

Media Release – for immediate release

SHAUN THE SHEEP'S CIRCUS SHOW



Shaun Comerford, Yaron Lifschitz with QPAC, Screen Queensland, Merrigong Theatre Company and Circa Contemporary Circus present by special arrangement with Aardman

Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show

NSW PREMIERE SEASON - Illawarra Performing Arts Centre 19 – 23 May

Continuing their record of investing in exciting new theatre works of national and international relevance, **Merrigong Theatre Company** has joined forces with **Circa Contemporary Circus** and UK-based, multi-award-winning animation studio **Aardman**, to produce a circus-theatre spectacular for audiences of all ages. **Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show** makes its NSW premiere in Wollongong, at Illawarra Performing Arts Centre from 19 – 23 May 2021.

Aardman is the Academy Award®-winning UK studio behind *Chicken Run*, *Wallace and Gromit* and more. The tales of an enterprising sheep named Shaun and his farmyard pals have been seen in 170 territories worldwide, and have spawned two critically celebrated feature films, a half-hour special and over 170 television episodes.

For ***Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show***, the beloved Aardman animation is combined with live performance, with Director **Yaron Lifschitz** and the Circa Ensemble combining all the sophisticated and challenging elements of Circa's extreme physicality with the fun, humour and playfulness found in the world of *Shaun the Sheep*.

Circa have performed in 40 countries to over 1.5 million people since 2004, and their work is continually greeted with standing ovations, rave reviews and sold-out houses across six continents. The company hold a legion of fans in Wollongong, who have flocked to see their previous shows at IPAC.

Circa Director Yaron Lifschitz commented, *"Shaun the Sheep is a playful, rambunctious feast of humour, good spirits and the triumph of the little guy. The medium of circus is a perfect vehicle for bringing these qualities to the stage. Melding the worlds of stage and screen and incorporating the extreme physicality of circus without losing the emotional depth and charm of the original is a major creative challenge – it's the sort of thing we thrive on."*

Ngaio Harding-Hill, Head of Attractions and Live Experiences at Aardman, added: *"We have always had an ambition to create a Shaun the Sheep circus show. The physicality of circus performance marries perfectly with the slapstick traditions, thrills and humour of the brand."*

Simon Hinton, Artistic Director / CEO of Merrigong Theatre Company said *"We are thrilled to be a partner on this ambitious new trans-continental collaboration. Shaun the Sheep is a family favourite throughout the world, and to host the NSW premiere season here in Wollongong is a fantastic win for the arts and for audiences in our region."*

"After the devastation wrought by COVID-19 in our sector, this is a wonderful opportunity to bring our communities back together to share in the joy and magic of live performance, as well as provide jobs for artists and arts workers".

Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show has been supported through the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund – an Australian Government initiative and by the Queensland Government's Queensland Arts Showcase Program (QASP)

Media enquiries: Please contact Jonathan Villanueva on 02 4221 5971 or email

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Venue: Illawarra Performing Arts Centre

Dates: 19 – 23 May

More info: <https://merrigong.com.au/shows/shaun-the-sheeps-circus-show/>

Tickets \$52 - \$72

A per transaction fee of \$6.95 applies for phone and online bookings.

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Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show

Based on the international award-winning television series Shaun the Sheep

Director Yaron Lifschitz

Costume Designer Libby McDonnell

Scenic Designer Dan Potra

Composer/Sound Designer Jethro Woodward

Lighting Designer Jason Organ

Video Director Craig Wilkinson (Optikal Bloc)

Associate Lighting Designer Alexander Berlage

Associate Choreographer Elise May

MERRIGONG
SEASON 2021