

ESTATICA UNLEASHED: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2026 SYDNEY GAY AND LESBIAN MARDI GRAS PARADE

SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA, February 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade will return on Saturday 28 February 2026, with more than 10,000 marchers and over 160 floats set to transform inner Sydney into one of the world's largest celebrations of queer identity, visibility and expression.

The Parade will unfold as a night of pride, activism and celebration following the iconic route along Oxford Street, Flinders Street and Moore Park Road, led by Dykes on Bikes, followed by First Nations marchers and the original 78ers.

In the theme of ECSTATICA, the parade will capture the collective release felt when queer communities gather in public space, moving through the streets joy, pride and defiance — the emotional high point where visibility becomes power and celebration becomes action.



“The Parade is where the Festival reaches its defining moment,” said Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras CEO, Jesse Matheson. “From our earliest trailblazers to the next generation stepping onto the route today, ECSTATICA becomes real when thousands of queer lives move through the city together, visible, connected and completely unapologetic.”

Minister for Jobs and Tourism, Steve Kamper said: “Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is the

pride of our major events calendar as Australia's most powerful expression of inclusion, creativity and community. Each year, the Parade brings tens of thousands of people to Sydney, which not only celebrates diversity and inclusion, but also makes a significant contribution to the businesses and jobs that rely on our visitor economy. . The NSW Government is proud to support the Parade, which will again be a powerful and colourful celebration of pride, joy and inclusivity that also helps shape the cultural vibrancy of our city."

From celebrating milestones to collective self-expression and strength, here are some of the highlights of the 2026 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade:

- Yamurrah: 'Mother Earth; YOU Better Werk' – Yamurrah's float centres Blak queer voices, linking pride and protest through a powerful statement on Country, climate and cultural responsibility.

- Trans Pride Australia: 'Trans Joy - A Decade of Light' - Celebrating ten years in the Parade, this float reflects on a decade of change, marking the journey from struggle to visibility and shared strength for the trans community.

- Fruits from Brazil: 'The Mouse's Rapture' – A political allegory responding to the rise of the extreme far right, this float uses the "big cat" and the "mouse" to contrast manipulation and fear with collective resistance and solidarity.

- Autism Spectrum Australia: 'The Neurodivergent Rainbow – UNMASKED' – A masquerade-inspired float celebrating autistic LGBTQIA+ people and the freedom to unmask and be yourself.

- The Fabulous Queer Upcyclers: 'ECSTATICA – Gather, Dream, Amplify' – Using reclaimed feathers and upcycled materials, this float turns fashion waste into bold, gender-fluid looks that centre sustainability and queer creativity.

This year's Parade is proudly supported once again by Canva, awarding 14 grants to community groups and individuals whose parade entries make a meaningful contribution to the LGBTQIA+



community.

The funding supports a wide range of participation costs, including travel, rehearsals, float production, costumes and construction materials, helping ensure the Mardi Gras Parade continues to reflect the diversity, pride and passion of the community it celebrates. Canva award winners include: Australian Asexuals, Autism Spectrum Australia, Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, Queer Roller Derby, Sydney Gaymers, Trans Pride Australia and more.

The Parade will be broadcast live on ABC for those watching from home, bringing the spectacle to audiences nationwide.

On the ground, [Glitter Club](#) will provide a premium Parade viewing experience in the heart of Taylor Square, offering exclusive vantage points from a raised viewing deck, dedicated bars, curated food, private toilets and live entertainment headlined by DJ Dan Murphy and Estée Louder (Jess Hill) — tickets are limited with final release only available at \$169.99 + booking fees.

A free [Accessible Parade Viewing Area](#) will also be available on Flinders Street, providing seating, accessible facilities, a Quiet Room and live audio description. Registrations closed.

For further information, visit: mardigras.org.au/event/parade or download the official Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras app for live updates.

Timothee Luong

Original Spin

timothee@originalspin.com.au

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