

SBS ON DEMAND



Shaun Micallef Joins Australian Comedy Icons Aaron Chen, Lizzy Hoo, Michael 'Wippa' Wipfli, Dilruk Jayasinha, Nina Oyama and Arj Barker on the Adventure of a Lifetime in *Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey*

Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey premieres Tuesday 24 September on SBS and SBS On Demand

Interviews Available

Watch the trailer [here](#)
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Adventure and revelry abound as **Shaun Micallef** travels overseas with popular Australian comedians **Aaron Chen, Michael 'Wippa' Wipfli, Lizzy Hoo, Dilruk Jayasinha, Nina Oyama** and **Arj Barker** in the brand-new SBS documentary series ***Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey***.

Shaun's trademark intellect and wit combines with the comedians' discovery of parts of their heritage that have remained a mystery to them until now to create a rich series that is entertaining and insightful in equal measure. The six-part series premieres Tuesday 24 September on SBS and SBS On Demand.

Having lived in Australia for most of his life, comedian Aaron Chen has little knowledge of the rich legacy he's inherited from his Chinese-born father. In the first episode, Aaron and Shaun head to China to learn more about Aaron's father's fascinating back-story. As the pair touch down in Shanghai, Aaron is keen to learn about the sacrifices his father Peter made before he moved to Australia in the late 1980s. And it's a place Aaron's visited before – more than five but less than ten times!

There are laughs-a-plenty in the next episode as comedian and radio presenter Michael 'Wippa' Wipfli and Shaun travel to Switzerland, Wippa's father's ancestral home. The pair make a series of surprising discoveries about Wippa's paternal family history – including why his grandfather decided to leave the idyllic and peaceful surrounds of the Swiss Alps for Melbourne when he was just 20 years old. And they aim to answer a profound question – is Michael Wipfli merely Swiss by name – or is he Swiss by nature?

As comedian Lizzy Hoo and Shaun embark on a once-in-a-lifetime adventure to Ireland, Lizzy sets out to discover more about the history of her mother's side of the family, who isn't a Hoo at all. When the pair arrive in Dublin following a 17-hour-flight from Melbourne, their driver Dave explains they can become Plastic Irish by consuming just six pints of Guinness. After ten, they'll also get a passport.

From experiencing the family trade as a firkin maker, to discovering the harrowing story behind a monument in honour of her ancestor, Lizzy hits the road with Shaun to take it all in.

Comedian Dilruk Jayasinha grew up Colombo, Sri Lanka, and ventured to Australia at the age of 19 with plans to complete a degree in accounting and move home. But he fell in love with Melbourne and stayed, and 20 years on he's now spent almost equal time living in Australia as in his birth country. Embarking on a journey home alongside Shaun, Dilruk enjoys a reunion with extended family, revisits the Catholic school he attended, explores his father's Buddhist temple, and seeks to learn more about his mother's Muslim beliefs – all together shaping the person and comedian he is today.

Actor, writer, and comedian Nina Oyama is half-Japanese by birth, but grew up in Australia and hasn't visited her father's homeland since she was a child. In this episode, Nina and Shaun explore not only the country's storied history and culture, but pose the question – is Nina able to look in the mirror and see herself as Japanese? But first a quick lesson about the weenis, which according to Nina is the flesh on your elbow, and one of Tokyo's most popular traditions – the Shibuya Crossing – the busiest pedestrian crossing in the world.

Australia's adopted son of stand-up comedy, Arj Barker, hasn't been to his father's homeland of India for almost three decades. Seeking to understand why his Sikh father chose to leave his family behind for a different life in the United States, the pair embark on an adventure-filled journey across the country. Disembarking the train at the sock line on the ankle of the first leg of their journey, Shaun is excited. It's been 26 years since Arj has been here, but he's most excited about his shpants. You know, 'too long to be shorts, too short to be pants. Shpants!'

Shaun Micallef said: "Two years ago, I retired from television, vowing never to return. I promised myself that I would travel the world helping younger and more diverse performers tell their stories. The offer to present *Origin Odyssey* has enabled me to do both. It represents the pinnacle of my glittering career."

SBS Commissioning Editor Emily Griggs said: "*Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey* offers a fresh and engaging perspective on our shared curiosity about heritage and identity. Shaun's skilful storytelling, paired with the fascinating odysseys of Aaron, Wippa, Lizzy, Dilruk, Nina, and Arj makes for an entertaining and heartfelt exploration of culture, family, and the stories that shape us."

Endemol Shine Australia Head of Comedy David McDonald said: "I am beyond thrilled to have worked with Shaun and his six travelling companions, who have been so generous with their humour and heart and displayed true vulnerability in sharing their family's stories."

Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey is developed and produced by Endemol Shine Australia (a Banijay Entertainment company), in association with SBS.

Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey will be subtitled on SBS On Demand in Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean. All episodes will be available with audio description.

***Shaun Micallef's Origin Odyssey* premieres on Tuesday 24 September on SBS and SBS On Demand. The six-part series airs on SBS at 7:30pm Tuesday nights, with new episodes available to stream on SBS On Demand weekly from September 24.**

Screeners and images for media use are available on the [SBS Screening Room](#)

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