



Photo: Zan Wimberley

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Pope Alice announced as Patron Saint of Dark Mofo 2021

Mona's winter festival Dark Mofo 2021 has today announced the festival's Patron Saint, Her Divine Holiness Pope Alice, an enigmatic alien figure embodied by Australian performance artist Luke Roberts over the past four decades.

Across five nights in Hobart this June, Pope Alice, manifesting as Santa Alicia, will engage audiences in two inclusive, participatory, and ritualistic performances each evening, joined by a cavalcade of performers and followed by late-night DJs.

Pope Alice's arena will be Dark Mofo's new temporary venue X-Cathedra (In The Hanging Garden's Cathedral), transformed into a place of ceremony and celebration.

Arriving in Her papal *odong-odong* parade, Pope Alice/Santa Alicia involves ‘the congregation’ in ‘The Chariot of the Gods at Twilight’ with the opening performance, and ‘The Dream of the Caterpillar’ in the closing performance each evening.

“To be proclaimed Dark Mofos Patron Saint, and be a supernal guide through Winter Solstice darkness - so close to Antarctica - is a great honour,” **Her Divine Holiness Pope Alice said.**

“Each evening the Divine Sparkle in all is acknowledged to celebrate the coming of the Light, Rebirth and Transformation; Cosmic Order restored. Our entreaty, ‘Open your Minds, Open your Eyes, Open your Hearts. Your time as a caterpillar has expired. Your wings are ready,” She said.

First channeled by Roberts in the 1970s, Her Divine Holiness Pope Alice is Roberts’ alternative-pontiff persona; a long-term extraterrestrial visitor offering a unique spin on themes of spirituality, sexuality, and hidden human history.

In the 1990s, Roberts became a key figure in the queer-art movement, and Pope Alice became a staple of Sydney’s annual Mardi Gras. Through Pope Alice, Roberts has contested the Catholicism in which he was raised (particularly its hostility to homosexuality), while reveling in its pomp and paraphernalia.

“Pope Alice, Mythology Personified, has guided me through significant stages lifting the holographic Veil of Illusions,” **Luke Roberts said.**

“Her Mission to Planet Earth and Her Presence here highlight the vexing questions; Are we alone? Have we ever been alone? As Pope Alice observes, ‘Planet Earth is the cosmological equivalent of a provincial town’. Sometimes it is necessary to laugh to learn the truth,” he said.

Pope Alice has created a substantial catalogue of artwork and events throughout Australia and internationally over the past four decades, including MoMA PS1, New York, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, Singapore Art Fair, El Museo del Barrio, New York, 2nd Asia-Pacific Triennial, Brisbane, 13th Biennale of Sydney, The British School at Rome, The National 2019, Sydney, Art Gallery of New South Wales, National Gallery of Victoria, and Renia Sofia, Madrid, among many others.

Pope Alice Close Encounters at Dark Mofos 2021

Wednesday 16 June–Sunday 20 June, performances between 5pm–10pm

X-Cathedra, 112 Murray St, Hobart, Tasmania, Free entry (subject to capacity).

www.darkmofos.net.au

www.popealice.com

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Images

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/156156674@N03/1e5H49>

Video

Compilation video of Pope Alice Encounters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7hbTLtKwzY>

40 years of Pope Alice: Luke Roberts & Dr Laini Burton In Conversation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEBmsbAn2aY>

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