



24 May 2022

RELIGION ON THE TABLE FOR VIVID SYDNEY AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Do politics and religion mix? That will be the topic when a panel of eminent people takes part in what is certain to be a controversial discussion at NSW Parliament House as part of 'The Bare Pit', a live event for Vivid Sydney in association with The Ethics Centre.

Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly Jonathan O'Dea said he welcomed the robust exchange of ideas in the parliamentary chamber, where laws are traditionally made.

"Every year, we look forward to hearing from a diverse range of people in public life, including our own NSW politicians, on a unique ethical question," said Mr O'Dea.

"This event will see a switch from the usual political debate to a more intimate discussion of personal stories, perspectives and experiences that will resonate with many."

The free lunchtime panel event on Tuesday 31 May will feature radio personality John Safran, journalist Amal Awad and NSW politicians sharing their personal takes on this year's topic: *What place does religion have in politics?*

The line-up includes:

- John Safran, Australian radio personality, satirist, documentary maker and author
- Amal Awad, journalist, author, screenwriter and performer
- The Hon. Rob Stokes MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Cities, and Active Transport
- The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier
- The Hon. Jihad Dib MP, Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Energy and Climate Change

President of the NSW Legislative Council Matthew Mason-Cox said the Parliament is an appropriate setting for such a thought-provoking discussion.

"They say you should never discuss politics and religion at the dinner table – what better place to talk through the tough ethical questions than at NSW Parliament House?"

"We are proud to be a part of Vivid Sydney for the first time and look forward to welcoming everyone to our live-streamed event both in person and online."

The popular panel event, now in its third year and its first as part of Vivid Sydney, will be moderated by Dr Simon Longstaff AO, Executive Director of The Ethics Centre.

The name 'Bare Pit' is a pun on 'Bear Pit', a colloquial term for the Legislative Assembly chamber, where the panellists will be asked to 'bare' their souls.

NSW Parliament House is a partner of Vivid Sydney. In-person tickets to The Bare Pit are sold out but you can register to join online at www.vividsydney.com/ideas.