



## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

### *Get Caught in a Web of Ancient Southern Italian Dance, Music and Culture at Tarantella Festival this Spring*

With the generous support of the Victoria Multicultural Commission, the patronage of Calabria Region, Comites Victoria & Tasmania, and the Segmento Foundation, the **Segmento - Tarantella Festival** endeavours to honour the vibrant music and captivating dances that originated in the Southern regions of Italy.

This month-long celebration features a diverse array of events, commencing with a media launch on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November and culminating in a series of day-long festivities at various locations, including Geelong's Club Italia on November 12<sup>th</sup>, Shepparton Showground on November 19<sup>th</sup>, Edwardes Lake Park in Reservoir on November 25<sup>th</sup>, and the Abruzzo Club in Brunswick East

on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The festival's opening ceremony takes place on Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, at the Darebin Art Centre, setting the stage for a magnificent celebration of dance, music, workshops, storytelling, performances, and a captivating multimedia exhibition.

The roots of the Tarantella dance trace back to the Renaissance era in Southern Italy. Originally, it was believed that this energetic dance could cure ailments caused by the bite of the tarantula spider. The dancer would induce a fever-driven trance to sweat out the venom. Today, the Tarantella and its associated traditions provide a platform for embracing diversity within the Italian community. Festival attendees can expect a welcoming environment that encourages their creative expression in a safe place.

Dr. Giovanni Butera, representing the Segmento Foundation, explains the driving force behind the festival:

"The festival brings together Australian, Italian and Greek creatives to provide an original and multi-immersive experience of traditional Italian music and dance. Participants and facilitators, including dancers, musicians, writers, poets, and visual artists, are committed to promoting Southern Italian and Southern European culture in the spirit of social cohesion. Workshops are thoughtfully organised in local primary schools, Italian Clubs and Associations, as well as elderly care centres, aiming to share knowledge, values, and identity across generations."

The festival's artistic direction is led by **Ciccio Nucera**, renowned as the "king" of the Calabrian Tarantella, with an impressive career spanning over 40 years, including successful tours worldwide. Nucera, a virtuoso accordionist and accomplished tambourine player, has contributed to village festivals and collaborated with numerous artists, notably with the Calabria Orchestra since 2014. He initiated the successful project "The Tarantella is Addictive", which garnered enthusiastic public acclaim

The festival's line-up includes performances by artists such as Davis Muccari, Gabriele Macri, Antonio and Maddalena Grosso, hailing from Italy, alongside Melbourne's very own Rustica Project and the talented Santa Taranta from Bellingen in NSW. Multimedia exhibitions and presentations will showcase traditional southern Italian musical instruments, which are used to accompany the enchanting singing and dancing. A series of workshops, hosted by Italian Clubs and Associations, will feature dancing sessions, music, singing and Tamburello workshops.

The core objective of the "Segmento – Tarantella Festival" is to serve as a platform for the promotion of Southern Italian and Southern European traditional music and dance, fostering connections, encouraging communications, and sparking curiosity among diverse communities. Additionally, the festival seeks to raise cultural awareness across all generations.

For further information, imagery, photo shoots, or interviews, please contact Dr. Giovanni Butera at [Giovanni.Butera@nixoragroup.com.au](mailto:Giovanni.Butera@nixoragroup.com.au) | 0410 860 036

## **SEGMENTO – TARANTELLA FESTIVAL**

Geelong, Club Italia - Sunday 12th November – all day event

Darebin Art Centre – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November - Opening Ceremony & Party, 6.30pm

Shepparton Showground - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 – all day event

Brunswick East – Jazz Lab – Tuesday 21st November - Ciccio Nucera quartet, dinner show

Edwardes Lake Park Reservoir – Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November – all day event

Brunswick East – Abruzzo Club on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

### **Workshops and activities at local schools and elderly care centres**

Wednesday 18th October to Friday 15th December

## **Press Conference and Cocktails**

Wednesday 8th November, 2023

11:30 am - 1pm followed by refreshments and finger food

Co.As.It, 189 Faraday Street, Carlton

### **Official Opening Cocktail Event**

Friday 17th November, 2023 at 6.30 pm

Darebin Art Centre - Cnr Bell Street and St George's Rd, Preston

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Facebook: @segmentomagazine

Instagram: @segmento\_magazine

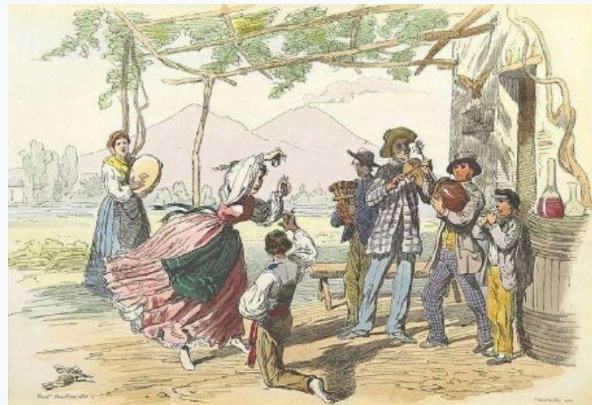
### **WEBSITE**

<https://www.segmentotarantellafestival.com.au>

## About the Tarantella

Tarantella, a mesmerising style of music and a captivating set of dances, finds its roots in the heart of southern Italy, dating back to the Middle Ages, with traces of a similar musical style even discovered in Magna Graecia.

Legend has it that during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, in the midst of the Renaissance, and originating in Italy's south, the Tarantella was employed as a dance to cure ailments induced by the venomous bite of the Tarantula spider. Women, often those labouring in the tobacco fields, were frequently the victims of this perilous spider. It was believed that the spider's bite would plunge one into a trance, curable only through a frenzied dance accompanied by lively music. The non-stop, frenetic dancing served to sweat out the poison from the victim's body.



Over time, the Tarantella evolved into a trance-inducing, therapeutic, ritualistic dance. It also became a courtship dance and a celebratory dance, marking significant rites of passage for a community as a whole, or for particular members within that community.



Today, the Tarantella dance and its accompanying traditions provide a unique opportunity for people to come together and celebrate diversity within the Italian community. It fosters an inclusive and supportive environment, enabling individuals to express themselves safely and creatively.

**Segmento – Tarantella Festival: A Project for Unity, Inclusivity, and Mutual Respect**

The mission of the “Segmento Tarantella Festival” is to serve as a catalyst, connecting diverse communities, encouraging communications and curiosity through the promotion of Southern European traditional music and dance. It also strives to raise cultural awareness across all generations.

The festival brings together Australian, Italian and Greek artists to offer an authentic and immersive experience of folkloristic traditional music and dance. Participants and facilitators encompass dancers, musicians, writers, poets, and visual artists. By championing Southern European culture and music as sources of knowledge, values, and identity, the festival actively engages local primary schools, ethnic associations, and elderly care centres to bridge cultural and generational gaps through the allure of traditional Southern Italian music and dance. The Tarantella’s history and tradition act as a conduit, honouring the elderly members of our community while instilling a sense of place and belonging to the newer generations.

The Tarantella Festival aims to empower all Australians to maintain a connection with their cultural heritage, transcending language and other established cultural practices. It also offers the opportunity to share aspects of Southern Europe traditions with other communities, highlighting both differences and similarities to foster intercultural awareness and appreciation. In our view, understanding various cultures and traditions is essential for the harmonious and peaceful development of all communities in a globalised and multi-ethnic society.

To further this mission and encourage multi-ethnic participation in this event, a social media campaign organised by *Segmento Magazine*, and supported by all of our partners, will be conducted in six languages: English, Italian, Greek, Hindi, Chinese and Arabic.

The Tarantella Festival is a welcoming event, open to all, irrespective of age, gender, culture, background, religion, or political affiliation. It beckons those who are passionate, interested in, or simply curious about Southern European culture and traditions. It is an all-inclusive event, catering to families, young couples, singles, children, and teenagers who seek to spend a day outdoors in picturesque Victorian parks, enjoying live music and interactive performances, while embracing the rich tapestry of Southern European folklore.

*The organisers, partners and all contributors, including artists and technicians, working at the Segmento Tarantella Festival, extend their acknowledgment to the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we live, and pay our respects to their elders, both past and present.*

*The Traditional Owners of the Land, including Edwardes Lake Park in Reservoir and Calabria Club in Bulla, Victoria, where festival events will take place, are the Wurundjeri People in the Kulin nation. They are the traditional owners of the Yarra River Valley, covering a significant portion of the current location of Melbourne.*

*The Traditional Owners of the Land at Shepparton Showgrounds in Shepparton, Victoria, where a festival event will also take place, are the Yorta Yorta People. The area is known as Kanny-goopna, signifying ‘deep waterholes by which people camped’. More specifically, the people who inhabited the exact Shepparton area were known as the Kailtheban.*