



MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Theatre Company South Australia presents

## The Popular Mechanicals

By Keith Robinson, William Shakespeare and  
Tony Taylor

Original direction by Geoffrey Rush

***“the excellent cast is inventive and versatile” and “hilarious from the get-go” Scenestr***

***“A hilarious romp with the supporting characters of A Midsummer Night’s Dream and their misadventures in amateur theatrics...an absolutely gut-busting laugh riot.”***

**– Australian Stage**

Merrigong Theatre Company and State Theatre Company South Australia are delighted to announce that the riotous production of *The Popular Mechanicals* will be coming to Illawarra Performing Arts Centre from 18 – 21<sup>st</sup> October. Following their riotous reception in 2015, the cast have been reassembled by Director Sarah Giles.

First directed by Geoffrey Rush in 1987, *The Popular Mechanicals* was written by Keith Robinson and Tony Taylor, inspired by the Rude Mechanicals of Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The play follows the backstory of Shakespeare’s greatest clowns; the group of amateur thespians who stage the ridiculously earnest and unintentionally hysterical Pyramus and Thisbe.

The actors of the original production of *The Popular Mechanicals*—including Paul Blackwell and Kerry Walker among others—went on to become some of Australia’s most acclaimed stage actors. This production stars a troupe of the next generation’s best comedic talents, led by multi-Helpmann Award-winning actress Julie Forsyth. They are joined on stage by Holly Austin, Lori Bell, Charles Mayer, Nathan O’Keefe and Rory Walker.

With excerpts from the original text of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Popular Mechanicals* rejoices in its own extravagance of expression. Farce, slapstick and bad puppetry combine joyfully together in this anarchically unhinged carnival that revels in its own theatricality. The cast of the play-within-a-play star in their very own behind-the-scenes romp of what might have happened off-stage during the Bard’s most loved comedy.



Sarah Giles said *“To approach this play in 2015 with a new generation of theatre makers, with our own deranged sense of humour and sense of chaos, well, we can’t wait to see what happens.”*

Tickets are on sale now via [www.merrigong.com.au](http://www.merrigong.com.au)

**WHEN** 18 – 21 OCTOBER  
**WHERE** Illawarra Performing Arts Centre  
**TICKETS** \$49 - \$79  
**BOOKINGS** <http://www.merrigong.com.au/> or (02) 4224 5999

**For further information, interviews and images:**

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