

QUEENSLAND THEATRE

Queensland Theatre explores neurodivergent coming of age as Queensland Premier Drama Award 2022–23 winner *Drizzle Boy* opens at Bille Brown Theatre

Queensland Theatre will explore a unique coming of age story when *Drizzle Boy*, winner of the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2022-23 proudly supported by the Queensland Government and production partner Griffith University, opens debuting Australia's first ever neurodivergent character portrayed by a neurodivergent actor.

Opening Thursday, March 16, *Drizzle Boy* follows a young, autistic boy as he embarks on his journey into adulthood and manhood taking back his story from a world of misunderstanding with irreverence and audacity.

A biting satire blending magical realism with a Kafkaesque journey of self-discovery, *Drizzle Boy* will follow the titular Drizzle Boy, portrayed by Daniel R Nixon (*A Chorus Line, On The Town*), in his first weeks at university as his parents, portrayed by Naomi Price (*Ladies in Black, Rumour Has It*) and Kevin Spink (*Antigone, First Casualty*), adapt to his burgeoning independence and even his first love.

Along the way audiences are invited into his imaginative psychological space meeting a number of his heroes including the first woman in space Valentina Tershkova and the goat-headed demon Baphomet, all an expression of his internal world.

"*Drizzle Boy* is a classic coming of age story dealing with themes of hope, fear, love and independence, but it's from the perspective of a neurodivergent person, which is something that I've never seen before," said writer, Ryan Ennis.

"It feels almost indescribable to be putting out this play. I was diagnosed as autistic when I was nineteen years old and looking back prior to that moment; I had never seen myself or someone like me on stage, or screen or in film."

At its very heart *Drizzle Boy* is a play about Australian identity, an identity that Ryan believes we are only just starting to explore.

"In Australian media, I feel like we're only just finding our identity and telling our own stories in the past five or ten years. For people like myself, who are neurodivergent, there are moments in this play where they will feel seen and represented in a way they haven't before. For a broader Australia, there are moments where they will feel seen, held and noticed from a new perspective."

Queensland Theatre Artistic Director, Lee Lewis, is hopeful that both *Drizzle Boy* and the opportunities created by the Queensland Premier's Drama Award will lead Australian storytelling into a new era.

"This particularly Queensland Premier's Drama Award was an opportunity to take the temperature of the nation at a time when things were changing hugely. It was an opportunity to understand the kinds of theatre that we're going to be seeing in the next few years, stories that feel much more forward looking opposed to nostalgic for any past," said Lewis.

"What was really lovely when Ryan's play rose-up in the Queensland Premier's Drama Award, it had this really fresh voice, speaking with confidence and strength with a perspective that we don't normally see on our stages. This young artist is leading us confidently into a new expression of identity in a time when people are really ready to hear it."

Drizzle Boy will run from Saturday, March 11 until Saturday, March 25 at the Bille Brown Theatre.

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Drizzle Boy

11 March – 25 March 2023
Bille Brown Theatre
By Ryan Enniss
Directed by Daniel Evans

Cast

Drizzle Boy Daniel R Nixon
Mother/ Juliet/ Valentina Tereshkova/ Dustin Hoffman/ Google/ Doctor Naomi Price
Father/ Hans Asperger/ Baphomet/ Google/ Doctor Kevin Spink

Creative

Director Daniel Evans
Designer Christina Smith
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Composer/Sound Designer Guy Webster
AV Designer Nevin Howell
Stage Manager Kat O'Halloran
ASM Nicole Neill

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Queensland Theatre acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, and their unique relationship with the lands, seas and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.