



KING KONG

The music theatre event exclusive to Melbourne

Stage musical **KING KONG** had its world premiere on 15 June 2013 at Melbourne's Regent Theatre, the culmination of five years of development by Australian producer **Global Creatures**. The show has already garnered a swathe of accolades including the Helpmann Awards for Best Lighting, Best Sound, Best Scenic Design and Best Costume Design.

The 50-strong Australian cast of actors, singers, dancers, circus performers and puppeteers is led by **Esther Hannaford** (*Hairspray*) as Ann Darrow, newcomer **Adam Lyon** as Carl Denham, **Chris Ryan** (*Thyestes*) as Jack Driscoll, veteran stage actor **Richard Piper** as Captain Engelhorn and the queen of musical theatre and cabaret, **Queenie van de Zandt** as Cassandra.

Based on the novel of the original 1933 screenplay, the stage show of **KING KONG** is a modern take on the classic tale of beauty and the beast. This timeless love story hits the Melbourne stage in the 80th anniversary year of the original Merian C. Cooper *King Kong* movie.

KING KONG features new and existing songs from some of the world's best contemporary artists, including **3D** from Massive Attack, **Sarah McLachlan**, **Justice**, **Guy Garvey** from Elbow and **The Avalanches**. The music is being overseen by composer and arranger **Marius de Vries**, whose credits include the soundtracks for *Moulin Rouge* and *Romeo + Juliet*.

Pioneering Creature Designer **Sonny Tilders** has developed the 6-metre, 1.1-tonne Kong that stars in the show, bringing together the worlds of animatronics and puppetry to provide a subtlety of expression that has never been seen on stage before. Kong is entirely Melbourne-made and was recognised with the *Outstanding Theatrical Achievement* award at the 2013 Helpmann Awards.

Due to the size of the production, **KING KONG** will not tour to any other cities in Australia or New Zealand – *guaranteed!**

* <http://kingkongliveonstage.com/melbourne-only/>

RESOURCES

For high-resolution images, an EPK and footage of live performances visit:

<http://kingkongliveonstage.com/media/> (username "media", password "kong").

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Playing exclusively at the Regent Theatre, Melbourne

Preview the show at http://youtu.be/HVGsR_1TzRQ

Bookings:

1300 111 011 or www.ticketmaster.com.au or Ticketmaster outlets

Groups 1300 889 278 or groups@ticketmaster.com.au

VIP Packages <http://www.showbiz.com.au/king-kong> or call 1300 4 SHOWS

ACCOR Stay & See® Packages <http://www.showbiz.com.au/king-kong> 1300 306 341

Ticket prices:

\$55 - \$145

Student rush tickets available through Facebook. Student group discounts available.

<https://www.facebook.com/KingKongStage>

<https://twitter.com/KingKongStage>

<http://www.youtube.com/KingKongStage>

<http://instagram.com/kingkongonstage>

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“You can taste the future in this unique and visionary theatrical event, and it's mind-blowing.” **The Age**

“King Kong has redefined the musical” **The Australian**

“The cast is superlative and Esther Hannaford is perfectly beguiling and quirky as Ann Darrow....The production is a triumph of state-of-the-art technology.” **The Herald Sun**

“..what emerges is a truth in performance that doesn't employ the common razzle dazzle fluff of musical theatre acting. Sure, King Kong is an event, but it is also a massive achievement in puppeteering, casting and music.” **Inpress Magazine / TheMusic.com.au**

“a remarkable theatrical achievement.” **The Guardian**

“Musicals can be naff – but not King Kong. It's an incredible spectacle with a gutsy modern soundtrack unlike anything I've seen on stage. New material from The Avalanches and Massive Attack's 3D is just the icing on the cake.” **FasterLouder**

“Kong is a f*****g impressive sight on stage.” **Beat Magazine**



THE FACTS

- The 6-month bump-in required from the **KING KONG** production was the longest load in/preproduction period of any live theatre musical ever staged in Australia.
- The production requires a crew of 76, to support a cast of 50 actors, singers, dancers, circus performers and puppeteers.
- Kong is part marionette, animatronic and puppet, made entirely in Global Creatures' West Melbourne workshop where the creatures of *Walking With Dinosaurs* and *How To Train Your Dragon* were also made.
- Kong is made up of 1.1 tonnes of steel, aluminum, lycra and latex and is 6 metres tall.
- Inside Kong there is 300 metres of electrical cable, 1500 connections and 16 microprocessors. Kong even has his own on-board hydraulic power with a liquid cooled quiet pump.
- The detail of Kong's facial expression is delivered by 15 industrial servo motors (the same ones used in the NASA Mars rovers) and 2 hydraulic cylinders, all controlled in real time by 3 off-stage 'Voodoo' puppeteers who sit at the back of the auditorium. One of the puppeteers supplies the voice of Kong live for every performance.
- As well as his animatronic core, Kong is operated on-stage by 10 'King's Men' who are all circus artists that are being specially trained in puppetry.
- On top of his core chassis, Kong has a layer of air-powered muscles that give him a lightweight body form. Over the top of that are a series of highly sculptured muscled bags that stretch and contract as Kong moves.
- There were two full-sized Kong prototypes before the current 'sculptural-look' version performing at the Regent Theatre.