

GOVERNMENT SEEKS PRIVATE OPERATOR FOR PARRAMATTA FERRY

Premier Nathan Rees called for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from private operators to run a commuter ferry service between Parramatta and the CBD. Mr Rees said that the Parramatta community have made it clear that they want a commuter ferry service to the City.

"This is an important step in making that a reality," Mr Rees said. "Parramatta is a major Western Sydney hub and we want a reliable commuter service established on this route. "The off-peak services currently run by Sydney Ferries are just not enough. "That's why we are going to the open market to find an operator that can provide a reliable commuter service.

"Interested private operators will need to have vessels appropriate for the Parramatta River, a track record in providing ferry services and staff to

deliver commuter services in the AM and PM peak." Transport Minister David Campbell and Member for Parramatta Tanya Gadiel joined the Premier at the Parramatta Ferry Wharf.

Mr Campbell said a key aspect of the EOI was for private operators to show that they can provide a peak hour ferry service in both directions between Parramatta and the CBD in less than 55 minutes.

"The current service just isn't working because of the shallowness of the upper Parramatta River," Mr Campbell said. "That's why we are calling on operators with more appropriate vessels to come forward with an alternative approach.

"It's important to understand that vessel technology has moved on since the RiverCats were first introduced 15 years ago, and there would now be a better choice for the river. "Once we have a clearer

understanding of the types of vessels the private sector has to operate in the sensitive conditions of the upper Parramatta River we can move quickly to establish the commuter service."

Parramatta MP Tanya Gadiel said this was a great step forward in delivering a commuter ferry service for the people of Parramatta.

"I have been calling for this service for a long time with the support of the community and the thousands of people who signed my "Keep our Boat Afloat" petition," Ms Gadiel said.

"The NSW Government is listening to local communities and working hard to deliver better services." Mr Rees said that If there is interest from the private sector the Government will go to tender in March next year for a commuter service between Parramatta and the CBD.

2008 CRC Voluntary Awards announced on Wednesday

The winners of the 2008 CRC Voluntary Awards were announced at a ceremony in Parliament House Sydney (in the Strangers Lounge) at 10.00 am on WEDNESDAY December 3, by Ms Virginia Judge, the Minister for Citizenship and Minister for Fair Trading.

There were nominations for the four categories.

- 2008 CRC Volunteer of the Year
- 2008 CRC Community Service Award
- 2008 CRC Young Volunteer Award
- 200 CRC Lifetime Achievement in Community Sector

Volunteering is a key strategy of the NSW Government's State Plan to develop community harmony.

The Chair of the Community Relations Commission Stepan Kerkyasharian says:

"Volunteers are at the heart of everything in our society. The NSW State Plan recognises the important link between community harmony and volunteering and has, therefore, placed great importance on increased participation by members of immigrant communities in public life.

"The Community Relations Commission believes that promoting and facilitating the involvement of ethnic communities in broader community activities will contribute greatly to a harmonious society

"CRC Awards for Volunteering seek out those members of the community who have given outstanding voluntary service to their fellow citizens over the previous twelve months and highlight the contribution to community welfare made by members of migrant communities".

in Sydney for the very first time....
Cretan masters of lyra and lute

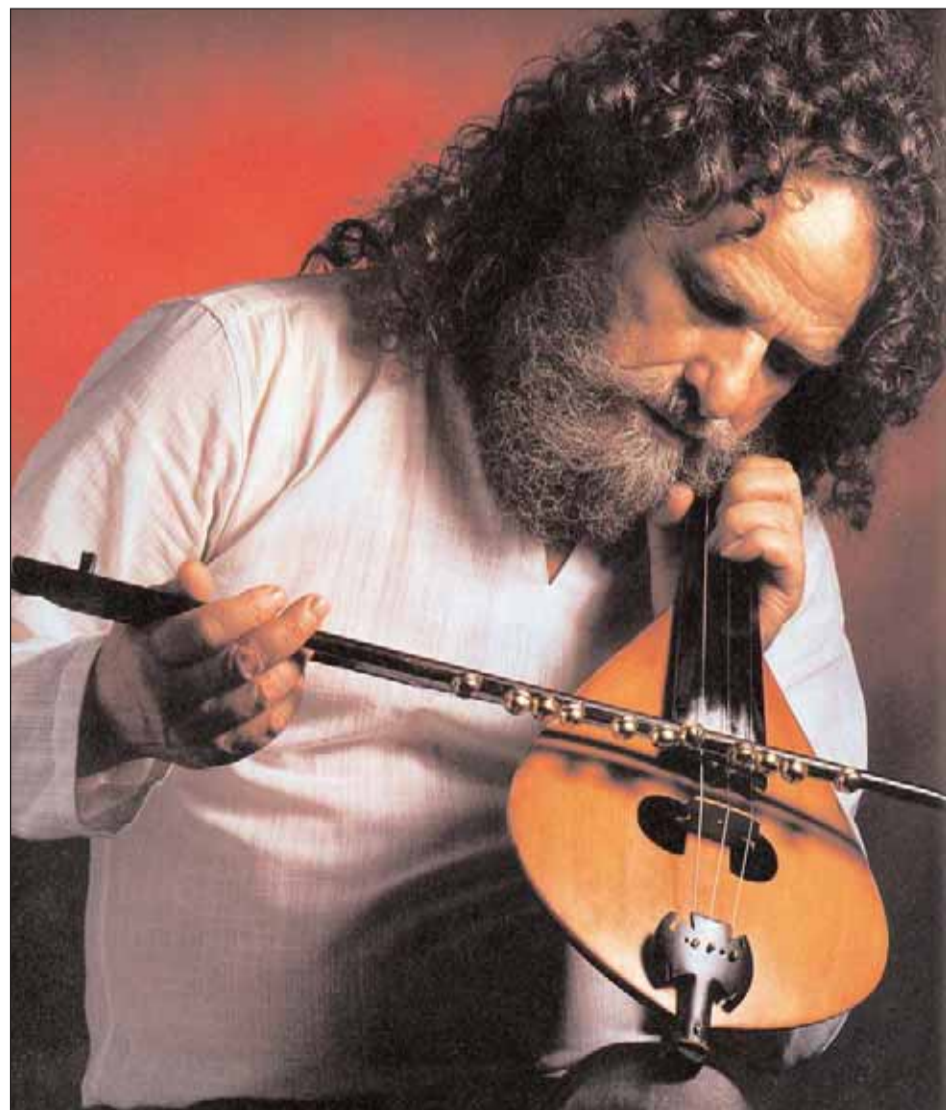
Psarandonis with Giorgos Xylouris Friday 16 January, 8pm

The Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre is honoured to host what promises to be one of the premier concerts of the year when Cretan traditional music superstar Psarandonis, (in his first ever Sydney concert) takes to the stage of the Joan on Friday 16 January at 8pm.

Psarandonis comes from a rich musical background in a land where myth and history are one. He is one of Crete's leading lyra players and is by far the most experimental. A master of dynamics and variation, his repertoire draws on a large body of traditional music as well as his own songs. He is one of the world's leading exponents of rembetika music, a Greek style that emerged in the middle of the last century as an underground, subversive musical form more akin to the blues, than rock & roll.

A senior member of the formidable Xylouris family, renowned musicians from the Cretan mountain village of Anogeia, Psarandonis is the younger brother of the late Nikos Xylouris an inspiring figure in the Greek resistance to fascism. The village of Anogeia has bred many musicians and has created and maintained for centuries an exciting tradition of dance, music and song.

Psarandonis is regarded as a master of the lyra, a traditional Cretan folk instrument that he has played since the age of 13 (he is now 65).



Psarandonis (born Antonis Xylouris) is also noted for the unique timbre of his singing voice. Psarandonis interprets traditional pieces expressively and continually changes them, so that each interpretation is unique to his style. He is a master of simplicity and deconstruction. His sound is timeless, drawing as it does on the past and reaching into the future.

Also appearing is the Xylouris fam-

ily's master of the lute (and Psarandonis' son) Giorgos Xylouris - a renowned instrumentalist and singer in his own right, who provides the rhythms we associate immediately with Greek dancing and virtuoso melodies. An unmissable event for all world music lovers! Bookings essential - phone the Box office on 4723-7600 or go to: www.jspac.com.au