

Theatre tops the bill in latest round of Regional Arts Development Fund grants

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In a highly competitive grant funding round, 13 exciting projects have been awarded a share of more than \$62,000 from Sunshine Coast Council's Regional Arts Development Fund, in partnership with Arts Queensland.

Theatre was strongly represented, with six original works receiving development grants, along with literature, screen, dance, visual arts and interdisciplinary projects also sharing in the funding.

Creative development funding was awarded to a unique project by local artist Benjamin Burns, entitled *Petrol and Repairs*, which will seek to engage established and emerging creatives to unpack the metaphor of maintenance and repair, physically and emotionally.

"*Petrol and Repairs* will be set in a mechanic's workshop, and will get 'under the bonnet' of surviving a breakdown and explore what fuels us," Burns said.

An intriguing project is the immersive and intimate one-night-only art event, based on the works, life and philosophies of Oscar Wilde, entitled *A Wilde Night: An Oscar Wilde Saloon*.

Presented by ShakesQUEER, creative director Anthony Borsato said *A Wilde Night* would celebrate queer culture.

"Our production will be a celebration of Oscar Wilde, who was one of the most recognisable artists of the last 200 years, and the underground queer culture of the late 19th century, featuring modern elements of cabaret, burlesque, live music and performance poetry," Mr Borsato said.

In a world of connections and disconnections, where human reality is becoming virtualised and virtual reality humanised, D.I.V.E. Theatre Collective invited highly-skilled local artists to develop *'Into the Light'*, an immersive theatre performance that explores this theme.

Cesar Genaro, Artistic Director of D.I.V.E. Theatre Collective, said we were losing the connection to our senses because of the digital world and gradually, more and more people, from a very young age, believed cyberspace to be the place where their truest selves dwelled.

"It is paramount that artists address this issue in a creative and accessible way, in order to generate reflection and community engagement," Mr Genaro said.

Local audiences and visitors will be amongst the first to see these debuts during the Anywhere Festival in May.

Visit the [Anywhere Festival](#) website for full program and ticketing details to be announced on April 3.

Arts Portfolio Councillor Rick Baberowski said the competitiveness of the grant funding round was a wonderful reflection of the quality and range of Sunshine Coast artists and the depth of their practice.

"It's important that we strategically help to develop local artists so they can continue to create new works here on the Sunshine Coast and reach new audiences near and far," Cr Baberowski said.

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said the Palaszczuk Government was proud to continue its RADF partnership with local governments with an investment of \$2.08 million, through Arts Queensland, for the 2019-20 fund.

"This investment supports the delivery of hundreds of arts experiences and professional development opportunities across the state," Ms Enoch said.

"Projects funded through RADF provide pathways for learning, contribute to the creation of jobs, foster creativity and boost cultural tourism."

Expressions of interest for the next round of RADF funding are now open and will close on March 1.

[Find out more](#), and to discuss your project, contact council's RADF Liaison Officer on 07 5420 8616.

Image: D.I.V.E Theatre Collective, Urban Twitters: Dis.connect.ed, performance May 2019.