
electric gardens festival 2018

The second installment of Sydney's electro bash festival descended again in the lush surrounds of Sydney's Centennial Parklands, an idyllic location and arguably one of the best inner-city festival sites in New South Wales, featuring formal gardens, ponds, grand avenues, statues, heritage buildings, sporting fields and a diverse flora and fauna that make it an ideal backdrop for the three stages and the diverse artists that Electric Gardens hosted in 2018: Local group DIGITAL THERAPY presented a stage situated in an indoor tent featuring some of more prominent names on the progressive scene of the last three decades: Sasha with his peerless command of dance floor sensibilities and his skilful exploration of beatless soundscapes; Hernan Cattaneo, who performed at Electric Gardens for the second time, took us on a complex voyage through genres, emotions and sounds; Eelke Kleijn heavy on anthemic floor fillers and Tel Aviv based Guy Mantzur, co-owner of the Munich-based label Plattenbank, weaved his hypnotic melodies to a carpet that invited to space out on.

The CODE techno arena returned with Hot Creations as well as its sub-labels Emerald City and Hottrax boss Jamie Jones at the helm, channeling his iconic sound that paved the way for a warmer, more melodic, deeper side of techno to emerge. &ME delivered his signature blend of Techno and soulful House and Brazilian born and Barcelona based ANNA had the dance floor moving with her seductive yet heavy-hitting brand of techno and tech-house. The MIXMAG main stage held the integral house heavyweight Mark Knight bouncing from genre to genre, invoking feels ranging from tropical via frenetic and at times just letting it rip by pulling on the audience's guilty pleasures, knocking out a thumping set of house, tech and progressive.

British electronic dance duo Basement Jaxx brought the big beats to the House (see what I did there?) and focused on what they do best: Fueling and providing the soundtrack to party. It would have been a nice addition to the festival to see them in their element with a full blown, colourful regular production of theirs as with a traditional DJ set it is hard to compete with the wacky costumes, exotic dancers and overall fun carnival that makes their performances fun.

Swedish headline act Eric Prydz returned to Australian shores for the first time in three years. Being both one of the world's most in demand underground spinners and producers of house tracks of the last decade, he took on the spot that in 2016 was reserved for Fatboy Slim. Prydz operates three labels, each of which serving as a launch pad for his own diverse productions, which he releases under pseudonyms, e.g. Cirez D under which he channels his more traditional techno emissions, the more melodic Pryda imprint focusing more on the fusion of hooks and bass lines and the hard edged Mouseville Records. His performance which was informed by all three streams of his creative sources once again underlined the breadth of his

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oeuvre that goes far beyond of what he is known for to the mainstream with his commercially most successful dance anthem “Call on me”. His performance was framed and accentuated by a light show that would have made Albert Speer proud as the lasers built a dome of light.

With a refined approach, Electric Gardens has done it again: A great, diverse festival in a fantastic location based on conscious effort to provide a great experience to a diverse crowd.

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