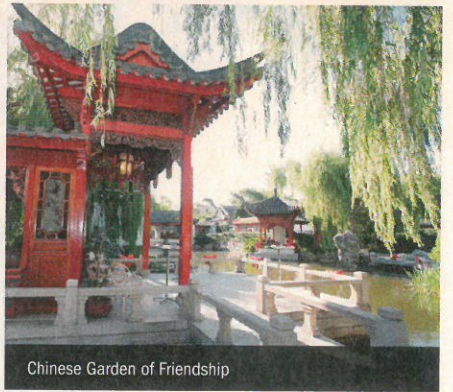




Dixon Street, Haymarket



Cinema Alley



Chinese Garden of Friendship

The great outdoors

Summer has finely arrived, so make the most of the fine weather – it might be fleeting – and head outside for talks, tours, theatre and art this month. **By Stuart Holmes**

Cinema Alley: Double Vision

4A, the awesome contemporary Asian gallery-cum-performance space in Chinatown, is once again producing its annual outdoor cinema event. And this time, much of the programme is in double-vision.

Cinema Alley, a temporary screening space in Haymarket's Parker Street, has been popping up for the last three years to show video art and contemporary films relating to Asian culture. The twist this year is that alongside the single-channel screenings, there'll also be a line-up of two-channel works, which will be shown on two screens simultaneously. Here, images will be layered and synthesised into new meanings to create an unconventional cinematic experience.

The unique event will be the perfect way to usher in the Year of the Dragon as the precinct celebrates Chinese New Year. Bookings essential. Parker St, Haymarket 2000. (www.4a.com.au/cinema-alley-2012). Fri 3 Feb, 7pm. **FREE**.

Chinese New Year tours

Continuing on theme, landscape architect Peter Nowland will give an architectural talk explaining the significance of the tranquil Chinese Garden of Friendship. Nowland will discuss the design and history of the popular tourist attraction and explain the challenges that lie ahead in maintaining its beauty. *Chinese Garden of Friendship, Darling Harbour 2000*. (www.darlingharbour.com). Wed 1 Feb, 2pm. \$3-\$6 (includes garden entry).

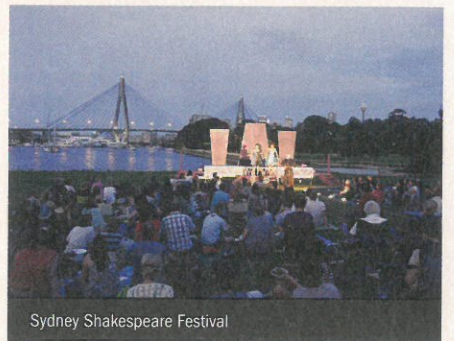
You can also discover Chinatown's hidden past during a series of informative and entertaining Chinese New Year tours run by the Haymarket Chamber of Commerce. Learn the history of one of Sydney's most eye-catching precincts, and gain insights on the people and cultures that shaped it. *Tour will depart from McDonald's, Harbour St, Sydney 2000*. (www.sydneychinesenewyear.com). Until 4 Feb, 10.30am-12.30pm. Gold coin donation; optional Yum Cha \$18pp.

Sydney Shakespeare Festival

"This most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire..." Hamlet's words might equally apply to Bicentennial Park on a good evening. Glebe's waterside park is currently the living set for two of the Bard's most-loved works, which are performed on alternate evenings.

Raucous battle of the sexes *The Taming of the Shrew* is our pick for family-friendly fun, while epic tragedy *Hamlet* will be the go if you're after more heavy-hitting fare packed with famous quotations.

The festival's talented cast will be under the direction of Julie Baz, who has been heavily involved in the event since it started five years ago. With spectacular views of the harbour and city skyline, the park also presents itself as a homage of sorts to the open-air Globe Theatre in London where many of Shakespeare's plays had their first performances. Sessions are BYO, so pack a picnic and a blanket, pour yourself a drink, relax and be entertained. *Bicentennial Park, 2a Chapman Rd, Glebe Foreshore, Annandale 2038*. (www.sydneyshakespearefestival.com.au). Until 12 Feb. Thu-Sun, 8pm. \$17-\$29; free for children under 12, those 65 and over, and people with disabilities.



Sydney Shakespeare Festival