



Media release



The Festival of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games

Embargo on release of schedule of events in its entirety before 23 February 2006.

January 2006

Festival Melbourne2006 – FREE PERFORMANCES

All the fun of the Circus

There is no need to run away to join the circus if you are in Melbourne during the Commonwealth Games. The best circus performers from Australia and around the Commonwealth will be here in Melbourne and performing free during Festival Melbourne2006.

In The Big Top there is non-stop circus fun – see spectacular and extreme circus, be in awe of death defying stunts, laugh out-loud with slapstick antics and just sit back and enjoy the best of new and modern traditional circus.

Beats, breaks and rap hit **The Big Top** with home-grown hip-hop talent in **Big Top Hop** (Australia), a new show created for Festival Melbourne2006. Hip-hop, street rap, break-dance and circus collide when crews from all over Melbourne make the Big Top their home turf, strutting their moves alongside extreme circus performer Stephen Williams and B Girl Nikki Ashby. Resident house band with Tamil Rogeon of True Live will deliver original beats, and Brisbane rap duo MIZ adding to the general groove. Ringmaster Elf Transporter will be in control at the mic.

Produced in association with Footscray Community Arts Centre and featuring crews from Jungle City (Footscray), D Force (Noble Park) and the A.R.A.B. Project (Broadmeadows, Hillcrest, Box Forest & Lakeside Secondary Colleges). Director: Rebecca Hilton

Nightly at the Big Top from 16-19 March at 9.15pm. World Premiere

The Candy Butchers (Australia) are a decadent contemporary circus, with a black, twisted heart. Startling stunts, acrobatics and dark clowning; contemporary circus luminaries Derek Ives & Azaria Universe join forces with Jess Love & DJ Garner to blend the perverse with the poetic in **The Candy Butchers – A Circus Sweetmeat**. This darkly humorous voyage into a neo-vaudevillian world of an imaginary sideshow era combines high-level circus skills with pathos, drama and tragedy. This is one of the most important works to emerge from the new Australian circus movement. Suitable for children 12 years and above.

Nightly at the Big Top from 21-24 March at 9.15pm and 25 March at 7:00pm

Snuff Puppets & acrobat (Australia) are a thoroughly modern old-fashioned circus, where physical virtuosity meets puppet anarchy at **Circus Olé**.

The fame of two rival circus companies - the Farelli Family and Da Silva's - has faded. When they join forces to try and regain their former glory, skilful acrobatics collide dangerously with giant puppet animals. The fabulous flying Farelli Family perform defiant high wire feats and jaw dropping acrobatics. Marvel at the Big Elephant and other assorted ferocious wild animals. Giant Chinese mathematical dogs. A parade of trained cows. A flock of squabbling seagulls. A collaboration between two of Australia's foremost performance companies, **acrobat** and **Snuff Puppets, Circus Olé** is a celebration of traditional circus values.

At the Big Top from 21 March at 4.30pm, 22 March at 2:00pm, 23 – 25 March at 1:00pm, and 26 March at 6:00pm

Internationally-acclaimed Daksha Sheth Dance Company (India), presents **BhuKham - Circus of Earth and Sky**, a spectacular production of breathtaking beauty, extraordinary human skill and boundless daring that blasts Indian dance into the 21st Century. An awe-inspiring fusion of ancient and modern dance melded with moves drawn from circus, martial arts, yoga and gymnastics, **BhuKham** is a celebration of the human spirit, of man's quest into the unknown, of the desire to explore what lies beyond the horizon.

Bridging the contemporary and the traditional, the **Daksha Sheth Dance Company** is considered to be the most radical and visionary contemporary dance company in India. Under the Artistic Co-Direction of Daksha Sheth and Devissaro, it has won international acclaim for dance-theatre productions that bring together performing artists from many disciplines - theatre, music and martial arts as well as dance.

At the Big Top from 21 – 24 March at 7pm and 25 March at 9.15pm

Meet the world's most dangerous clowns at **Cirkus Inferno**. When Lucky and Lady show up at **Cirkus Inferno** they find the big show has been cancelled, so they decide to put on a production of their own. In this side-splitting slapstick adventure, the loveable pair of troublemakers finds their way into the circus props, creating a fantastic mess in the process.

This is extreme clowning from the **Daredevil Opera Company** (Canada) - thrill clowns and circus performers who tell poetic and pyrotechnic stories. Inspired by silent film, animation, vaudeville, circus and mythology, the **Daredevil Opera Company** has worked with Cirque du Soleil and Montreal's 'Just for Laughs'.

At the Big Top on 21 March at 2pm, March 22 at 4.30pm and from March 23-25 March at 5pm.

What happens when top graduates of **Australia's National Institute of Circus Arts** (NICA) create a show that's all about love, in all its confusing permutations, enigmatic rituals and tempestuous pairings? **Love Happens** is an alluring new-generation circus showcasing the skill, athleticism and creativity of Australia's most talented young contemporary circus performers.

Directed by international circus artists Rodrigo Matheus and Carla Candiotta **Love Happens** has been devised with, and performed by, graduates from NICA.

At the Big Top from 16 – 17 March at 7:00pm, 18-20 March at 5pm. World premiere

Traces is a new work from one of Canada's most exciting circus theatre companies, **Les 7 Doigts de la Main**. Since forming in 2002, Montreal's **Les 7 Doigts de la Main** has taken the world by storm with its disarmingly eccentric and intelligent re-interpretation of circus. With state-of-the-art circus skills and a jet-fueled urban street energy, these circus artists move effortlessly from one skill to another, using anything and everything that comes to hand. From traditional Chinese circus techniques to basketball; from skateboard to classical piano; soaring, somersaulting, contorting, balancing and catapulting – there are no bounds.

Les 7 Doigts de la Main is French for "the seven fingers of the hand". A twist on a French idiom about working together with agility and co-ordination, the phrase indicates both unity and individuality.

At the Big Top from 16 March at 4pm, 17 March at 5:00pm, and 18 – 20 March at 7:00pm.

Three diverse cultures. Three different youth circuses. One amazing show. 26 young artists join forces under the Big Top in **3wAyXchange**, a collaboration between three leading youth circuses. Created for Festival Melbourne2006, The Flying Fruit Fly Circus, (Albury/ Wodonga), Zip Zap Circus (South Africa) and the Brewarrina Youth Circus (NSW) show what can be achieved when the extraordinary unite.

Set in an airport transit lounge and featuring aerial acts, acrobatics, balancing, juggling, dance and live music, this contemporary circus poignantly explores themes of dislocation, relocation and cultural transition.

Directed by Kim Walker, Artistic Director of the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, **3wAyXchange** is a magical lesson in cultural exchange.

The Flying Fruit Fly Circus is Australia's premier youth circus. Founded in 1979 it has performed all over Australia and the world, and has produced many fine circus artists who have gone on to perform with Circus Oz, Cirque du Soleil and many others. Based in Cape Town, **Zip Zap Circus** is the oldest and most established youth circus in Africa. Since 1992 it has been teaching circus skills to disadvantaged children, giving them opportunities to travel and perform all over the world. **Brewarrina Youth Circus** began in 2002 as a means of offering alternative paths for education, physical exploration and creativity to young people living in the area. It is now the largest National Touring Indigenous Youth Circus Troupe in Australia.

At the Big Top from 16 March at 1:00pm, 17 – 18 March at 1:00pm & 2:45pm, 19 -20 March at 2:30p.m. World premiere.

Welcome to **Circus Allsorts**, an impossibly eclectic bag of assorted delights from around the globe, all under the one Big Top. This delectable and never-to-be-repeated confection of circus and music treats from Australia and the world stars – comic juggling, flying trapeze, hula-hoops, trick bicyclists, the high-trapeze, fire eating, limbo dancing, acrobats plus more.

At the Big Top from 23-25 March at 3pm. World premiere.

Festival Melbourne2006 – Wednesday 15 to Sunday 26 March, 2006.

Festival Melbourne2006 celebrates the breadth of culture and art from across the nations of the Commonwealth. The Festival is an integral part of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games, and it is proudly funded and supported by the Victorian and Australian Governments.

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Australian Government

