

Festival program drops with diverse offerings of true-blue talent

NO one should be belting out "What about me?" once they get a Bo Peep at the official Mackay Festival of Arts program, which dropped on Saturday, May 8.

Instead, leave that to the expert – the Festivals team have announced Shannon Noll will be rocking this year's G&S Engineering Wine and Food Festival and Festival Club After Party.

Mayor Greg Williamson said the 2021 Mackay Festival of Arts had it all – rock and roll; jazz; disco; opera; acrobatics; gigantic, illuminated puppets; tuk tuks; a world premiere musical; an X Factor winner; giant Gouldian finches and much more.

"This festival is the celebration of local talent, culture, colour, music and food we all need in 2021," Mayor Williamson said.

"And it might well be one of the most exciting and diverse festivals the team have delivered," he said.

"For the young, and young at heart, we've locked in Shaun the Sheep's Circus Show, Charlotte's Web and some fun silent disco tours complete with a funky 'disco guru' tour guide.

"As for musical talent, the program is alive with it – from X Factor winner Isaiah Firebrace to the Aussie pub rock icon that is 'Nollys'.

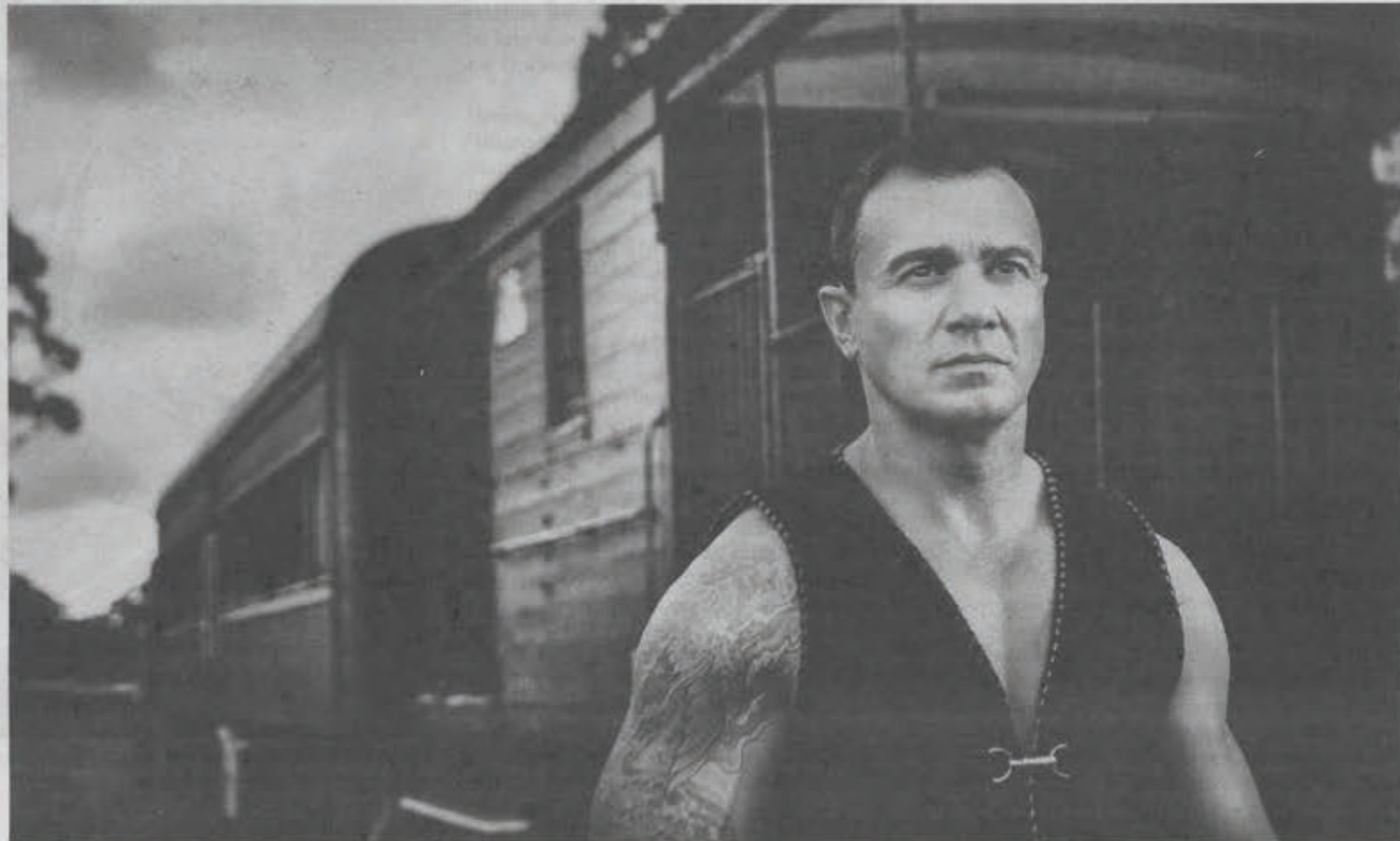
"Add in the ultra-smooth Dale Pengelly, who's hosting the Friends of the MECC Jazz Brunch, and award-winning singer-songwriter Jess Hitchcock, who is headlining the new Savour Seaforth event and is fresh from touring with Kate Miller-Heidke and Paul Kelly, and you have a stellar line-up.

"For those who like their music in the theatre, there's the all-local creation Heading North, the Joel Bow production featuring the writing of S.K. Munt and music of Graeme Connors.

"And Opera Australia is presenting Bizet's Carmen, complete with thrilling Spanish colour and rhythms, amazing sets and vintage-inspired costumes."

The Mayor also paid tribute to one of the festival's long-term supporters.

"Can you believe G&S Engineering have



The Festivals team have announced Shannon Noll will be rocking the G&S Engineering Wine and Food Festival and Festival Club After Party in 2021. PHOTO: Supplied

been the major sponsor of the G&S Engineering Wine and Food Day for 20 years?" he said.

"That's an incredible achievement and a testament to their unwavering support for the local community.

"With Shannon Noll headlining the line-up of 13 tremendous musical acts, this year's event will undoubtedly be a standout and a great 20-year milestone."

Of course, DBCT Illuminate is also back!

The Mayor said installation 4.0 would be spellbinding in its new venue along the Blue-water Trail.

"It will be our most interactive DBCT Illuminate yet and will feature 'String Symphony', a giant illuminated puppet, hand-woven using more than a kilometre of rope," he said.

"You will also have the option to catch a lift back to the start of the trail via tuk-tuk, which will be a great way to cap off the experience.

"Adding to this spectacle, we have giant, colourful Australian native Gouldian finches complete with party hats, which will act as 'Messengers for Mackay' and will adorn prominent buildings in locations around the city."

The Mackay Festival of Arts program is live now.

Grab a hardcopy program from the Box Office or check it out online at themecc.com.au/festivals