



MEDIA RELEASE

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Comedian, Michael Veitch, for Sirens Awards and Masterclass next week

Comedian, Michael Veitch will announce the winner of the 2006 Siren Awards at a breakfast in Sydney next week and also speak at a seminar following the event, the Sirens Masterclass. Veitch, renowned for his work on D-Generation and Fast Forward, has also worked on radio and for newspapers and most recently has been involved in stagework and theatre writing.

He will talk about the art of comedy at the Masterclass, a creative seminar focusing on Australian comedy entitled, "So Who the Bloody Hell Are We?" Veitch will be joined at the seminar by members of The Chaser team, Andrew Hansen and Chas Licciardello, who will talk about why their irreverent humour works in Australia and also about confronting and lampooning key players from the world of politics, business, religion, media and culture. Best-known for their work on CNNNN (Chaser Non-Stop News Network) and election coverage specials, Chaser Decides, the team has an irreverent comic attitude to just about everything. Their latest show on ABC TV, The Chaser War on Everything, is another satirical comedy in which no target is spared.

The breakfast will be hosted by Bianca Dye from Sydney's Nova 969 and will feature the announcement of the 2006 Siren Award winners including the Gold Siren winner. The winner of the 2006 Gold Siren, chosen by the Siren Creative Council from the winners of the five rounds of the Awards already held, will be automatically entered into the Cannes Radio Lions to be held in June. The Gold Siren winner will also be awarded travel and accommodation to attend the festival in Cannes.

Last year's inaugural Gold Siren Award winner was the Victoria Bitter campaign. The advertisement, written by Josh Stephens and Ben Coulson from George Patterson Partners (Melbourne), with creative director, James McGrath, uses comedy and the well-known VB theme song.

Also speaking at the Masterclass is Senior Lecturer in Cinema Studies at La Trobe University, Dr Felicity Collins. Dr Collins has won a two-year Australian Research Council Discovery Grant looking at how comedy can be understood in terms of nationhood and identity and will talk about radio's role in the formative years

The Masterclass will also feature international creative expert and creator of the award-winning Australian radio brand campaign, Ralph van Dijk of Eardrum Australia. In March this year, Van Dijk's agency, Eardrum International, won five awards at the UK 2006 Aerial Awards for radio advertising including the Gold, Silver and Bronze in the Best Directing category.

Tickets are selling fast to both the Sirens breakfast and Masterclass, which will be held at Taronga Zoo on May 11. The breakfast will run from 8am to 9:30am and the Masterclass will follow the breakfast and includes lunch. Tickets are on sale now at \$550 for the breakfast and Masterclass combined and \$60 for breakfast only. For more information contact phone 02 9281 6577 or to download your ticket booking form, visit the dedicated website www.sirenawards.com.au.

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