



eFestival of Lights 2020

Report



Sponsor Midwest Ports Authority's CEO Dr Rochelle Macdonald, Tom Mwangi (MWMA President), Salome Hargrove (Geraldton Fijian Association), Janine Gerard from MWMA

Midwest Multicultural Association
Building Harmony in the Community!

The Midwest Multicultural Association respectfully acknowledges the Southern Yamatji peoples who are the Traditional Owners and First People of the land on which we meet. Respects are paid to the Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Southern Yamatji people.



Aboriginal Elders have given Rashaan Briggs the authority to create sand murals within the community.

The circles depict the many different cultures in the Midwest with the black lines to the sides representing the linkages back into the community

The Midwest Multicultural Association Inc (MWMA) was incorporated in 2008 and is recognised by local government as the voice of the multicultural community in the region.

The Midwest Multicultural Association (MWMA) has coordinated the annual multicultural Festival of Lights for the Midwest community at Stow Gardens for many years. In 2020 the MWMA moved with the times, due to COVID19 restrictions on public gatherings, and created a 53 minute film of local performers which was to be shown at the local cinema.

With the support of a Fostering Integration Grant from the Dept of Home Affairs and sponsorship from Mid West Port Authority, the MWMA engaged local film maker, Mark Hollander from Dragonfly Media to film some of the incredible local performers at various locations around the City. To showcase not only the artists but also points of interest in the City.

The *World Premier of the eFestival of Lights 2020* was shown at the Orana Cinema on Saturday 7 November. The venue was decorated with the City of Greater Geraldton's cultural flag collection which represents residents from more than 60 nations of the globe. Adding to the vibrancy and the festive atmosphere, guests wore either cultural or colourful dress for photo opportunities and of course enjoyed "walking the red carpet".

Two sessions were held at the Orana Cinema the first for sponsors and entertainers and the second for the general public.

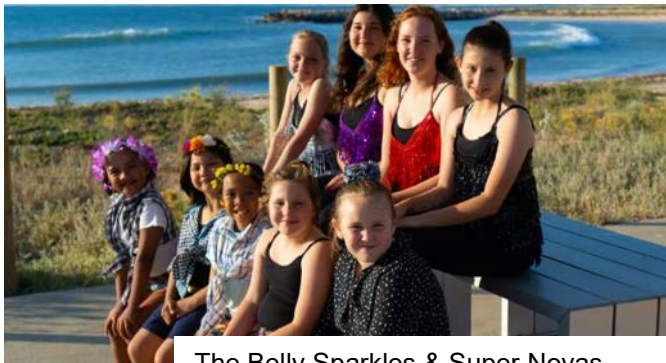
A third viewing of the film was arranged at the Queen Elizabeth II Seniors & Community Centre the following week as part of the annual Seniors' Week activities.





Lighting of the Lamp: (Deepa Jyoti)

- ❖ **Ernest Gutsa** (Inaugural President, Midwest Multicultural Assoc
- ❖ **Yvonne Marsden OAM** (Treasurer)
- ❖ **Tom Mwangi** (President, Midwest Multicultural Association
- ❖ **Maria Flavel OAM** (Established English as a Second Language classes in the Midwest)
- ❖ **Dr Hari Kumar** (Leader of Geraldton Indian Cultural Society)



The Belly Sparkles & Super Novas



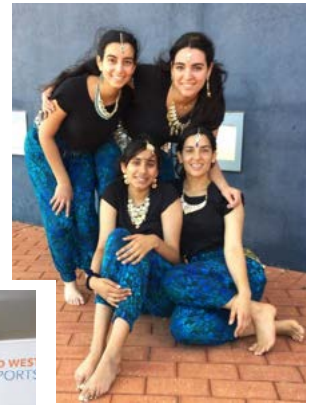
Zumba with Lishell



Jaye Allan
Playing a *Chinese Gourd Flute*



Natya Classical Indian & Bollywood



Geraldton Fijian Association



Ahalya Harikumar & Hari Kumar



Hanover Trio

Geraldton Chinese Dance Group



Sania Sajeev



Phil Doncon – Paint Storm



Zambezi mix – Manyoni & Guy



Midwest Community Bellydancers





Warren Nathan



Warren & Karen Nathan serenaded guests in the foyer of the Orana Cinema

Thank you to the volunteers and performers of the multicultural community, your dedication, creativeness and willingness to share your cultures add to the vibrancy of the Midwest region and make it a wonderful place to live.

Acknowledgements:



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs



This activity is supported by a *Fostering Integration Grant* from the Department of Home Affairs

The Geraldton Yacht Club & Queens Park Theatre for use of their premises



Thank you to the team at Orana Cinemas Geraldton for assistance at the eFestival of Lights 2020.

Promotion:

- ❖ Facebook: [\(20+\) Midwest Multicultural Association | Facebook](#)
- ❖ Radio: RadioMAMA – interview
- ❖ Print Media (Midwest Times weekly circulation 5,000: Guardian 5,100)

10 NEWS 6 geraldtonguardian.com.au **Guardian** Friday, September 11, 2020

2020 fest to light up screens

LISA FAVAZZO

The Festival of Lights will light up computer and phone screens this year, after event organisers decided they couldn't take the COVID-19 risk.

The Mid West Multicultural Association runs the annual festival, which hosts local creators, performers and culinarians celebrating their cultural roots, annually. It's a beloved local event and its shift online has stirred mixed feelings in the community.

The association estimates there were more than 3000 festival goers last year, rubbing shoulders in a manner that has since fallen out of fashion.

"2020 will be a little different," association president Tom Mwangi said.

Instead of the physical festival, Mid West Multicultural Association performances will be filmed and put online on November 7.

"Although the organisation is not able to tantalise taste buds with food from cultural stalls it is proposed to share cooking tips for people to try cooking some cultural dishes at home," he said.

Mexican food truck Taco Locos owner Aldo McLaren said he was disappointed with the decision to cancel the festival.

"It's one of the biggest events in Geraldton and a part of my income," he said.

While he said safety was important, he disagreed with the decision to put the event online.

"They are having festivals in Fremantle... why can't we do it in a country town?"

Mr McLaren said he was not interested in taking part in an online festival. Sue Knighton runs the Mid West Community Belly Dancing School, and she said her class was sad they would not get the chance to perform for the festival crowd this year.

"It's the highlight of our year," she said, adding that it was a "necessary evil" to keep the broader community safe from COVID-19.

"We are very sad... but we fully understand," she said.

Guardian 11 September, 2020



Advert: (10 x 5)
Midwest Times 28 October, 2020
Guardian 30 October, 2020

**Orana Cinemas at 3.30pm on
7 November, 2020**

Tickets \$5

**Purchase tickets via Trybooking -
on sale from 1 November**

Link to be on Facebook:

MidwestMulticulturalAssociation

Limited seats

Patrons are encouraged to wear cultural or colourful dress

Building Harmony in the Community!



This activity is supported by a Fostering Integration Grant from the Department of Home Affairs

08161

Festival's light-bulb idea to mark diversity

ELISE VAN AKEN



Sania Sajeev performs for the eFestival of Lights film.

A popular annual festival has not let the global pandemic get in the way of sharing the variety of cultures that call the Mid West home.

The Midwest Multicultural Association will hit the big screen this Saturday after COVID-19 restrictions made it impossible for it to host its regular Festival of Lights at the Geraldton foreshore.

Last year's festival brought thousands of people together to celebrate cultural diversity with music, dance and art from all corners of the world while enjoying food and crafts sold



Ernest Gutsa, Yvonne Marsden, Tom Mwangi, Maria Flavel and Hari Kumar at a Deepa Jyoti (lighting of the lamp) ceremony.

by local vendors. But this year, local filmmaker Dragonfly Media has filmed volunteer cultural group performances in different locations around the city, with the feature film The eFestival of Lights 2020 to be screened at

Geraldton's Orana Cinemas on Saturday.

MMA president Tom Mwangi said with the difficulties of 2020, the association had embraced the challenge to share cultural experiences.

"Because of COVID-19 we

thought we'd try something different and deliver the festival in a different format" he said.

"We have filmed the performers that would normally support the festival and offer that to the Geraldton community until things are much better and we can get back to doing things a normal way."

The family-friendly festival started as the November Indian festival of lights — Diwali — and has come to include a range of light festivals from different cultures with the support of the local Indian community.

Tickets for the 3.30pm showing of the film are available through Trybooking.

Times

Wednesday, November 4, 2020

Midwest Times 4 November, 2020

Grant Biggs and Noia Gregory Pictures: Gina Jenkin/ZEN Events & Photography Services.

Elsy Chandy, Ingrid Rawson & Noreen Parshad.

Janine Gerard and Karina Pepper.

Celebration of the things that unite us all

YVONNE LOVEDEE

Orana Cinemas was an ocean of colour at the weekend. Lined with cultural flags from more than 60 nations and graced by distinguished guests in colourful attire, the Midwest Multicultural Association launched the eFestival of Lights 2020.

Guests were greeted by the melodic tunes of Warren and Karen Nathan as they entered the cinema to a red carpet welcome.

Midwest Multicultural Association president Tom Mwangi said it was a proud time for the MWMA to be able to showcase some of the rich cultural diversity in the community, filmed at key locations around the City.

"The COVID challenges of 2020 provided a choice to either cancel all cultural celebrations or to think outside the square — the MWMA chose to be creative and engaged Dragonfly Media to create a film to commemorate the day," he said.

"The eFestival of Lights movie was a complete local production, with local performers being filmed by local film producer Mark Hollander of Dragonfly Media."

Funding from the Department of Home Affairs via a Fostering Integration grant and sponsorship by the Mid West Ports Authority provided vital financial backing for the project.

Guests in the auditorium demonstrated their enjoyment of the film by clapping, singing along and cheering the performances by the 15 groups that contributed to the 53-minute film.

Individuals, groups, mother-and-daughter and father-and-daughter combinations created a sharing of culture through music and dance which captivated the audience.

The Midwest Multicultural Association is looking forward to March 13, with plans for the Harmony Festival to be held in Stow Gardens. The association thanked all supporters who continued to make events like the eFestival of Lights possible.

Janet Lubit with James Miguel and Irah Jandy.

Cheyne and Chona Mantabote.

Maria Flavel and Jan Bowen.

Anne Brown, Lisa Wheateley, Jackie Aatson and Michelle Vanelogt.

Midwest Times 11 November, 2020

Evaluation:

Midwest Multicultural Association Committee recommendations for *Festival of Lights 2021*

Date chosen		6 November, 2021
Promotion	Marketing Plan	❖ Develop plan early and incorporate all avenues of marketing
	Networks	❖ Use personal networks more effectively
	Social Media	❖ Excellent and effective method of circulating information
	Print Media	❖ At least two adverts ❖ More media releases to encourage editorials
	Radio	❖ Interviews with MWMA representative as well as key entertainers in lead up to event
Funding	Sponsorship	❖ Invite sponsors to cover the costs of particular areas of the program e.g. Stage entertainment, children's activities (then advertise with naming rights if appropriate)
		❖ Strengthen current partnerships
		❖ Invite main sponsor to be part of the program e.g. introducing entertainers
	Grants	❖ Applications need to be early – investigate with funding bodies to join both Festival of Lights and Harmony Festivals
Entertainers	Variety of performers	❖ Encourage performers with different styles of entertaining
	Cultures	❖ Encourage representation from all cultures in the community
	Music	❖ Copyright approvals required prior to filming
	Language	❖ Captioning of movie (when language other than English spoken) ❖ Verbal translation when spoken from stage
Safety of Patrons		❖ Deliver event in line with Health Dept regulations

Midwest Multicultural Association

✉ P.O. Box 7428, Geraldton 6531

☎ 0428 312 338

📘 www.facebook.com/MidwestMulticulturalAssociation

🌐 www.midwestmulticulturalassociation.org/

Email: midwestmulticultural@gmail.com

