Carrying the Fire

Written audio description for deaf and hard-of-hearing visitors.
Saturday 7 November 2026 | Emu Point to Binalup (Middleton Beach), Kinjarling (Albany).

About this written audio description

This written audio description tells you what you will see at *Carrying the Fire* and what the sound is doing, from the moment you arrive to the end of the event. It is written in plain English for anyone who is Deaf, hard of hearing or has hearing loss.

- Part 1 sets the scene: the place, the sound, the people and the lanterns. Read it before the night.
- Part 2 describes the performance moment by moment. Each moment tells you what you see and what the sound is doing. “Watch for” notes link a sound to something you can see, so you can follow along on the beach.
- Lantern Bearers: your phone sits in your lantern during the show, so read this description before the night.
- All times are approximate.

Part 1: Setting the scene

Welcome

Carrying the Fire is a free night of light on Menang Country, and the final chapter of Albany 2026. Estimated 2,000 people carry handmade lanterns along almost four kilometres of beach, from Emu Point to Binalup (Middleton Beach). Together, we create one moving river of light.

The whole artwork asks one question: **What do we carry into our shared future?**

The place

The performance takes place on the beaches that run between Emu Point and Binalup (Middleton Beach). The beach is long and gently curving, with pale sand and low dunes behind it.

At the Middleton Beach end is Ellen Cove. Here, a concrete footpath and a boardwalk run along the foreshore and a jetty reaches out into the water. The main stage stands at Ellen Cove, where the finale happens.

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The sound

Sound, light and movement are linked. When the sound changes, the lights and the people change too. This means you can follow the whole performance with your eyes.

- **Soundtrack:** A soundtrack created for *Carrying the Fire* plays through speakers along the beach for the whole performance.

- **Lights:** An app on each phone switches the lantern lights on and off. Your lantern lights up automatically, right on cue. Hundreds of children carry sea star lanterns that are lit by hand held torches. These lights stay on throughout the performance.

- **Movement:** Lantern Leaders guide every movement. They are wearing white jumpers with an orange and yellow flower on the back. Watch your nearest Lantern Leader and when they gesture to you, move when they move.

- **Vibration:** Some sounds are deep and strong. Near a speaker, you may feel them through your body and the sand.

- **Spoken words:** A Welcome to Country and speeches take place at 6:30pm. The performance opens at 7pm with an Acknowledgement of Country. The Acknowledgement to Country is spoken in many different languages by local people. It represents the many different cultures of the many different people that call Albany home.

The people

- **Lantern Leaders:** Around 150 trained volunteers, standing about every 30 metres along the beach, path and boardwalk. They help to shape the artwork and guide everyone through it.

- **Lantern Bearers:** Estimated 2,000 community members, each carrying a handmade lantern lit by a phone torch or hand held torch. An app switches every phone light on and off, right on cue.

- **On stage at the finale:** A single male dancer performs a rhythmic solo that prepares the stage for fire. Fire performers, a Menang girl named Djorna and her grandmother, Elders, the Mayor, Whadjuk representatives and State Government representatives all arrive on the stage for a handover ceremony of a banksia seedpod lantern (biyarra) that symbolises the care that the community of Albany wishes to pass onto the people of Western Australia

The lanterns

Every lantern is made by hand, in kitchens, classrooms, sheds and workshops across the Great Southern. The designs draw on symbols of Menang Country, chosen with community and Elders.

With your lantern, you carry the fire. You carry your connection to this place and your hopes for our future. Explore how you can carry the fire **through Country, into our homes, across seas, into spirit and beyond time.**

Inspired by the people, animals and plants of this place, these symbols are invitations for contemplation, learning and reflection.

Through Country | Biyarra / Banksia

A symbol of resilience, the biyarra / banksia was traditionally used by Noongar people to carry fire from camp to camp. The embers of the burning banksia nut were kept alive under a booka, a kangaroo skin cloak, and sustained life through the movements of the seasons.

The biyarra / banksia lantern recognises the first way of carrying the fire through Country. When we light our biyarra lantern, we carry the fire of knowledge and life into our future.

Reflection question: *How do you care for Country and the natural world?*

Into Our Homes | Kwornt / Koornt

The kwornt / koornt is a traditional Noongar shelter, created with natural materials, shifting with the changing seasons. All of us, no matter where we come from, use materials from the natural world to build our homes, creating warmth and shelter and a place for loved ones to gather together.

By creating the kwornt lantern, we recognise the first forms of shelter on this Country and all the forms of home that have been created since.

Reflection question: *What creates a sense of home?*

Across Seas | Sea Star

A symbol of regeneration, the sea star can regrow lost and broken limbs as long as part of the central disc remains intact. By creating the sea star lantern, we see our own capacity to regenerate, regrow and expand. When we light our sea star lantern, we see reflections of the skies and the oceans, showing us how vast our world can be.

Reflection question: *What keeps you strong when things change?*

Into Spirit | Moodjar / Christmas Tree

The moodjar tree, also known as the Western Australian Christmas Tree, is a plant native to South-West Western Australia that blooms with vibrant orange flowers at the end of the year. The moodjar tree is very special for Noongar people. Many Menang Noongar people believe it is where spirits rest on their journey to Kuranup, the sacred place where the spirits of their people return to the Dreaming.

By carrying the moodjar, we honour the special spiritual connection that exists between Menang people and the Country. We also remember those who have gone before us, lighting the way forward. We are all moving through the cycles of life and death, carrying the fire to light the way.

Reflection question: *Who are you remembering as you carry your lantern?*

Beyond Time | Tidelines

Tidelines capture a moment in time, offering pathways into past, present and future. As we walk the shorelines, we see rhythms of arrivals and departures, moments of time marked in the sand and then washed away.

Carried by the tide, water holds the memories of our many histories, pasts and possibilities for the future.

Reflection question: *Can your lantern capture a special moment in your life?*

You can make your own lantern at a free workshop with Southern Edge Arts before the night or download instructions for their website (southernedge.org.au/carryingthefire) and make your own at home.

Where to watch

- For a clear view of the main stage, watch from Ellen Cove, between the Albany Surf Life Saving Club and the Middleton Beach Amphitheatre.
- Zone A at Ellen Cove and Middleton Beach is our most accessible zone. It has footpaths, beach matting and extra accessible (ACROD) parking bays for ACROD permit holders next to the Albany Surf Life Saving Club.
- When you register, select “smooth path”. We will direct you to Zone A and the concrete path along the Ellen Cove foreshore.
- A short stretch of beach matting sits on the sand in front of the Albany Surf Life Saving Club.
- Hearing dogs, guide dogs and other assistance animals are welcome.
- Toilets are at the Albany Surf Life Saving Club.
- From 4pm, Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park at Emu Point have food, a live DJ and lawn games. Ellen Cove also has market stalls. The DJ music may be loud, with a strong beat you can feel.
- From 4pm to 6:30pm, Albany Golf Course has a free sausage sizzle or free ice cream, one per person, while stocks last. Pick up a ticket from our info marquee to redeem at your vendor of choice.
- A shuttle bus runs from the Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre to Emu Point (Zone E) and Albany Golf Course (Zones C and D). Overflow parking is at Eyre Park, and at the southern end of Albany Golf Course from Wollaston Road.
- A drone films the performance from above. You may see it in the sky.
- Spring nights on the coast are cold and windy. Wear warm clothes and good walking shoes.

If you are a Lantern Bearer

- At the start of the night, let your Lantern Leader know you are Deaf or hard of hearing. They can help you find a spot with a clear view of them.
- Your lantern lights up by itself. The app does this for you. The download link for the app is emailed to you 10 days before the event. Make sure you register at southernedge.org.au/carryingthefire to receive this link.
- There are three main moves: hold your lantern straight out in front with two hands, lift it quickly to the sky and lower it slowly, and turn slowly on the spot. Your Lantern Leader shows you each move. Repeat this three times in total.
- Next, follow your Leader to make circles and squiggly lines along the beach.
- In an emergency, follow the directions of Lantern Leaders and event staff.

Key times

- **4pm:** Food, live DJ and lawn games at Ellen Cove and Firth Street Park, Emu Point
- **4pm to 6:30pm:** Free sausage sizzle or ice cream at Albany Golf Course, while stocks last
- **6:30pm:** Welcome to Country and speeches at the main stage, Ellen Cove
- **7pm:** The performance begins and runs for about 37 minutes
- **7:45pm:** DJ and after party at Ellen Cove and Emu Point
- **9pm:** Event ends

FORM

Part 2: The performance, moment by moment

The performance lasts about 37 minutes. It moves from twilight into night, and from stillness into a river of moving light. Each moment tells you what you see and what the sound is doing.

1. Acknowledgement of Country. 7pm.

The beach is still. Lantern Leaders and Lantern Bearers stand quietly in their groups along the sand and the paths, their lanterns dark. Above the water, the sky holds the last soft light of the day, pale at the horizon and blue above.

What the sound is doing: an Acknowledgement of Country is shared across the beach, it is spoken in the many different languages of people who call Albany home today.

Watch for: everyone standing still while it is shared.

2. The arrival of fire. About 7:03pm.

In front of the crowd, the beach is open and empty: a wide band of pale sand running down to the water's edge. Thousands of people stand along the beach and paths, looking out to the ocean. Waves roll in and break in long white lines.

What the sound is doing: music begins and slowly builds. It feels deep and ancient, carrying the strength of the Porongurup, the granite range inland from Albany.

3. The first lights

Lantern Leaders walk out onto the sand and take their places along the beach, one every 30 metres. They stand still. Then a single light glows. Then another. A few more. Then many, scattered along the coast.

What the sound is doing: light, airy and misty, with twinkling sounds and moments of deep strength underneath. This moment honours what moves beneath Country, through the headlands (kaart) and the granite. It asks: can we be as patient as granite?

Watch for: the first Lantern Leader lights. The airy sound plays as they appear.

4. The Moodjar Flower dance. About 3 minutes.

The Lantern Leaders dance the Moodjar Flower. Each leader moves in their own time, and together they move as one long line along the coast. Their dance reflects the life cycles of plants and growth, and flows like the ocean moving in and out. Light glows inside each flower, reflecting off the petals off the Moodjar Flower like small fires calling across the dark.

What the sound is doing: a calling. The sound brings to mind Ancestors and spirits, campfires, smoke and food cooking in light rain. The music builds in strength, as the feeling of inner fire grows inside each Lantern Leader.

5. The Lantern Bearers arrive. About 1 minute.

Guided by the Lantern Leaders, thousands of Lantern Bearers walk down onto the sand and make their way to the water's edge. They form one long line along the shoreline, facing the ocean. Lanterns blink on in scattered patches, here, then there, until a line of light runs along the edge of the sea.

What the sound is doing: voices can be heard calling low and gentle to the Lantern Bearers, bringing them to the shoreline.

Your part as a Lantern Bearer: walk with your group to the shoreline and face the ocean.

6. Preparing the fire. About 10 seconds.

The line is still. Every Lantern Bearer holds their lantern straight out in front with two hands, arms reaching towards the sea. The line of light holds steady.

What the sound is doing: deep sounds from the Porongurup, like a calling from the granite.

Your part as a Lantern Bearer: hold your lantern straight out with two hands, ready to lift.

7. Lighting up. About 7:11pm.

The sky deepens to blue. Every lantern on the beach glows at once: one unbroken ribbon of light, tracing the coast.

What the sound is doing: the sound falls away into quiet.

Watch for: every lantern glowing at once. This marks the quiet moment.

Your part as a Lantern Bearer: keep holding your lantern out in front and wait.

8. The fire builds. About 3 minutes.

Together, the Lantern Bearers lift their lanterns quickly towards the sky, then lower them slowly. Up, and down. Six times. Along the whole coast, the ribbon of light rises and falls together.

Then the Bearers turn slowly on the spot, two or three times, their lanterns sweeping circles of light, until they stand with their backs to the ocean, facing the dunes. The lifts and turns repeat three times. On each set of turns, every lantern on the beach pulses.

What the sound is doing: each set of lifts and turns has its own sound.

- **First lifts:** a deep boom, like granite
- **First turns:** fire sounds and a rising note
- **Second lifts:** a pause in the music
- **Second turns:** a big, emotional melody
- **Third lifts:** the music reaches its peak
- **Third turns:** a wavering, warbling sound

Watch for: the first lifts. They match the first deep boom.

Your part as a Lantern Bearer: lift fast on 1, lower slowly on 2, 3, 4, six times. Turn slowly two or three times, finishing with your back to the ocean. Repeat the whole sequence three times in total. Your Lantern Leader sets the timing.

9. Concentration of intent. About 3 minutes.

The long line breaks and reforms. Following the Lantern Leaders, the Bearers move across the sand to draw shapes for the drone filming from above: long winding lines like tendrils, circles of light that pulse brighter and softer, folding lines and tight clusters that glow like signal fires along the coast. Then a wave of light pulses down the length of the beach and scatters into sparkling, random patterns.

What the sound is doing: a piano melody begins and grows into a big, full wall of sound. Then drums and rhythm join in. Near a speaker, you may feel the beat.

Watch for: the wave of light running down the beach. It starts when the drums begin.

Your part as a Lantern Bearer: follow your Lantern Leader across the sand.

10. The procession of light. About 7 minutes

The river of light begins to move. Half the Lantern Leaders guide thousands of Bearers along the beach towards Binalup (Middleton Beach). The other half stay in place, marking the way. Every 200 metres, a small group of Lantern Leaders dances the Moodjar Flower again. For a moment, the Bearers' lanterns go dark, and only the Moodjar Flower groups pulse along the shore. Then the Bearers' lights spark back on, here and there, until the river glows again.

What the sound is doing: the rhythm rises and falls like waves. Voices in the music call everyone towards Binalup.

Your part as a Lantern Bearer: walk with your group at a comfortable pace and follow your Lantern Leader.

11. Embers. Happening simultaneously on the stage at Binalup

The long column of light keeps moving along the coast. Its glow is warm and steady, shifting gently in patterns that follow the music. On the stage, a single dancer appears from a crowd of Lantern Bearers. He represents a personal question *"What do I carry into our shared future?".* He moves with a mixture of softness and power, sharp small movements become big, wide leaps and spins, as he looks out at the thousands of people approaching.

What the sound is doing: the strong beat stops. The sound becomes soft and atmospheric, like the glow of embers after a fire, birdsong and piano combine. Then strong drums beat once more, pushing the dancer into action. A woman's voice calls out lightly over the sounds. We heard her earlier, when she called the Lantern Bearers to the ocean's edge.

12. Fire travels through the Six Seasons: the Songline of Djorna. About 11 minutes.

Attention continues to build at the main stage at Ellen Cove. Many Lantern Bearers gather around it, a crowd of glowing lanterns surrounding the stage. On stage, fire performers create pictures with flame: shapes of Kwornt, Biyarra, tidelines, Sea Star and Moodjar Flower. At the heart of the story are a Menang girl, Djorna, and her grandmother, connecting past and future.

Twice, as the music swells to a high point, the lanterns on the beaches nearest the stage go dark, and the fire on stage stands out against the dark.

What the sound is doing: a strong change in the music, like the start of a new chapter. The music builds to two big high points. There are sounds that evoke lightning, bird song, twinkling stars and voices of young and old.

Watch for: the beaches near the stage going dark. Each time, the music is at a high point.

13. The handover of the Biyarra. About 2 minutes

Djorna sits beside a campfire on stage. Flames rise. An Elder lifts the Biyarra, a sculpture made to carry fire. The Lantern Leaders spread out from the stage in long lines, like tendrils reaching across the sand. Light flickers across each line, lantern after lantern, sending the light outward from the stage.

Along these glowing lines, more Elders, the Mayor and a State Government representative walk to the stage, through an honour guard of Moodjar Flowers. The beaches near the stage are dark now. The Lantern Leaders' lights glow on, steady and bright.

What the sound is doing: calm and reflective. The music holds the question: what do we carry into our shared future? It keeps the moment quiet and thoughtful.

Watch for: light travelling down the lines of Lantern Leaders. The music stays calm through this moment.

14. The departure of the Biyarra. About 1 minute

The Mayor and Menang representatives stay on stage, gathered around the campfire. Whadjuk and State Government representatives carry the lit Biyarra off the stage, walking along the line of Moodjar Flower Lantern Leaders. Further down the beach, the groups of Lantern Leaders go dark. A final line of leaders lights the path, then their lights go out, one by one.

At the jetty, one cluster of Moodjar Flower lanterns glows on: an enduring signal fire to the State.

What the sound is doing: the flickering sound of fire. The music slowly dissolves into the natural sounds of fire.

15. The show ends. About 7:37pm

Across the beach, the lanterns glow again. They stay lit for up to 45 minutes, lighting the way as thousands of people make their way along the sand, back to their cars and on to the after party.

What the sound is doing: the soundtrack ends. The ocean and the voices of the crowd remain.

From 7:45pm: A DJ plays at Ellen Cove and Emu Point. The music may be loud, with a strong beat you can feel.

Tonight, we carry the fire forward, together.

Contact

- Email mail@form.net.au or phone 08 9385 2200 for access questions or to request this description in another format.

- More access information: form.net.au/carrying-the-fire

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Menang Noongar people as the Traditional Custodians of Kinjarling (Albany), the land and waters on which *Carrying the Fire* takes place. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and honour their enduring connection to Country, culture and community.

Event Producers

We present *Carrying the Fire* in collaboration with Creative Producer Southern Edge Arts and Artistic Director Annette Carmichael, as part of the City of Albany's Albany 2026 program. Minderoo Foundation is Lead Partner. Supported by Lotterywest. The Australian Government has assisted this project through the Festivals Australia program.

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