Murdoch, Hall plan Fleet St nuptials

LONDON: Media mogul Rupert Murdoch and former superstar Jerry Hall will hold a marriage celebration next month at St Bride’s Church on London’s Fleet Street, the spiritual home of British journalism.

The 84-year-old executive chairman of News Corp and 21st Century Fox Inc and Hall, 59, announced their engagement last month in a classified advert in the Times newspaper, one of the papers he group owns.

The couple’s nuptials will be celebrated by a gathering of stars at the historic church, famed for its wedding-cake spire and designed by Christopher Wren, who was also responsible for the nearby St Paul’s Cathedral.

“He will be having a service to celebrate the marriage,” Claire Seaton from St Bride’s told Reuters. She said the actual wedding ceremony would take place in March.

The three-times-married couple, who have a twin and Hall, the former longtime partner of Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger, became engaged in Los Angeles, where they had been attending Hollywood’s Golden Globes awards ceremony.

Mr Murdoch divorced his third wife, Wendi Deng, a former reporter at Murdoch- owned Star TV in China, in 2013 after 14 years, saying their marriage had been irretrievably broken.

Hall was married to Jagger for more than 20 years but in divorce proceedings in 1999 the British musician claimed they were never legally married.

There was no immediate comment from Mr Murdoch’s spokesman, but Britain’s Guardian newspaper said the couple’s former partners were not expected to attend.

Among the 50 or so guests would be Robert Thomson, News Corp’s chief executive, and Rebekah Brooks, chief executive of his British media arm, the paper said.

St Bride’s link with journalism dates back centuries.

HOLLYWOOD heart-throb Chris Hemsworth was paid $450,000 to voice Tourism Australia’s 179-second advertising campaign — and that’s his master rate.

Tourism Australia bosses confirmed the six-figure contract included having access to Hemsworth in an ambassadorial role for the entire 2016 calendar year.

The Territorian and star of Thor attended O’Day USA events in America last month, but no formal calendar of appearances has been agreed upon yet.

Tourism Australia managing director John O’Sullivan told a Senate estimates hearing the $450,000 in taxpayer funds used to lure Hemsworth had generated a whopping $54 million in global publicity in less than two months.

“We think it’s a pretty good return on anyone’s investment criteria,” he said.

Hemsworth’s deep, ironically Australian voice booms across the campaign, which highlights Australia’s beaches and waterholes.

Mr O’Sullivan said it was critical Australia stepped up its global footprint, one of the world’s most competitive industries.

“We compete against some 180 countries around the world for the tourist dollar,” he said.

Some suggested Hemsworth’s body doesn’t feature in the advertisement because it would have been too expensive for the government-funded organisation.

But Mr O’Sullivan said images of iconic Australian tourist destinations had to be the “heroes” of the campaign.

It is understood the contract is far less than Hemsworth’s going rate.

Multiple industry sources claim Hemsworth would have charged more had the advertisement been for a corporate brand.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop had developed a good relationship with the actor in the months before he penned the deal.

Manillow on mend after double dose of surgery

WASHINGTON: Barry Manilow is out of surgery and doing well, according to his publicist, after the singer was rushed to Los Angeles following surgery on the weekend at Memorial Hospital in one quick operation.

The 72-year-old, known for his hits “Mandy” and “It’s Garden Party,” added that he had been instructed not to talk or sing for the next 48 hours.

“Barry thanks everyone for their well wishes and concern,” it said.

On Thursday, a statement posted on the singer’s website and Facebook page said he had been rushed back to Los Angeles due to complications from emergency oral surgery.

“I’m sorry to announce that Barry was rushed to Los Angeles,” the statement said.

The nod tops a stellar few months for the Melbourne singer, who was crowned Australia’s best female artist and best breakthrough artist at last year’s ARIA awards.


Taylor Swift and rapper Kendrick Lamar dominate the list of nominations for this year’s awards.

The 58th Grammy Awards will take place at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on Monday (Tuesday Northern Territory time).

Four Australian acts in running for Grammys

NEWS

BLACHTT

LONDON: Hollywood’s finest are set to descend on Los Angeles this weekend as Australian actors Cate Blanchett and Sam Neill are up for recognition at BAFTA for their roles in Carol and The Imitation Game.

The 50-year-old Blanchett has been nominated for the Best Leading Actress gong at the British film awards for her role in the biopic Carol, directed by The Danish Girl, Dame Maggie Smith for The Lady in the Van, Room’s Brie Larson and Brooklyn’s Sonarse Ronan.

The Aussie star, who is up for Best Actress at the Critics’ Circle at the Academy Awards later this month, is already a three-time BAFTA winner. She first won the award in 1999 for her leading role in Elizabeth. Blanchett won the Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role gong in 2005 for The Aviator and won the Best Leading Actress BAFTA again in 2013 for Blue Jasmine.

There is a lot of expectation on British stars at Sunday’s awards. American stars picked up almost all the top honours last year, with only Eddie Redmayne fying the flag for Britain by winning Best Actor for The Theory of Everything.

He’s up for the honour for a second year in a row, for The Danish Girl, while heart-throb Leonardo DiCaprio will be hoping to continue his triumphant awards season tour for his role in The Revenant.

In Britain, Blanchett and Sam Neill are up for a best third time at the Academy Awards where Blanchett is nominated for the Best Actress in a Supporting Role gong for Carol and Neill for the Best Actor in a Leading Role for The Imitation Game.

There has been a lot of speculation about the height of the Oscar winner’s award as she is set to pick up her fourth Oscar at the Academy Awards later this month, is already a three-time BAFTA winner. She first won the award in 1999 for her leading role in Elizabeth. Blanchett

washington: barry manilow is out of surgery and doing well after the singer was rushed to los angeles following surgery on the weekend at memorial hospital.

manilow’s publicist confirmed the 72-year-old hitmaker was recovering well, adding that he had been instructed not to talk or sing for the next 48 hours.

“barry thanks everyone for their well wishes and concern,” the publicist said.

The nod tops a stellar few months for Manilow, who was crowned Australia’s best female artist and best breakthrough artist at last year’s ARIA awards.


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