



Australian High Commission

Vanuatu

6 October 2022

Media Release

Australian Aboriginal Artist Fred Leone to perform at Fest'Napuan



Fred Leone

Fred Leone, an Australian Aboriginal, Tongan, Vanuatu and South-Sea Islander artist will be performing in Vanuatu for the first time at Fest'Napuan 2022.

Leone is a respected community leader in Australia. He and his family come from the Garawa and Butchulla tribes (from the Northern Territory and K'gari island off the coast of Queensland respectively). Through his South Sea Islander heritage, Fred has links to Tannese communities in Vanuatu.

Fred's Great Grandfather was blackbirded from Tanna Island with the name Tanna becoming his family's last name. His Great Great Grandfather was blackbirded from Gela Island in the Solomons.

Leone is one of the Butchulla Songmen, a language custodian, and a ground-breaking, award-winning artist who works across genres and mediums to bring a distinctly original voice to his performances and recordings. He is the founder of Queensland's first Indigenous Australian owned and operated record label, Impossible Odds Records.



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In 2013, Leone performed at Fest'Napuan as a member of the Singaot Musik Kamp and will now be on stage as a solo artist in 2022.

Leone says: "To be able to perform at Fest'Napuan means so much to me because of my family connection to Tanna.

"I can't wait to share my stories and music with Port Vila and the audience from all over Vanuatu and the Pacific who attend the festival."

He has toured as a featured artist with the internationally acclaimed Black Arm Band in Canada, China, Malaysia, Brazil, the UK and Australia and presented solo theatre works in the UK. Saralana Park in Port Vila, Vanuatu will be Leone's first performance in the Pacific.

Alongside his artistic output and responsibilities as a Butchulla Songman, Leone is one of Australia's leading arts workers and a tireless champion of Indigenous rights. He sits on the board of the Australian Live Music Business Council and is a current member of the Indigenous Advisory Group for the National Indigenous Music Awards.

Leone arrived in Vanuatu on Thursday 6 October with his manager, Jordan Verzar of Top Shelf Productions. The Australian High Commission in Vanuatu is supporting Leone's participation in Fest'Napuan 2022.

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