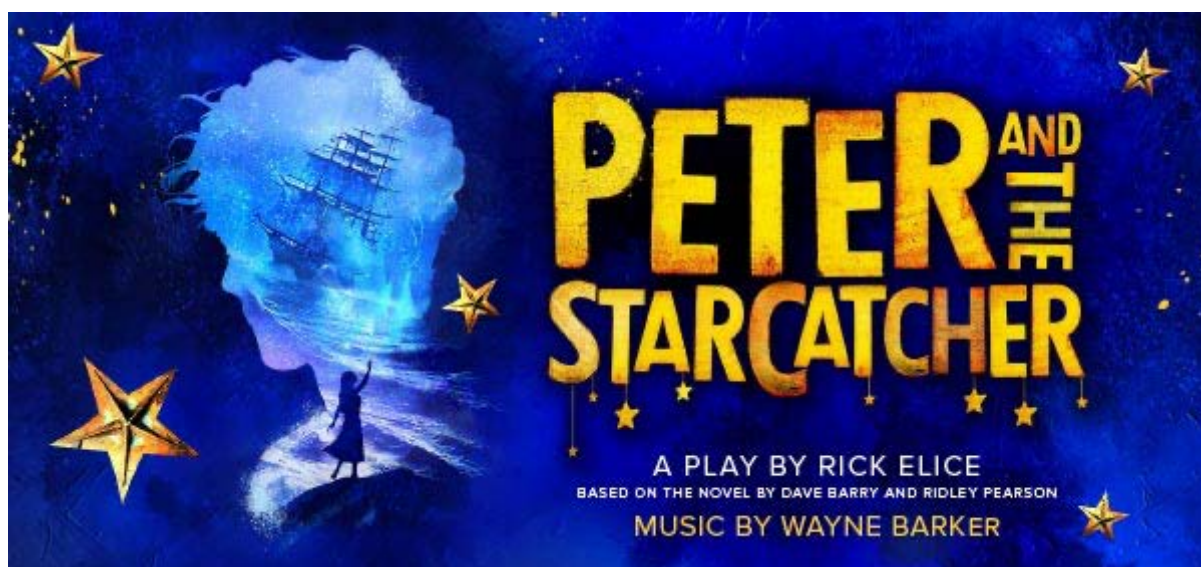


MEDIA RELEASE WEDNESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2023

Dead Puppet Society, Glass Half Full Productions,
JONES Theatrical Group and Damien Hewitt
Production of



**TONY AWARD WINNING PRODUCTION
PETER AND THE STARCATCHER
TO PREMIERE IN AUSTRALIA FROM 2024**

**REIMAGINED BY AUSTRALIA'S CREATIVE POWERHOUSE
DEAD PUPPET SOCIETY**

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Peter and the Starcatcher, the smash hit Broadway production and winner of 5 Tony Awards, will have its Australian Premiere, touring nationally from 2024. Originally developed by **Disney Theatrical Group**, written by **Rick Elice** (*Jersey Boys*, *The Addams Family*), with music by **Wayne Barker**, this all-new production is directed by **David Morton** (*Holding Achilles*, *The Wider Earth*).

Peter and the Starcatcher is the untold story of Neverland. Before Neverland there was an island. Before Captain Hook, a moustachioed pirate. Before Wendy, her mother Molly. Before Peter, a nameless orphan.

Reimagined by Australia's **Dead Puppet Society**, acclaimed for creating visually astounding worlds, this highly anticipated version of *Peter and the Starcatcher* blurs the lines between reality and fantasy, traversing oceans of mystical mermaids, and lands of curious creatures.

Premiering at **Canberra Theatre Centre** in October 2024 before seasons at **Arts Centre Melbourne's Playhouse** in November 2024, **Adelaide Festival Centre** in January 2025, **Sydney's Capitol Theatre** in January and February 2025 and in Brisbane at the **Queensland Performing Arts Centre** in March 2025.

Tickets are now on sale for Melbourne, and Canberra will go on sale on 13th December at www.peterandthestarcatcher.com.au. A waitlist is available for Adelaide, Sydney and Brisbane.

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This production is a major achievement for Brisbane-based production and design house **Dead Puppet Society** who, in an Australian first, have been granted a licence by **Disney Theatrical Group** to stage a new version of the Tony Award winning production. The creativity, passion and determination of **Creative Director David Morton** and **Executive Producer Nicholas Paine** was the driving force behind the achievement with that same attitude to continually push the boundaries, sure to make this production an international success.

Felipe Gamba, Vice President International Strategy and Licensed Partnerships, Disney Theatrical Group said:

"Peter and the Starcatcher holds a very special place in the hearts of all of us at Disney Theatrical. The artists involved in crafting this brilliant play – playwright Rick Elice, original directors Roger Rees and Alex Timbers, and their entire team, created a unique and memorable world of theatrical inventiveness out of a bucket, a piece of rope and a ladder. Their vision conquered hearts off and on Broadway, around the United States and various international territories. Very fitting to have our play now in the incredibly talented hands of Dead Puppet Society, who will lend their own masterful ability to conjure up imaginative worlds on stage to deliver a brand-new production of it for Australian audiences. We are thrilled to see this come together."

Writer of the play **Rick Elice** said:

"The initial production of Peter and the Starcatcher was a passion project — just a great group of artists and high expectations. To see the play come to life over and over again around the world is a joy I never expected. And to witness the marriage of this humble piece with the vast imagination and ingenuity of Dead Puppet Society is more than a joy, it's a privilege — and, for this playwright, an inspiration."

Director and Designer, **Dead Puppet Society's** Creative Director **David Morton**, explains the significance of being granted the opportunity to reimagine **Peter and the Starcatcher**.

"Nearly everyone knows the tale of Peter Pan, but Peter and Wendy's origin story has been a much more closely guarded secret. Rick Elice's incredible play takes the characters we know and love and charts the course they take to Neverland and into the classics when a group of lost orphans, moustachioed pirates, and Wendy's mother Molly collide over a trunk full of Starstuff, the most powerful substance on earth."

"This lightning-paced, whimsical show was a mega hit on Broadway. To have the opportunity to bring an all-new production to Australian audiences, reimagined with Dead Puppet Society's approach to design-led theatre and stagecraft, is both an honour and a dream come true."

"Ultimately this is a story of villains finding their heroes, of timeless friendships, and fates that can't be avoided. But don't be fooled...this isn't just a show for young people, it's for the young at heart, and anyone else who never wanted to grow up."

Dead Puppet Society is the brainchild of **David Morton** and **Nicholas Paine** and since its beginnings in 2009 has established itself as one of Australia's most ground-breaking production houses, bringing its works to stages across Australia, London and New York. They are known for combining timeless craftsmanship with cutting-edge technologies, and collaborating with world class creatives to produce large-scale visually stunning works that shake up genres and incorporate contemporary methods of puppetry. Recent box office hits include *Holding Achilles* (Brisbane Festival and Sydney Festival), *The Wider Earth* (Australian National Tour, Natural History Museum London), *Ishmael* (Brisbane Festival,

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Regional Queensland Tour), *Laser Beak Man* (Brisbane Festival, National Tour) and *Storm Boy*. The company has been nominated for an Olivier Award and 6 Helpmann Awards.

Peter and the Starcatcher is written by **Rick Elice** with music by **Wayne Barker**. This new Australian production is Directed and Designed by **David Morton**, Musical Director and Additional Music by **James Dobinson**, Movement Director **Liesel Zink**, Lighting Designer **Ben Hughes**, Costume Designer **Anna Cordingley** and Sound Design by **Matthew Erskine**. Casting Director **Michael Topple**, Creative Producer **Nicholas Paine** and Associate Director **Matt Seery**.

Experience the joy of this theatrical spectacle with over 100 unforgettable characters, puppetry, live music, and technical wizardry - jump onboard this epic pre-Pan voyage and discover the untold story of Neverland.

Hook tickets now!

Age recommendation: From 10+ and for those who never grew up

Casting: To be announced

Running time: 2 hours and 20 minutes including interval

Commissioned and originally produced by Disney Theatrical Group.

Originally produced on Broadway by Nancy Nagel Gibbs, Greg Schaffert, Eva Price, Tom Smedes, and Disney Theatrical Group.

Licensed exclusively by Music Theatre International (Australasia).

This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

BROADWAY ACCOLADES

“An absurdly funny fantastical journey”
Entertainment Weekly

“You must experience it for yourself”
New York Times

“A blissful exercise in the make believe”
New York Times

“A Rollicking Good Time”
Entertainment Weekly

“Spectacle, wit, and joy spill out of this production like treasure from a magic pocket”
New York Magazine

**CANBERRA – CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE
FROM 15 OCTOBER 2024
TICKETS ON SALE 13 DECEMBER**

**MELBOURNE – ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE
FROM 8 NOVEMBER 2024
TICKETS ON SALE NOW**

**ADELAIDE - ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE
FROM 9 JANUARY 2025
JOIN THE WAITLIST NOW**

**SYDNEY – CAPITOL THEATRE
FROM 31 JANUARY 2025
JOIN THE WAITLIST NOW**

**BRISBANE QPAC
FROM 14 MARCH 2025
JOIN THE WAITLIST NOW**

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@peterandthestarcatchertour

[MEDIA ASSETS CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE](#)

Media Enquiries:

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ABOUT DEAD PUPPET SOCIETY

Dead Puppet Society is an international production house and design-led theatre company. They combine timeless craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology to create deeply imaginative experiences wrought with spectacle and wonder.

Recent box office hits include *Holding Achilles* , *The Wider Earth* , *Ishmael* , *Laser Beak Man* and *Storm Boy* . They also create captivating activations for events and public spaces, from open-air performances and large-scale installations, to one-of-a-kind, laser-cut artefacts and exquisite, custom-made sculptures.

Dead Puppet Society has a Gallery and Fabrication Workshop space in Woolloongabba, Brisbane. www.deadpuppetsociety.com

ABOUT RICK ELICE

Broadway: *The Cher Show*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Jersey Boys* (with Marshall Brickman, Bob Gaudio, Bob Crewe; directed by Des McAnuff: Tony Award, Best Musical); *The Addams Family* (with Marshall Brickman, Andrew Lippa; directed by Jerry Zaks). Regional: *Turn of the Century* (with Marshall Brickman; directed by Tommy Tune); *Double Double* (directed by Roger Rees); *Dog and Pony* (with Michael Patrick Walker); *Studio 54* (with Stephen Trask, Peter Yanowitz; directed by Christopher Ashley). His book *Finding Roger, An Improbably Theatrical Love Story* is published by Kingswell.

ABOUT WAYNE BARKER

2011 Drama Desk Award for *Peter and the Starcatcher*. B'way: *Dame Edna: Back With a Vengeance* (composer, co-lyricist with Barry Humphries). Reg'l: *The Great Gatsby* (Guthrie), *Twelfth Night* and *The Three Musketeers* (Seattle Rep). TV: "A Little Curious." Other: Mark Bennett's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (orchestrations). *Chicago City Limits*, the *Raymond Scott Orchestrette*, orchestras worldwide. Upcoming: *I Heart Bob*. Dramatists Guild: artistic associate for new musicals at NYTW.

ABOUT DAVID MORTON, DIRECTOR AND DESIGNER

David is a writer, director and designer, and the Creative Director of Dead Puppet Society. Over the last fourteen years he has led Dead Puppet Society in the creation of large-scale design-led theatre works developed with international teams. Some highlights from work produced includes *Holding Achilles*, which was supported through the Major Festivals Initiative and has had successful seasons with Brisbane and Sydney Festivals. *The Wider Earth* (Dead Puppet Society, Queensland Theatre, Trish Wadley Productions, Glass Half Full Productions) was conceived in residence at St Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn, New York City and enjoyed a six-month run in a custom-built theatre in London's Natural History Museum. *Laser Beak Man* (Dead Puppet Society, La Boite, Brisbane Festival, PowerArts) was a collaboration with Tim Sharp developed at the New Victory Theater in New York City. Additional works include *Ishmael*, *The Riddle of Washpool Gully* (Terrapin, Dead Puppet Society); *Argus* (Dead Puppet Society, Lincoln Centre, Queensland Theatre, Brisbane Powerhouse), *Trollop* (Queensland Theatre) and *The Harbinger* (Dead Puppet Society, La Boite, Critical Stages). David has been nominated for five Helpmann Awards and an Olivier Award. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in puppetry and visual theatre from Queensland University of Technology.

CREDITS

A Dead Puppet Society, Glass Half Full Productions, JONES Theatrical Group and Damien Hewitt
Production

Creatives

Written by Rick Elice

Music by Wayne Barker

Director and Designer: David Morton

Musical Director and Additional Music by: James Dobinson

Movement Director: Liesel Zink

Lighting Designer: Ben Hughes

Costume Designer: Anna Cordingley

Sound Designer: Matthew Erskine

Casting Director: Michael Topple

Creative Producer: Nicholas Paine

Associate Director: Matt Seery

Producers

Dead Puppet Society

Glass Half Full Productions

JONES Theatrical Group

Damien Hewitt

Co-Producers

Canberra Theatre Centre

Nancy Gibbs

Neil Gooding Productions

Bryan McCaffrey

PowerArts

Queensland Performing Arts Centre

The Jelley Family Foundation

Woodward Productions