

Stellar local Michael Cormick leads Drum roll of stars

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Drum Theatre's 2020 program of stellar names in singing, theatre and dance has been launched by hometown hero Michael Cormick.

Cormick, an international musical theatre star who grew up in Doveton, will team with Rachel Beck for *You and I* in June.

The pair will reprise songs and tell stories from their extensive careers, including their first collaboration *Beauty and the Beast* from 25 years ago.

Other songs from musicals *Next To Normal*, *Les Miserables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Chicago* will also be performed.

Since the first time they shared the stage, Cormick and Beck have been enduring friends. Cormick is godfather to Beck's two daughters.

On stage, there's always been a chemistry; the pair's voices being a "natural blend", Cormick says.

"We're very close. To work on stage together is nice - we know each other so well.

"I know from that glint in the eye when she's going to make a certain move."

Last year, Cormick performed back in his hometown for the first time since shooting to international stardom.

It was a return to where he first learnt his craft, as a shy choir singer at St Mary's Catholic Church, Dandenong. His career took off after winning a local St John's talent quest at 14.

Last year, his former schoolmates, his mother and brother were among a packed Drum Theatre audience for his *Feel'n' Good* concert.

"It was like coming home. So delightful," Cormick says.

For much of 2020, he and Beck will tour together. Having trod the stage of the most acclaimed concert halls in Europe, Cormick has hopes to return for a musical theatre show in London late in the year.

Other delights await Drum audiences in 2020 - legend singer-songwriter Archie Roach, cabaret artist Jude Perl, Red Stitch Theatre, guitarist Johannes Moller, Opera Australia performing *Carmen*, Bell Shakespeare and the Australian Ballet.

Details: drumtheatre.com.au



Michael Cormick at the launch of Drum Theatre's 2020 program. 204186

Picture: STEWART CHAMBERS

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