

# Regional Theatre Projects Assessment Meeting Report 13 March 2015

Arts & Cultural  
Development  
Programme



Trade &  
Investment  
Arts NSW

# Assessment Meeting Report

# REGIONAL THEATRE PROJECTS

Closing Date: Monday, 16 February 2015

Panel Meeting Date: 13 March 2015

Regional Theatre Projects funding supports activities that increase the development of, and access to, regionally produced theatre experiences in NSW. For the purpose of this category, regional NSW comprises the Local Government Areas outside of Sydney and Western Sydney, and includes the Central Coast, Hunter and Illawarra.

## Activities may include:

- partnerships with a professional theatre organisation in another regional area or in Sydney
- a producer placed in the region to facilitate partnerships between the community, local artists and professional theatre organisations and practitioners
- opportunities for artists and arts workers to build professional networks
- the creation and presentation of original, locally based theatre work
- the presentation of a short play festival
- opportunities for regional artists to tour their work to other regions
- mentoring of artists, arts/cultural workers and arts organisations by professional theatre artists and organisations
- skills development for regional people in playwriting, acting, directing, production, media and fundraising.

## Objectives

- Increase the opportunities for regional artists and arts workers to develop and present theatre
- Provide platforms for regional artists and the distinctive stories of regional NSW
- Build capacity of regional organisations to create and present high quality professional theatre productions
- Support skills development for regional playwrights, actors, production staff and other creatives
- Develop and retain audiences for theatre in regional NSW.

## Assessment

Regional Theatre Projects applications are assessed by a panel of peers against the General Assessment Criteria:

- Artistic and Cultural Merit (Quality)
- Engagement and Participation (Reach)
- Viability (Health)
- Budget (Health).

## ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

There was a broad regional spread represented in the Regional Theatre Projects applications and submissions reflected a good mix of professional artists working across artistic practice including community theatre. There were also a high number of applications for projects engaging with young people.

The panel noted that a number of applications lacked a strong strategic focus and did not clearly articulate the rationale or artistic vision of the proposed works. In general, the panel recommends that a greater level of research and planning is undertaken by applicant organisations prior to submission.

The panel also encourages applicants to seek support to develop the work to an appropriate level before applying for funds for presentation. Arts NSW will ensure the Guidelines for future rounds provide a clearer focus on the artistic vision and the objectives of the program.

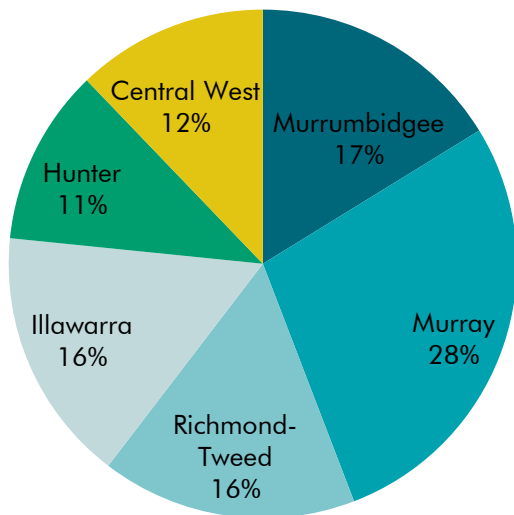
Applicants are reminded to:

- consider all assessment criteria when describing their projects
- include detailed explanatory notes in the budget section of applications, to aid assessment. In particular, any in-kind support and exact rates and timeframes for artist fees and wages
- include biographies of key artists
- provide evidence and support of community consultation and engagement processes, particularly where the engagement is with Aboriginal communities.

The panel recommended that Arts NSW should consider repositioning the Regional Theatre Projects category as a strategic initiative within the Arts and Cultural Development Program, with the aim of stimulating the development of strong partnerships in the regions and between regional NSW and metropolitan artists and organisations.

# FUNDING STATISTICS

GRANT CATEGORY	Regional Theatre Projects
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	25
SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS	8
SUCCESS RATE	32%
AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$1,178,265
AMOUNT FUNDED	\$369,755



REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING

## SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

### REGIONAL THEATRE PROJECTS 2015

#### Arts Upper Hunter - \$3,370

A one day forum for Upper Hunter theatre groups, individuals and educators to share successes and challenges, meet with some relevant industry professionals and discuss ways to promote theatre in the Upper Hunter.

### **Bathurst Regional Council - \$45,000**

A Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre (BMEC) / Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP) collaboration which will provide young people and adult professionals in Bathurst and the surrounding region the opportunity to develop an original contemporary theatre production working with partners from the Australian Theatre for Young People. The eventual production will have seasons in Bathurst in the BMEC Annual Season and at the ATYP theatre in Sydney.

### **Bundanon Trust - \$60,000**

SNAKE SESSIONS is a site-specific work by award winning contemporary performance company Branch Nebula produced by Bundanon Trust in partnership with Shoalhaven City Council. It will take place at two skate parks in the Shoalhaven region. The project extends the company's extensive body of street-style work. A team of professional street-style artists will create a daring, dynamic performance and local skaters and BMX'er will be able to take part in improvisational workshops, participating in the final performance. Local audiences will see their local spaces anew. It is anticipated it will be an adaptable model suitable for touring to other regions.

### **Eastern Riverina Arts - \$60,000**

BASIN is the creative development and presentation of a new play in the Riverina by emerging and established writers in the region. Overseen by Newcastle-based playwright Vanessa Bates, seven writers will develop stand-alone 'episodes' within a larger narrative arc, characters and events will overlap and entwine throughout the episodes. The resulting work will be presented in partnership with volunteer presenters over a six week period in 2016 and culminate in presentation at Artlands Dubbo in 2016. BASIN will be developed at the Cootamundra Arts Centre

### **Flying Fruit Fly Foundation - \$60,000**

Flying Solo is an exciting collaboration between the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Sydney Opera House, Albury City Council and Murray Arts providing emerging NSW circus artists and an emerging contemporary circus director with an opportunity to create and perform their own original circus work, receive professional mentorship on varied aspects of building a successful career in the performing arts, both in regional & metropolitan NSW, and to engage with a young teenage audience 12-16. The show, titled 'Stunt Lounge', will be created as an adaptable performance that can be staged in various types and sizes of venue for boutique regional touring.

### **Hothouse Theatre - \$43,290**

HotHouse will partner with NSW-based repertory theatre company Sport for Jove to commission and produce a major new Australian work for outdoor presentation. The aim is to produce a sprawling large-scale work that responds to the history, storytelling and mythology of our bucolic setting on the banks of the Murray River.

The production will also provide professional development opportunities for HotHouse's Associate Director, the young people who train through our Studio workshop program, and the Indigenous artists supported through our Black Border project.

This grant will resource a critical creative development period, including the commissioning of a significant Australian playwright.

### **Spaghetti Circus - \$59,998**

'The Borogroves' is two five day Masterclasses, a 12 week part time creative development and a work-in-progress showing of a circus collaboration, June-Sept for the 2015 Mullumbimby Circus Festival, (MCF) Sept 25, 26.

Investigating Lewis Carroll's poem 'Jabberwocky', Spaghetti Circus will develop a highly visual circus and stilt performance for site-specific contexts with renowned Stalker Stilt Theatre. Its creative adaptability and portable design aspire to provide regional artists with wide-ranging sustainable employment avenues. The project aims to engage young people, produce mentoring opportunities and consolidate networks between metropolitan and regional emerging artists to strengthen and enrich a diverse rural community.

### **Tantrum Theatre Co-operative - \$38,097**

The creative development and presentation of a new theatre work, 'Hello, Stranger' created by Paper Cut in Newcastle, with a residency period in Albury for Hot House Theatre's 'A Month in the Country'. The project also includes a tour of the work to the University of Newcastle and Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre in early 2016.