



Mona curator Nicole Durling at installation artist Ryoji Ikeda's *Supersymmetry*. Picture: SAM ROSEWARNE

The Dark arts to light up city as winter Mofo festival hits Hobart

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IT is cold, it is wet, and there are thousands of tourists wandering around Hobart — it must be Dark Mofo time.

The Museum of Old and New Art's fourth annual winter festival is in full swing, with several events last night marking the official start of the 11-day "maelstrom of cultural pandemonium", which features large-scale public art, food, film, music, light and noise.

Last night's opening of the Dark Park art playground at Macquarie Point; the unveiling of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's new major exhibition *Tempest*; and sold-out opening night concert at MAC2 were just the start of a packed program that includes 59 events and 420 artists.

In just three years, Dark Mofo has become Tasmania's most popular annual event, attracting about 280,000 people to events last year alone.

Festival organisers are bracing for record crowds, with creative director Leigh Carmichael confirming that ticket sales were up on previous years. "We're sitting

at close to 90 per cent of our box office target now, which is absolutely huge — we're well ahead," he said.

"Our interstate visitation was about 30 per cent last year and it's 40 per cent this year, so we can assume that numbers are well up. I'd say there's probably a few thousand more interstaters coming."

Visitors and locals alike are set to flock to events like the Funeral Party gothic gala ball at Turnbull Family Funerals on June 16; the hugely popular City of Hobart Dark Mofo Winter Feast at Princes Wharf, Castray Esplanade and the Salamanca Lawns from June 15-19; and concerts by the likes of Savages, Chelsea Wolfe and Olympia. The festival will conclude with the traditional Nude Swim at Sandy Bay.

Art and science smash head-on in the latest hi-tech work by Japanese audiovisual artist Ryoji Ikeda, which was switched on at Mona yesterday.

The latest addition to the museum's permanent collection, Supersymmetry was the result of Ikeda's 2014-15 residency at CERN, home of the Large Hadron Collider.

It deals with particle physics, space-time symmetry, helium atoms and other concepts that are difficult to explain but make for spectacular art when handled by Ikeda — the man behind the much-loved Spectra vertical light beam that lit up the inaugural Dark Mofo in 2013.

"I'm a composer and musician, and I've composed with time and space and data," the usually media-shy Ikeda explained.

"When you listen to music, you don't question the meaning of the melody. You don't understand music, you just feel and experience it. And this is very much like that — everyone must have their own experience of it."

Ikeda will give a live musical performance, Supercodex, at MAC2 tonight. Tickets have sold out.

For bookings go to www.darkmofo.net.au