

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 27 November 2014

## THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT AT THE MECC IN 2015!

The 2015 Entertainment Season was launched at the Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre on Thursday 27 November to an enthusiastic audience, and the stars will shine bright at the MECC in 2015.

MECC & Events Manager Mark Fawcett said, "Again we've tried to ensure some of the very best entertainment in Australia will be featured at the MECC, and we're reasonably certain next year won't disappoint."

Starting off the year is the original rock goddess herself, Suzi Quatro, who is embarking on her last Australian tour. This concert has already sold incredibly well, but there are still tickets left for Suzi's February performance. Music lovers can then expect a feast of music throughout the year from some of the world's most celebrated performers including the Aria Award winning John Butler Trio, Wendy Matthews and 1927 who feature in a double bill, the famous Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, The Ten Tenors and many more.

Children and family audiences should love the line-up of works assembled for them, which include the new musical for children "Stripey" based on the much loved book by Wendy Binks. Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes by Shake & Stir Theatre brings the Roald Dahl magic to life in a slightly dark rendition of this story. If you enjoyed the 13 Story Treehouse, you must see the sequel The 26 Story Treehouse. "The way these Andy Griffiths' tales are brought to life on stage is simply wondrous," said Mr Fawcett. These offerings for our younger audiences are proudly supported by Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal as part of the DBCT Young People's Entertainment Season.

Dance lovers are well catered for with QLD Ballet's "Coppelia", Bangarra's "Kinship" and more works from DanceNorth, QLD's leading contemporary dance company. While drama audiences should be captivated by Bell Shakespeare's "Hamlet", and the glorious "Head Full of Love" a story about the Darwin Beanie Festival from QLD Theatre Company.

To pay homage to the Centenary of Anzac Day, the MECC has secured the stage play of "Gallipoli". This is wonderful production that will allow a heightened understanding of what our Anzac diggers went through. Michael Veitch from the ABC's Arts Show will also be performing "Flak", true stories of the pilots who flew in World War II, and Mr Veitch will also be providing a free talk in Mackay City Library as part of the show.

To surprise our audience we have several shows that are the ultimate in audience engagement. 360 Allstars doesn't feature actors, it features BMX riders, Breakdancers and extreme sports people showing their skills live on stage. As part of this performance, workshops in BMX, breakdancing and extreme sports will be offered. Drumstruck, an amazing troupe of African drummers sees the audience kitted out with tom tom drums so they are literally part of the performance. A great way to be active and engaged during a performance!

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A major coup for the MECC is securing a partnership with the acclaimed Follies Company from Sydney. This will see the MECC and the Follies Company co-produce the brand new Australian work "The New Black". "Starring Ernie Dingo, think Bran Nue Day," said Mr Fawcett. "Ernie Dingo will be in Mackay working with local artists such as the Corowas, and acclaimed celebrities including Ms Robyn Archer. Co-producing a show every few years allows Centre staff to be fully engaged with the creative process, it also allows the MECC to work with local schools and Central QLD University so that students can better understand creative arts and the professional process of bringing a show to life. The New Black will then travel from Mackay to other Centres such as the Gold Coast Arts Centre, so yes, Mackay sees it first."

Many of the events in 2015 have great appeal for inclusion in the learning programs of our regional schools and access to the theatre is made possible through the support of the fantastic BMC Pathways to Performance Program.

Finally, the MECC's oldest and most beloved program Morning Melodies continues, supported by Healthpoint Chemists, with a diverse line up of morning entertainment covering the abridged version of Pirates of Penzance, Aussie stalwart Lucky Starr, and leading Australian stage actress Gina Hogan who has been wowing audiences in Mamma Mia.

Yes, the stars will shine bright, and with ticket prices as low as \$12.50 for some shows get in now and get the best seats in the house for next year's productions, or purchase a MECC gift voucher as a Xmas present to delight someone with the gift of entertainment.

