

Damian Callinan Biography

– November, 2021

Damian Callinan is a multi award-winning comedian, actor & writer. He is best known to TV/film audiences for his roles on **Skithouse**, **Before The Game** & **Backyard Ashes** & regular guest appearances on shows such as **Spicks and Specks** & the **Melbourne Comedy Festival Gala**.

More recently, his multiples roles as lead actor, screenwriter & co-producer on **The Merger** have greatly expanded his profile & reputation. The feature film is based on Damian's multi award winning one-man show of the same name & also stars Kate Mulvany, John Howard, Fayssal Bazzi, Penny Cook & Nick Cody. The film was selected as the Gala Centrepiece at the **Melbourne International Film Festival** in 2018 and was theatrically released soon after, to wide acclaim. The film consistently picked up awards & nominations including the **Cinema Australia Audience Award**, two **AACTA** nominations, **Best Film & Best Screenplay** at **Ozflix Independent Film Awards** & was also shortlisted for the coveted **Cinefest Oz Prize**. In 2019 the film was selected as the touring feature for both the **Dublin & Glasgow International Film Festivals**. The film was released on **Netflix** in January 2021, where it achieved Top 10 status within a week. This second life has seen the film reach a much wider audience.

An ex-drama teacher, Callinan has come a long way since taking long service leave to 'give it a crack.' A 3 time nominee for **Most Outstanding Show** at the **Melbourne International Comedy Festival** [**The Merger**, **Sportsman's Night**, **Proxy Heroes**] he has been prolific in his output of live shows racking up awards & nominations like parking fines. These include **Spaznuts** [**Piece Of Wood Comedians Choice Award at MICF**] **Proxy Heroes** [**MICF Outstanding show nomination**] **The Cave the Rave** [**ABN Amro Edinburgh Foreign Exchange Award**] **Sportsman's Night** [**Melbourne Fringe Best Comedy**] & **The Lost WWW1 Diary** [**Nominated Best Comedy @ Perth Fringe & Victorian VCE Playlist 2017 & 2020**]

His most recent festival & regional arts funded, national touring shows, include his Lindy Hop inspired **Swing Man [Nominated Best Comedy @ Perth Fringe 2018]**; his smash hit take down of wine snobbery with Paul Calleja, **The Wine Bluffs [2016-2019]** & his critically acclaimed titular role in Kieran Carroll's **Newk: The John Newcombe Story [2019-2023]** continues to find new audiences.

In early 2021, Callinan completed the world premiere seasons of **The Wine Bluffs - Decanted at Adelaide Fringe & Melbourne International Comedy Festival** & a **Regional Arts Victoria** tour of **The Merger** [stage show] with the play being included on the **2021 VCE Playlist**. Following highly successful outreach tours in February 2020 & April 2021, Damian will continue touring into drought, flood & fire affected regions throughout 2022 with the **National Recovery & Resilience Agency**.

Callinan has just added author to his list of credits, with the release of a junior fiction book **Weird School**, published by **Penguin Random** [August 2021] The book made the Top 10 sellers list at Reading Books in September 2021. He has also recently hit the screens with a leading guest role in the final season of **Rosehaven [ABCTV]** and a guest role on **Spreadsheet [Paramount +]** alongside Catherine Parkinson. He is just about to film a lead ensemble role in **The Emu Wars**, a **Screen Australia** funded web series for **Hot Dad**.

Callinan used Melbourne's lockdowns to launch a narrative comedy podcast based loosely on the world conjured up in **The Merger**. As reward for his toils, **The Bodgy Creek Community Podcast** has just been nominated for **Best Comedy Podcast** at the **2021 Australian Podcast Awards** alongside such luminaries as **The Chaser, A Rational Fear & Hamish & Andy**.

In 2022, he'll be remounting a **Regional Arts Victoria** produced reprisal of **The Hall Committee**, a play commissioned by the **Wagga Civic Theatre & Create NSW**, which toured the halls of the NSW's Riverina in 2019. The five-actor play is

directed, written by & stars Callinan. He'll also be touring with his solo immersion comedy show **Mayor for a Day**.

In development, Damian has a comedy drama TV series with the working title of **Finnegan's Reef** and is working on a **Kennedy, Miller Mitchell** project alongside **The Merger** director, **Mark Grentell**.