

FLOTSAM.

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MEDIA RELEASE

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All-new FLOTSAM surf film and photography festival set to launch on the Gold Coast 1-8 May, 2022.

The inaugural Flotsam Festival will stage a pilot in May, becoming the first locally-grown Gold Coast festival to open since restrictions have lifted for the city.

Flotsam, a film and photography celebration exploring the creative side of surf culture, will take over spaces across the southern Gold Coast in early May with a mix of short pop-up film installations, photography exhibitions, movie screenings, workshops and photo meets.

With Covid-19 restrictions hampering trade and events in the Gold Coast's southern border region for the past two years, Flotsam is a commitment to better days to come. The festival aims to help the southern Gold Coast bounce back while showcasing the area's unique surf culture, world-class waves, and abundant creative talent – many of whom were disproportionately affected by rolling lockdowns.

During the festival, a unique stay and play mechanism will be employed whereby 50% of passes to select premium ticketed events will be offered to patrons who stay overnight during the festival within designated southern Gold Coast parameters, postcodes 4223, 4224, and 4225. Titled 'Ticket Per Day Per Stay,' the program will encourage visitors eager to engage with creative experiences to book extended stays in the region.

The festival will also host free events, including a self-paced photo tour taking in reproductions of iconic surf images positioned back into the locations they were captured. Titled Flotsam: Focal Point, this series of ten installations will stretch along the Oceanway between Kirra and Point Danger. Outdoor film evenings, international curated surf shorts, and group photo exhibitions are just some of the other events teased to be announced when the full pilot program is unveiled in coming weeks.

The festival pilot commenced development after organisers were awarded a Creative Tourism grant through Gold Coast City Council. Major Events Gold Coast, recognising the festival's potential to attract international audiences through its highly visual, innovative programming, also supports the project.

“Surfing is in our city’s DNA so to host this eclectic festival is a fantastic opportunity for the creative side of surf culture to be explored,” says Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate. “I applaud organisers and Major Events Gold Coast for attracting such a great story-telling event for the Goldie.”

“The Gold Coast is quickly building a reputation as a cultural events destination with a host of fantastic art, music and film festivals, and the Flotsam Festival is an exciting addition to our calendar of events,” says Major Events Gold Coast CEO Jan McCormick. “We’re always happy to support new events like this that not only celebrate Australia’s talented filmmakers and photographers, but also bring new visitors to the city to enjoy the festival and our beautiful surfing mecca.”

Although 2022 will be the inaugural festival pilot, there's a wealth of proven talent behind Flotsam with the common goal to create a major international event for the southern Gold Coast. The festival concept was devised by local content production company, Soul Arch Media, while the festival is being presented by newly-formed Flotsam Arts Inc, a coalition of local artists from surf media and event logistic management backgrounds.

Peter Joli Wilson, one of surf photography’s most recognised figures with a career spanning over 40 years, and internationally-acclaimed ocean photographer **Trent Mitchell**, will be assisting the festival’s photo program. Three-time Surfing Australia Hall of Fame Culture Award winner, **Tim Baker**, will curate the Flotsam Focal Point Exhibition. Flotsam’s head of film content, **Dave Emge**, will be curating films alongside **Simon Saffigna**, who has been documenting Gold Coast’s highest profile surfers since his teens, producing more than 10 films, a TV series, and winning over 10 Surfer Magazine Poll awards.

Over thirty high caliber artists will have their work showcased during the festival. By engaging key world-renowned local professional creatives and festival partners, Flotsam aims to develop and deliver creative visual storytelling elements in the form of cinema, workshops, photography exhibitions and exhibits that offer an insight into the art of surfing.

Festival Director, Carolyn Ridings Emge, is adamant that Flotsam is both timely and warranted. In the short term, the festival aims to support artists, lift spirits, and boost local business. In the long term, the goal is to raise the area's profile as an international creative hotspot. "In the lead up to Brisbane 2032, we're aiming to build a platform that communicates our enviable coastal lifestyle through imagery and film that allows us to showcase our authentic, inimitable surf roots while highlighting the destination's wealth of creative talent," says Emge.

Flotsam Festival runs 1-8 May 2022 across various southern Gold Coast venues. Tickets will be available via Oztix and the festival website, flotsamfestival.com.au (website coming soon)

ABOUT FLOTSAM ARTS

Flotsam surf film and photography festival will ignite spaces across the southern Gold Coast in early May with a mix of pop up short film installations, photography exhibitions, movie screenings, workshops and photo meets aiming to explore the creative side of surf culture.



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Flotsam Arts