

Vision Australia  
presents

# Carols by Candlelight

2019  
SOUVENIR  
SONG BOOK



vision australia's  
**carols by candlelight**

Broadcast Partner 

**TICKETS** ON SALE NOW  
[carolsbycandlelight.com.au](http://carolsbycandlelight.com.au)

Christmas Eve  
Sidney Myer Music Bowl

# PROUDLY SUPPORTING



## vision australia's carols by candlelight



**NIGHTLY 6PM**

**9 NEWS**

**MELBOURNE'S MOST TRUSTED**



# Share the joy



## Season's greetings

Welcome to Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight, a fabulous tradition where families all across Australia join to celebrate Christmas. Children and their families are the focus of Carols by Candlelight. From celebrating big milestones, to sharing small moments of joy, Vision Australia works with 2300 children who are blind or have low vision and their families nationally. Our services include helping children succeed at school, use technology to support their independence, participate in sport, and develop important life skills. We invite you to join us in a moment of Christmas joy and generosity and help us raise funds to continue our services for children. With your help, Vision Australia can make the future brighter for children who are blind or have low vision and their families. Merry Christmas!

Ron Hooton, Vision Australia CEO

For 82 years, Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight has entertained people of all ages in its annual Christmas Eve celebration. In 2019 the iconic event celebrates 60 years of performances bringing joy to thousands at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl and 40 years of live broadcasts reaching millions on the Nine Network.

This festive season, singer Paul Kapeleris, who was born legally blind with just 5 per cent vision, will perform at the family event in a dream come true for the musician.

Paul first made headlines earlier this year in *Australia's Got Talent* and now, as Carols by Candlelight ambassador, he will share his joyful music on Christmas Eve.

Carols by Candlelight supports children who are blind

## Carols tradition celebrates 60 years at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl

or have low vision. On Christmas Eve, donations will be matched by generous partners of Vision Australia to double the impact for those who are blind or have low vision and their families.

Carols by Candlelight began as the concept of Norman Banks MBE, a veteran of radio. On Christmas Eve in 1937, he noticed an elderly woman sitting by her window, her face lit by a candle. Next to her was a radio and she was singing along to *Away in a Manger*. It was at this moment that Banks was inspired to create a gathering of people to sing Carols by Candlelight.

The following year 10,000 people gathered at midnight in the Alexandra Gardens with

a 30-strong choir, two soloists and the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Band performing Christmas songs in the candlelight setting. A new Christmas tradition was born.

The annual event has seen some of Australia's biggest names perform including Madame Florence Austral, Gilda Grauen, Robert Simmons, Mary Miller, Robert Payne, William Laird and John Lanigan.

Australia's Queen of Song, Gladys Moncrieff, appeared on the program in 1942, the same year the event reached worldwide acclaim and included special messages from the lord mayors of London and New York via a radio hook-up.

From 1949, Vision Australia

(then the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind) became the main beneficiary of the event. In 1959, the event moved from Alexandra Gardens to the just-opened Sidney Myer Music Bowl where more than 100,000 people attended.

In 1970, Carols by Candlelight was televised for the first time on Channel 0.

In 1979, Channel 9 became the official broadcast partner and 40 years on, the Nine Network is proud to be partnered with this Christmas tradition.

During the past decade, the number of famous guests has grown, with crowd favourites including Denis Walter, Marina Prior, Silvie Paladino, David Hobson, Lucy Durack, Delta Goodrem, Guy Sebastian, Casey Donovan, Dami Im and Anthony Callea celebrating Australian music and musicians.

Nine is proud to be partnering

once again with Vision Australia to broadcast the 82nd Carols by Candlelight. This year marks a significant anniversary for Nine, as we celebrate 40 years of broadcasting this popular Christmas Eve tradition. And 100 per cent of profits from ticket sales on the night will go towards services for children and families who are blind or have low vision, ensuring they are well-equipped to lead a full life. On behalf of the Nine Network, I'd like to wish you and those close to you, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



Matt Scriven, Nine Melbourne managing director

Australia's most loved performers will get into the Christmas spirit to delight fans at Carols by Candlelight

# Sing it loud

DAVID CAMPBELL & ALLISON LANGDON



NATALIE O'DONNELL & SIMON GLEESON



DENIS WALTER



DAVID HOBSON & MARINA PRIOR

Win a family pass to the exclusive VIP Lawn Terrace at Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight on December 24! See Page 12 for details



Since its inception in 1938, Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight has become a much-loved Christmas tradition. Attended by thousands of festive folk and watched by many more from the comfort of their homes, this iconic event celebrates 60 years of performances bringing joy to a packed Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

Nine's Carols host David Campbell will be joined by Allison Langdon to present this much-loved variety spectacular and welcome familiar faces on stage, including Silvie Paladino, Tim Campbell, David Hobson, Anthony Callea, Jack Vidgen, Christie Whelan Browne and Rob Mills.

Before being handed the co-hosting reins, Allison was among the millions of Australians who tuned in to watch.

"I'm excited to be joining David as the host of Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight," Allison says.

"With two small children, Christmas is a big deal in my house. I have always loved watching the program from my couch at home, and I am thrilled to be able to play a role in one of Australia's most loved Christmas Eve traditions.

"I can't wait to see the great performances and help in raising money for services for children and families who are blind or have low vision."

David says, "I love this time of year, and what better way to finish the year than having Allison join in the festivities.

"Seeing the candles being held up in the air to the kids singing along in the crowd, it is always a wonderful night of Christmas celebrations."

John Foreman will wield the baton, conducting the huge orchestra, and Doug Heywood will lead the choir. "It's such a beautiful show," John enthuses.

"You have some of Australia's biggest names up on the stage, dressed to the nines and everyone performs brilliantly.

"We also need to remember that all profits go toward services for children who may never see a Christmas light and it's about making everyone feel included in the celebrations."

Popular 3AW talkback radio host Denis Walter will be back delighting fans at Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight, an event he has performed at for the past 40 years.

Known for his baritone singing voice, his deep notes have filled the Sidney Myer Music Bowl for decades.

"I am truly overwhelmed by the event and year after year, seeing families come together and seeing the children watching it before their eyes, is truly spectacular," Denis says.

No Christmas in Melbourne would be complete without perennial favourite, award-winning soprano Marina Prior. Performing at carols has formed a huge part of her Christmas memories, marking almost three decades of singing at the Bowl.

Marina says, "it's such a festive atmosphere and such

a long-standing tradition for me that I just couldn't think of anywhere else I'd rather be on Christmas Eve."

For the first time, internationally-acclaimed musical theatre stars Natalie O'Donnell (*Mamma Mia*) and her husband, Simon Gleeson (*Les Miserable*), will come together to delight audiences.

"We are beyond thrilled to be performing on the carols stage together," Natalie says.

"It's not often you get to be a part of an enormous event, on stage with an incredible orchestra, not only celebrating the spirit of Christmas but giving back to a charity that desperately needs support."

Of course, it's not just about singing songs. Carols by Candlelight is a major event for Vision Australia, raising vital funds for children who are

blind or have low vision, which is why stars and hosts generously give up their time on Christmas Eve each year to bring joy to Australia.



JOHN FOREMAN

## A special tradition

In his 16th appearance at Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight, Anthony Callea will lead a stellar line-up of Aussie singers performing this Christmas Eve, including his husband, Tim Campbell. Here, we chatted with Anthony about his favourite Christmas traditions.



**Where will you be spending Christmas this year?**

At home in Melbourne. Being home for Christmas is always great, however, I've always wished for a white Christmas and I did try and take off a year from Carols by Candlelight to have one, but the producer said, "Have a white NYE instead!" Ha!

**What was your favourite Christmas present as a child?**

I think it was probably a trampoline. I do remember waking up that year and racing to the Christmas tree to find nothing there and I was totally devastated. However, mum then quickly opened the curtains to the backyard (along with some Logie Award-winning acting) and there was a massive trampoline.

**What has been your most memorable Christmas?**

I would have to say the first year I performed at Carols by Candlelight. As a child, it was always a dream to just be there in the audience and be a part of carols, so when I stepped on the stage on Christmas Eve all those years ago, the feeling was incredible. Sixteen consecutive years on, the feeling is just as special and I love that I get to share Christmas Eve with the whole of Australia. But I've never been in the audience! Ha!

**Do you have a favourite Christmas song?**

No I don't. Every year it changes and I feel as though I am more drawn to newer Christmas songs rather than traditional carols. I even wrote a Christmas song with John Foreman about my childhood at Christmas time, titled *Christmas Day*.



# Talent on the rise



Carols by Candlelight ambassador Paul Kapeleris is living his dream and hopes to inspire others with his message to never give up

**P**aul Kapeleris' life changed in an instant when his musical career skyrocketed to fame after an extraordinary performance of Andra Day's *Rise Up* on popular television program, *Australia's Got Talent* earlier this year.

The now 23 year old with the angelic voice and exceptional piano playing skills is the 2019 Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight ambassador.

The talented musician was born with just 15 per cent vision, and now has only 5 per cent vision, which is slowly deteriorating.

Paul found a new meaning for life when his mother encouraged him to start piano lessons at the age of eight.

"It was very difficult as I couldn't see the notes. Basically my teacher told me to practise and feel the notes with my eyes closed. The piano has a set structure so I don't have to look to play the piano anymore. There's a lot of muscle memory going on," Paul says.

From a young age, Paul would watch talent shows on television such as *The X Factor* and *Australian Idol*, and would dream of doing something similar as he grew up. To Paul, music was what gave him the confidence and freedom to truly be himself.

Earlier this year, Paul completed his Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in music, which came after years of dedication to the piano and music.

Inspired by his mum, music teachers and professors, Paul has had the privilege to learn from a variety of people.

He finds inspiration across the industry in stars such as Sam Smith and Chris Stapleton for their ability to connect with their

music and audience.

"I love Ed Sheeran's songwriting ability, and Gary LeVox and Tori Kelly for their absolutely stunning vocals. All of these incredible artists have sculpted my own artistry in some way, and I am eternally grateful for their drive and passion to make music," he says.

As Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight ambassador, Paul hopes to provide inspiration to those who don't think they are good enough or have what it takes.

"Vision Australia has allowed me to live a life I would never have been able to live otherwise," he says. "They have provided me with support, got me out of the house with young adult social activities, and have taught me life skills through occupational therapy. Interacting with other people who have vision impairments is an enriching experience that, for me, would only have been possible through Vision Australia.

"As someone who has lived with a severe degenerative vision impairment for all of my life, it means the absolute world to be given this opportunity. We are strong. We are powerful and can do anything.

"It is quite daunting knowing I will be performing in front of an audience of millions of people on Christmas Eve. Not being able to see anything helps. It's just me and that piano on the stage."

The rising star is treating this journey as something special, something to be cherished with every second.

Alongside writing his own music, Paul is willing to take on every opportunity that comes his way — and he plans to grab it with both hands and never let go.

## HALA AUSTIN

"Carols to me is not just an event, it's a special part of the family that brings so much joy."

**F**or 23 years, Hala Austin has been attending Carols by Candlelight with her ever-growing family.

It's such a tradition for her family, they arrive around 11pm the night before and camp to secure the best seats.

Hala's family have been coming to the carols since they moved to Melbourne in 1997.

They see the event as an important occasion where the family can spend time together and see how much they have grown over the year.

To Hala, carols is an opportunity to reflect upon the year and enjoy the special night together as a family.

One of Hala's mum Lilian's favourite memories is watching her daughter bring her six-month-old son to the carols. Lilian saw this as the start of a tradition with her daughter's new family and something to share with her extended family.



Back left to right: Nada Poke, Jana Joy, Ashtyn Royakkers, Jordan Adams, Lilian Poke, Hala Austin, (front left to right), Tarkyn Royakkers, Tayte Royakkers, Oscar Joy and Paytn Adams.



Erin Lynch and husband Mark Basile with their children, Siddaley, Mackenzie and Buster, Ann and Peter Downton, and Elizabeth and Bernadette Dornom.

## ERIN LYNCH

"Everyone is here for exactly the same reason, which is to celebrate that genuine spirit of Christmas."

**E**rin Lynch is possibly the easiest person to find among the sea of thousands at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

For the past few years, Erin

and her friends have attracted plenty of fans with their matching costumes on display for Australians to enjoy from their television sets.

Through wearing their recognisable costumes, Erin's family and friends have established a carols community, highlighting the kinship among

the people who make the effort to attend each year.

The dedicated carols attendee arrives at 1pm on the day to secure her spot on the lawn. And she is not alone, with many other carollers setting up, ready for a magical evening of song, giving, community and joy ahead. Come rain, hail or shine.



Rebecca Vine with her children, Callum, Shyla and Mikayla.

## JUDY STIFF

"It's just amazing to be able to celebrate and give at Christmas, to help somebody else. This is what Christmas spirit is all about."

**J**udy Stiff (inset) may be one of Carols by Candlelight's biggest fans. The former Corowa resident has been going since 1964, travelling over three hours to attend the annual occasion.

The actor and charity worker is now based in Melbourne where she is closer to the action at Christmas time.

Each year, Judy attends the event stating, "Christmas is not Christmas until I spend it at the carols!"

Having attended for more than 50 years, Judy encourages everyone to experience just how magical the atmosphere is at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

## REBECCA VINE

**I**t's been an annual Christmas tradition for single mum Rebecca and her three children to attend the carols.

Since 2004, the family has been attending the big event at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

The tradition started after Rebecca's kids first saw Carols By Candlelight on television and enjoyed it so much, she decided to take them to the actual event the following year and they haven't stopped going since.

Attending the carols makes Rebecca and her children feel like they are a part of something larger — an extended family.

They sit in the same spot each time, alongside other regular attendees and her children know they are helping out those in need by being present and experiencing the special event.

# Countdown to Christmas Eve! We're counting on you!



**Vision Australia**  
Blindness. Low Vision. Opportunity.



**Christmas Eve is a time to enjoy. A moment to inspire. Your generous donation will make such a difference.**

When you donate on Christmas Eve your donation will be matched to double the impact for blind and low vision children. Don't miss your chance to make Christmas twice as special, for everyone.



**\$25**  
x2 = \$50

could pay for a special Connect 4 game for a family to play together.

**\$50**  
x2 = \$100

could pay for Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone to be produced in braille.

**\$100**  
x2 = \$200

could help a child who is blind or has low vision to learn to get around the playground safely.

**\$500**  
x2 = \$1,000

could pay for a course of special braille music classes.

**Double your impact this Christmas.**

Find out how at [carolsbycandlelight.com.au](http://carolsbycandlelight.com.au)

**vision australia's carols by candlelight**  
Broadcast Partner

**\$50,000**

It costs more than \$50,000 to care for and train a seeing eye dog. Seeing eye dogs are specially trained to support people who are blind or have low vision be active, safe and independent when navigating their surroundings.



**1953**  
Feelix reading kits have been borrowed, helping our youngest clients with vital literacy skills

## What we do with your help...

**3000** pages of music were converted into braille this year

Here's what your donation helps make possible

- Twenty tertiary students received bursaries for technology in 2019, including monitors, Apple devices, smartphones, braille notetakers, to access technology software and music production software to assist their studies.
- 15,500 pages of complex science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) materials were converted into braille, tactual and electronic text for university students.
- Six people took part in a trial of the new Learn, Engage, Act, Perform (LEAP) youth leadership program aimed at 14-17 year olds. As part of the program they joined 200 young leaders from across Australia at a four-day leadership camp.
- Ninety-nine people aged 15-25 took part in the Building Stronger Futures employment program. They attended intensive pre-employment workshops, received problem-solving skills and concentrated job search support.



In partnership with Australia Post, we provided braille and large print letters from Santa to young clients



Almost 2300 children are supported annually across Australia

**Nearly 50,000 hours are dedicated to supporting children every year**

## Children's services

Vision Australia provides specialist services that support families to help their children achieve the greatest levels of independence.

**MOBILITY SERVICES**  
To help children develop skills to move around safely and independently.

**PHYSICAL, OCCUPATIONAL and SPEECH THERAPIES**  
To develop everyday living skills such as getting dressed, preparing food or brushing their teeth.

**COUNSELLING**  
With the input of parents and other role models, we offer support to children and their families.

**EARLY EDUCATION**  
Services like our Feelix Library allow children to learn in a unique sensory way and supports their literacy skills.



**BRILLE and ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY**  
Helping children to enter mainstream education using the techniques of their choice to read, write and communicate.

**HOLIDAY PROGRAMS**  
A range of fun, educational activities that strengthen a sense of belonging and social inclusion.

**Vision Australia** [visionaustralia.org](http://visionaustralia.org) [info@visionaustralia.org](mailto:info@visionaustralia.org) 1300 84 74 66

# CLASSIC carols

Sing along to these much-loved tunes as we celebrate the festive season

## Ding Dong Merrily On High

Public Domain

Ding dong, ding dong  
Ding dong, ding dong  
Ding dong merrily on high  
In heaven the bells are ringing  
Ding dong, verily the sky  
Is riven with angel singing

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis  
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

E'en so here below, below  
Let steeple bells be swungen  
And io, io, io  
By priest and people singing

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis  
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

Pray you, dutifully prime  
Your matin chime, ye ringers  
May you beautifully rhyme  
Your eve-time song, ye singers

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis  
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

## Winter Wonderland

Public Domain

Sleigh bells ring, are you listening  
In the lane, snow is glistening  
A beautiful sight, we're happy tonight  
Walking in a winter wonderland

Gone away is the bluebird  
Here to stay is a new bird  
He sings a love song as we go along  
Walking in a winter wonderland

In the meadow we can build a snowman  
Then pretend that he is Parson Brown  
He'll say are you married  
We'll say no man  
But you can do the job when you're in town

Later on, we'll conspire  
As we dream by the fire  
To face unafraid  
The plans that we've made  
Walking in a winter wonderland

## Jingle Bells

Public Domain

Dashing through the snow  
In a one-horse open sleigh  
Over the fields we go  
Laughing all the way  
Bells on bobtails ring  
Making spirits bright  
What fun it is to ride and sing  
A sleighing song tonight

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way!  
Oh, what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh

A day or two ago  
I thought I'd take a ride  
And soon, Miss Fanny Bright  
Was seated by my side  
The horse was lean and lank  
Misfortune seemed his lot  
He got into a drifted bank  
And then we got upstot

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way!  
Oh, what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh

A day or two ago  
The story I must tell  
I went out on the snow  
And on my back I fell  
A gent was riding by  
In a one-horse open sleigh  
He laughed as there I sprawling lie  
But quickly drove away

Jingle bells, jingle bells  
Jingle all the way!  
Oh, what fun it is to ride  
In a one-horse open sleigh

## We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Traditional

We wish you a Merry Christmas  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

Good tidings we bring  
To you and your kin  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

Now bring us some figgy pudding  
Now bring us some figgy pudding  
Now bring us some figgy pudding  
And a cup of good cheer!  
Good tidings we bring  
To you and your kin  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

We won't go until we get some  
We won't go until we get some  
We won't go until we get some  
So bring it right here!  
Good tidings we bring  
To you and your kin  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

We wish you a Merry Christmas  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!  
Good tidings we bring  
To you and your kin  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

## The First Noel

Public Domain

The First Noel, the Angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds  
In fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay  
Keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night  
That was so deep.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the East beyond them far  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord  
That hath made Heaven and earth of nought  
And with his blood mankind has bought.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel

## Deck The Halls

Public Domain

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.  
'Tis the season to be jolly,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

Don we now our gay apparel,  
Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la.  
Troll the ancient Yule-tide carol,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

See the blazing Yule before us,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.  
Strike the harp and join the chorus,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.  
Follow me in merry measure,  
Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la.  
While I tell of Yuletide treasure,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

Fast away the old year passes,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.  
Hail the new year, lads and lasses,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.  
Sing we joyous, all together,  
Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la.  
Heedless of the wind and weather,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Don't forget to jump online for all the songs that will be performed at Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight this year, so you can sing along! The full list will be available by December 20 at [carolsbycandlelight.com.au/song-book](http://carolsbycandlelight.com.au/song-book)



Vision Australia's  
**BEST EVER!** **Carols by Candlelight Christmas Festival**



Enjoy a fun filled afternoon at the Christmas Festival, with a huge range of family-friendly activities to keep you entertained before the show begins!



**Rehearsal Night**  
23 December

4pm ..... Gates open  
 4-8pm ..... Christmas Festival  
 4:30pm ..... Rehearsal starts  
 6:30pm ..... Rehearsal break  
 11pm ..... Rehearsal finish (approx.)

DEC 23<sup>RD</sup>

**Main Event**  
24 December

4pm ..... Gates open  
 4-8pm ..... Christmas Festival  
 6pm ..... Kids Pre-Show  
 8pm ..... Show starts  
 11pm ..... Show finish (approx.)

DEC 24<sup>TH</sup>



x10  
PASSES  
TO WIN

**WIN** a FAMILY PASS to the VIP LAWN TERRACE on 24 December!

10 lucky winners will receive a Family Pass (4 tickets for family or friends) to the VIP Lawn Terrace where you'll enjoy premium lawn seating and a free candle kit. The VIP Lawn is a seated section, so no need to queue! From 4pm you'll be able to enjoy the Christmas Festival with activities for kids and adults alike. From 6pm the kids pre-show entertainment will start on the main stage before the main show at 8pm.

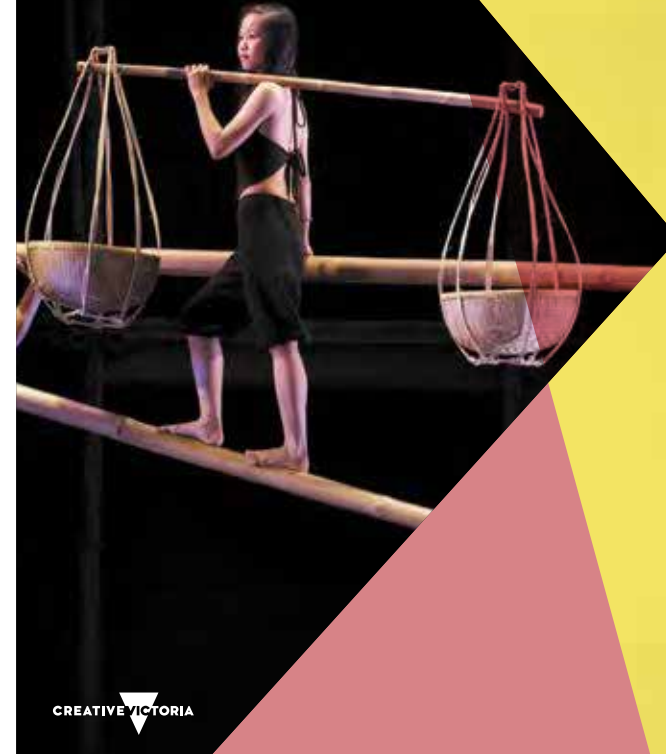


For your chance to win enter by **THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER** at [carolsbycandlelight.com.au/competitions](http://carolsbycandlelight.com.au/competitions)

Arts Centre Melbourne

Playful and imaginative adventures await you!

**Families at Arts Centre Melbourne**  
 Summer | Autumn 2020



**The 91-Storey Treehouse**  
4 - 19 January  
Ages 6+

**Stick By Me**  
14 - 18 January  
Ages 3 - 6

**10 Minute Dance Parties**  
16 - 24 January  
All Ages  
FREE

**À Ố Làng Phố**  
27 - 29 February  
Ages 7+

**Charlie and the War Against the Grannies**  
28 March - 5 April  
Ages 5+

**Dr AudiYO's Giant Adventure**  
9 - 10 May  
Ages 8+

**Creative Workshops at The Channel**  
Various dates throughout 2020.  
Ages vary, see website.

BOOK NOW

[artscentremelbourne.com.au/families](http://artscentremelbourne.com.au/families)

Relax with us



smoothfm 91.5

Proud Partner of Vision Australia's Carols By Candlelight

# IT'S NOT CHRISTMAS UNTIL DENIS WALTER SINGS AT CAROLS



**PROUD PARTNER OF VISION AUSTRALIA'S CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**



## Reach for the moon

**"I had never been around a child with special needs. When Luna was born I just wanted to be in her shoes so she didn't have to go through what she was dealing with."**  
— Sarah Williamson

When Luna was three months old, she had an MRI scan which showed she had optic nerve hypoplasia, nystagmus (where her eyes shake) and one eye turned in. Once Luna had been diagnosed, her parents, Sarah and Jake Williamson, sought help from Vision Australia to learn how to support their daughter in living her life to the fullest. "We wanted Luna to be comfortable, understand the world she lives in, and to give her the best so she could live her dreams," Sarah says. "Luna started walking just before she turned two. I was so proud of this achievement, but once she started walking, I noticed Luna would get down on her hands and knees to try and climb over a line on a normal footpath," Sarah explains. When her parents noticed Luna wasn't focusing on objects such as the television and the mobile above her bed, they sought further help from Vision Australia.

Luna has about 10 per cent vision. She was given a cane to help her recognise space, height and depth, which helped her understand she didn't need to climb over lines on the ground. "Vision Australia have been extraordinary," Jake says. "They come to the house every couple of weeks. It has been amazing watching them help Luna achieve her milestones. "Not only do they teach Luna new skills, they teach us, as parents, how to improve Luna's way of life." Help from Vision Australia has provided Luna a cane and access to the Felix Library, where she will soon learn braille. Ahead of her third birthday, Luna is a happy child, but still struggles in a new environment. Vision Australia has provided Luna with a support worker who assists her in day-to-day activities, and helped Sarah and Jake prepare Luna for kindergarten and school. "We are so grateful for Vision Australia," Sarah says. "To see so much joy in my daughter as she discovers our world, brings such happiness. We wouldn't be where we are today without this incredible resource."

## "To my dearest Parker..."

**In 2017, as a perfect little 22-month-old baby you were one of the faces of Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight.**  
It's amazing to look back over the past two years and see what you have achieved. You not only blow my mind with your passion for life, sense of humour and strong will, but you continue to show the world being blind is not a disability but the ability to see the world differently. Our journey with Vision Australia started simply. You just wanted to jump. You worked hard and never gave up, even with the bumps and bruises and the occasional "I can't do this". Well, you did it. I'll never forget the look on your face in that moment — you were beaming with pride and pure happiness. Something switched in you — you gained trust in your team and from there nothing could hold you back. You learned to ride your balance bike, then a scooter and recently a pedal bike. You worked hard for every achievement, and I saw

that same look across your face each time you reached your goal. You grab life by the horns at every chance. Next year, you head to kindergarten. As your mum I am terrified — terrified of sending you into the big, wide world. But Parker, you have shown time and again, you are ready. Lean on your family at home and your family at Vision Australia, because together you can accomplish anything your heart desires. I never imagined our life would be so easy, I thought you would struggle at every hurdle. Yes, there are times where you need a helping hand to achieve your goals, but it is a testament to your personality, and the love and compassion from Vision Australia, that you are where you are today. Parker, I wholly believe the reason I was put on this

earth was to be your mummy. Always try your hardest, keep your head high, and show the world being blind is not what defines you. I am so proud of you and everything you have achieved in your four years, and so excited to see where this journey takes us." With all my love, Mummy xox



## Support is music to her ears

**This musical teenager is making a difference**  
Born on Christmas Day in 2003, Natalija was just nine months old when she was diagnosed with a grapefruit-sized tumour that was cutting into her optic nerve. After many operations, Natalija left hospital a year later with her family coming to terms with the fact that their little girl was blind. Natalija and her family received support from Vision



Australia from an early age. An occupational therapist assisted Natalija with day-to-day activities and the Vision Australia library provided access to music, leading the young musician and aspiring radio announcer to help others with music as a career. Natalija was just seven when she was asked to perform at Carols by Candlelight in 2010. A talented singer and pianist, Natalija was joined on stage by Marina Prior, Kate Ceberano, Denis Walter and Anthony Callea.

It was Natalija's rendition of Jon Bon Jovi's *Living on a Prayer* that stole the show. These days the star pianist with the voice of an angel regularly performs at church and in her local choir. She would also love to play in retirement homes and teach piano to the elderly. The Year 9 student has big dreams once she finishes high school. Moving out with friends will give her greater confidence and independence. She also suggests if anyone at her favourite radio network wants to take a holiday, she'd be more than happy to step in as a replacement.



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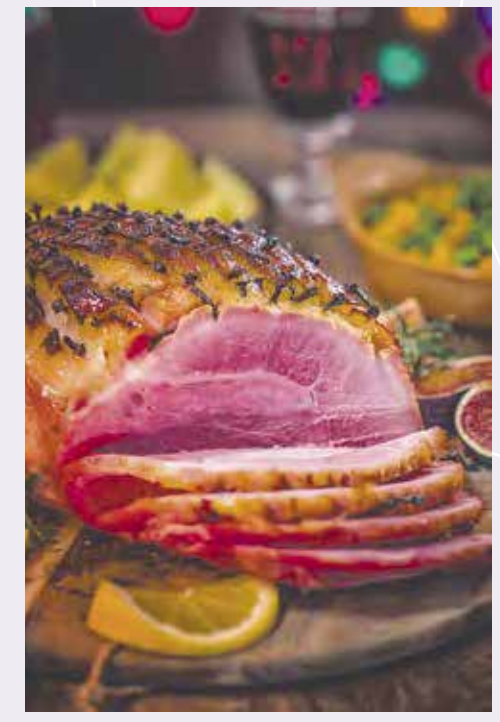
# Festive fare

Have a very merry Aussie Christmas feast from Vision Australia. Enjoy some of our all-time favourite recipes

**Pavlova**  
A dessert named after the great ballet dancer Anna Pavlova is a wonderful summer holiday dessert and makes a regular appearance on many Australian Christmas menus.

- 3 egg whites
- ¾ cup castor sugar
- ¼ cup white sugar
- 300ml cream
- Kiwifruit, passionfruit and strawberries for garnish

Preheat the oven to 150C. Whisk egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, a tablespoon at a time, beating well until meringue is thick and glossy, and sugar dissolved. Spoon meringue on to foil and smooth sides and top of pavlova. Use a spatula to form little peaks around edge of pavlova. Bake in oven for 1½ hours. Turn off oven. Leave pavlova in oven with the door ajar to cool completely. When cold, top with whipped cream and decorate with sliced kiwifruit, sliced strawberries and passionfruit.



### Orange glazed ham

Make this heavenly ham the centrepiece of your Christmas table.

- 6kg cooked leg of ham
- 2 small oranges, halved and sliced
- Whole cloves to decorate
- ½ cup orange marmalade
- ¾ cup orange juice
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard

Heat oven to 160C. Using a sharp knife, score the fat in a diamond pattern, taking care not to cut more than 5mm deep. Place ham in a large baking dish and combine marmalade, sugar, orange juice and Dijon mustard in a small bowl and brush over ham. Bake until golden brown. Place orange slices over ham and secure with cloves. Brush again with sugar mixture and return to oven for 30-35 minutes or until orange slices are golden.

### Prawns with chilli, lime and coriander

Add some spice to your barbecue prawns with a fragrant marinade of chilli, coriander, lime and garlic.

- 1 kg large prawns, heads removed, but unpeeled
- 1 large garlic clove
- 1 small bunch coriander, roughly chopped
- 1 red chilli
- Juice of one lime, plus wedges to serve
- 200g softened butter

To make the marinade, put the garlic, coriander, chilli and lime juice in a food processor and pulse until chopped. Add butter and seasoning to the food processor, and pulse again until everything is combined. Cook the prawns for 3-4 mins on each side. Lift them off the barbecue on to a platter and, while still sizzling hot, brush the marinade over the prawns and squeeze a wedge of lime over the top.





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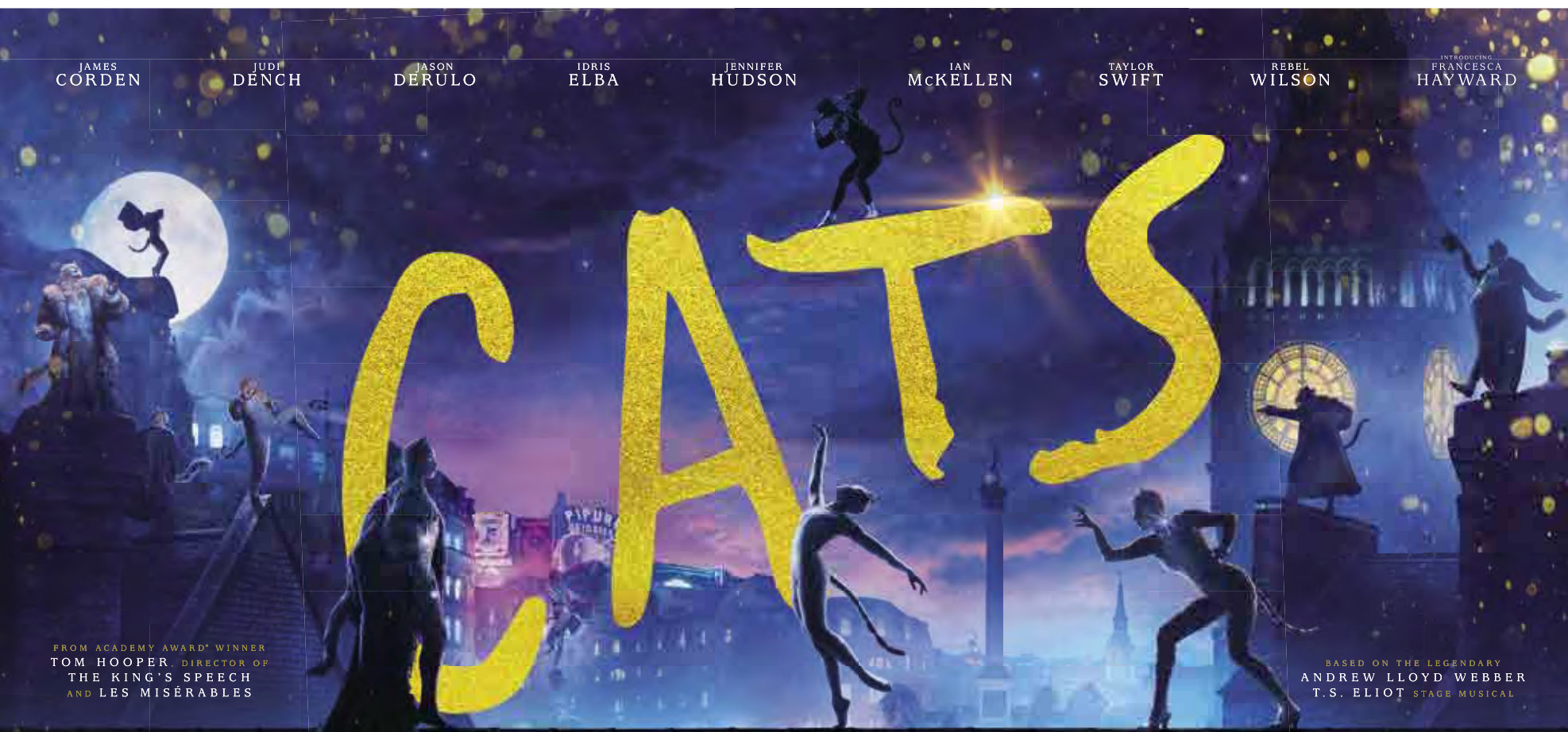
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