



MEDIA RELEASE

8th February, 2007

THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH... THE BIG LAUGH WILL SCRATCH YOUR COMEDY ITCH IN MARCH

Now in its 7th year the **Big Laugh Comedy Festival** is itching to bring you the finest laughter package ever seen in Sydney with exclusive shows from the USA, Ireland, UK, Australia and Samoa!

From March 21 to April 1, 2007, comedy fans are in for a treat at all our venues - Riverside Theatres, the Laugh Garage Comedy Club Parramatta, The State Theatre and the Seymour Centre in central Sydney.

The legendary **Jim Henson Company's Puppet Up! - Uncensored** is without doubt the big ticket for 2007. A company of 16 brilliant performers and technicians and close to 100 puppets will fly direct to Sydney from Los Angeles for the Australian premiere of the most talked about festival comedy attraction in the world right now. Direct from sold out performances in Edinburgh, Las Vegas and Aspen, the Henson Company's show combines remarkable comic improvisation and superbly irreverent puppetry in an un-missable evening of hilarity.

"The Jim Henson Company show is brilliant," says Festival Director John Pinder. "I have seen it four times and getting it to Sydney is a coup for the **Big Laugh**. We are very proud to again be presenting one of the great comedy entertainment names in the world as our big attraction this year."

"This is the best collection of **Big Laugh** shows we have ever assembled. There really is a show for every comedy fan in the program - old favourites, big stars and new shows that we promise will have you laughing out loud."

From Ireland, **Sean Hughes** (Sean's Show) and **Ardal O'Hanlon** (Father Ted) along with the return of **Dylan Moran** (Black Books) head a brilliant line-up of stand up comics including our own **Judith Lucy** making her **Big Laugh** debut, Scotland's **Danny Bhoy**, **Akmal**, **Corinne Grant** who is threatening to give away all her possessions to the audience, and the outrageous **Chopper** from Network Ten's The Ronnie Johns Half Hour in his first one man show whimsically titled **Harden The F**k Up Australia**. Sean and Ardal will appear at both Riverside Theatres and the Seymour Centre.

From London comes **The Pool Guy**. **Steve Daking** is the '8 Ball' Trick Shot Champion of the World...and he's funny. In the intimate Lennox Theatre at Riverside with slo-mo replays on screen, celebrity guest players and tricks that will make you gasp and laugh, this is a show for pool players and people who really don't know what to do with that stick thingy.

Special events include an all star, NOT for broadcast, concert version of 702 ABC Sydney's **Thank God It's Friday**, Sydney's favourite radio comedy spot on Richard Glover's Drive, with **Richard, Mikey Robins, Jean Kitson, Phil Scott, Tommy Dean, Anthony Ackroyd, Mike 'Mr Weather' Bailey** and musical guest, showbiz legend **Toni Lamond**.

Rod Quantock has also created a new Special Event for us this year. **Coming Clean** is a criminally funny orgy of confessions, where top comics admit to stuff they could go to jail for! A must see for legal eagles, comedy fans and possibly the police department. Confessing to their crimes will be Mark "Bob Downe" Trevorrow, Jackie Loeb, Dave Grant, Tom Molombo and additional performers.

Rod is the only performer to have taken part in all seven **Big Laugh** festivals. This year he is also returning with one cruise only on his **Laugh Boat...** an unpredictable and hilarious journey on a Parramatta Rivercat where anything can happen...and this time it's in daylight!

Samoa's most famous exports are back with a brand new show called **The Laughing Samoans - Off Work!** One of the **Big Laugh's** bestselling shows ever, **Eteuati Ete and Tofiga Fepulea'i** will sell out for sure with the Sydney Samoan community coming from all over town for a special night of Pacific hilarity. And you don't have to be Samoan to be in on the fun!

Free in the Riverside foyers, **Behind the Lines** is a brilliant exhibition of political cartoons from newspapers around Australia, curated by The National Museum in Canberra. The exhibition will be launched by the some of the notorious ABCTV satirists **The Chaser** team. The rest of our foyer walls will be covered with the work of school age cartoonists, caricaturists and comic strip artists taking part in the annual **Big Laugh Cartoon and Caricature Competition**.

Our other annual event for young talent is **Kick Start Class Clowns**, the big chance for NSW secondary students to strut their comedy stuff to win a berth in the National Final held in Melbourne.

For music lovers who like sharp wit with their good time tunes, don't miss the double bill of acclaimed piano players **Jan Preston** and **Bob Malone** in **4 Hands Boogie Woogie**. He is American, she is from Sydney and together they will lift the roof off the Riverside Theatre in a world premiere concert.

Maggie Scott first presented her one woman show **Life's a Lemon** at Riverside Theatres in 2006 and was such fun we have invited her back. Funny and a great singer.

And we have let **Puppetry of the Penis** back in to the **Big Laugh**, but it's coming a week early and for only a one night stand.

Other **Big Laugh** shows for 2007 make up our best ever programme:

- **Alzheimers The Musical** comes from the comedy team of Lyn Shakespeare, Maureen Sherlock and Carole Yelland. Two years ago at the **Big Laugh** they sold every seat to Tragic at their Age. As they say, **Alzheimers The Musical** is a show you can see again and again and again.
- Two rising stars making their **Big Laugh** debut are Geraldine Quinn, a brilliant and dangerously funny singer-songwriter from Melbourne in **SexDeathBowtie**, and Jordan Rascopoulos in **Man with the Dominant Claw**. This is out there comedy from one of the Ronnie John Half Hour team.
- From Melbourne, **Men of Steel** is a hilarious and inventive comic puppet show that won the Directors Award at last year's Melbourne International Comedy Festival. Messy, funny and suitable for all ages.
- **The Delusionists** is the 2007 edition of new student sketch comedy. Two years ago our student show, The 3rd Degree, went on to become the Ronnie Johns Half Hour on Network Ten – where will these students end up?
- **The Popular Mechanicals** is a reworking of Tony Taylor's 1970's Nimrod Theatre hit in which the rude jesters from A Midsummer Nights Dream bumble their way through a hilarious mix of songs, verse, dance and chicken puppetry.
- **Spontaneous Broadway** from Melbourne is a must see for lovers of the musical theatre and improv. An entire hilarious Broadway show is created from audience suggestions by this team of brilliant improvisers.
- **A Tribute to Danny Kaye**, starring Russell Fletcher, recreates great moments with one of the world's favourite comic entertainers. If you loved Danny Kaye you'll love this show. If you have never heard of him prepare to be amazed, and tongue twisted.
- **Tunks for the Memories**, with Wayne and Gary Tunks, is a semi-autobiographical comedy creation from a team who has staged many successful shows at Riverside Theatres. They come from a long line of brothers... the Baldwins, the Daddos and now the Tunks!

The **Big Laugh** is again delighted to partner our neighbours at The Laugh Garage Comedy Club in Church St, Parramatta with three hot shows for 2007: **The Imports** are **Buster Bailey** (UK), **Meisel** (USA) and **John Zeez** (NZ); plus **Gordon Southern** (UK), **The Dazz and Gazz Show** and **Mick Meredith**.

For further information, please contact:

Page Lovelace

Publicist

The Lantern Group

(02) 9383 4038 / 0432 187 769

www.biglaughcomedyfestival.com.au