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MEDIA RELEASE

RUSSELL CROWE TO NARRATE BEN HUR AT ANZ STADIUM

StadeFrance Live Events and **ANZ Stadium** are thrilled to announce that Australian icon **RUSSELL CROWE** has agreed to be the Narrator of **BEN HUR – the Stadium Spectacular** at the **ANZ Stadium on 22 and 23 October**.

An internationally acclaimed star of film and stage, Russell Crowe is the winner of an Oscar for *Gladiator* at the 2000 Academy Awards, and countless accolades including a Golden Globe Award, Film Critics Circle Award, Australian Film Institute and Screen Actors Guild Award.

Russell Crowe will lend his voice and iconic stature to the biggest theatrical event ever seen in Australia. The monumental \$15 million production is set for two shows only, exclusively in Sydney.

Russell Crowe said "We all know the Australian saying, "Bigger than Ben Hur" and there is no doubt this show will be massive. It is an honour to be asked to participate, it's going to be fun, that's for sure, and I'm really looking forward to it. There's a cast of 200, Chariot races, Pirate attacks. It's huge."

"Obviously I have a relationship with ANZ Stadium, being that it is the home ground of The Rabbitohs. I've long been an admirer of the cutting edge approach that the Stadium has taken in its operations. This idea is so ambitious, the scale so daunting that when they asked me to be involved I just said absolutely."

"This isn't a play, it's not a musical, it's a spectacle. When I was approached I put the question up on Twitter, "Did anyone see the Paris production?" and the responses that I read confirmed for me that the people who are lucky enough to see this will have an unforgettable, once in a lifetime experience."

ANZ Stadium Managing Director Daryl Kerry has hailed the signing of Russell Crowe as "a stellar moment in major event theatre worldwide".

"To have the biggest star in Australia join the biggest theatrical event we've ever seen is a ground-breaking event," said Kerry.

“BEN HUR is more than a big show, it’s a new entertainment genre that’s sure to excite Australian audiences.

“With Russell Crowe as Narrator we know we have the best in the business and that makes BEN HUR the must-see show of the year.”

BEN HUR brings to life the Biblical epic made famous by the Academy Award winning Hollywood movie ‘Ben Hur’, starring Charlton Heston.

The 1959 classic won a record 11 Academy Awards, a benchmark for excellence unsurpassed in movie making.

BEN HUR – The Stadium Spectacular combines the scale of the Sydney Olympic Games Opening Ceremony with the drama of the galley slave who dared defy the Roman Empire.

This stadium adaptation has been crafted by renowned French director Robert Hossein, whose masterpiece was watched by over 300,000 people in its Paris debut.

BEN HUR features a cast of 200 actors, a full-scale live chariot race, a giant Roman Galleon and a 15,000 square metre performance area that will transform ANZ Stadium into the biggest Roman Coliseum ever seen.

The new television commercial for BEN HUR – The Stadium Spectacular with a voice over by Russell Crowe will air from this evening, Tuesday 27 July.

For tickets, show information and new video, go to www.benhur.com.au or call Ticketek on 132 849.

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