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Daniel Evans winner of the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2014-15 with *Oedipus Doesn't Live Here Anymore*

Extraordinary story tellers shine in year of record breaking entries

Following a record 121 entries for the 2014-15 Queensland Premier's Drama Award (QPDA), and three finalists announced earlier this year, Queensland writer, director and producer Daniel Evans has been announced the winner with his explosive *Oedipus Doesn't Live Here Anymore*.

Evans' work was selected as the winner following a public play reading which also showcased plays by fellow finalists **Megan Shorey** for *One In Seven* and Brisbane-born, London based playwright **Tim Benzie** for his work *The Overflow*. The QPDA is delivered through Queensland Theatre Company (QTC).

Oedipus Doesn't Live Here Anymore is a contemporary reimagining of the events leading to the implosion of the most talked-about family in the Ancient Greek myths of The Oedipus Cycle. Ripped from today's headlines and spurred on by neighbourhood hearsay, the story is delivered from the perspective of characters on the periphery of the action; a trolley-boy is charged with the task of killing a royal child, and a chorus of pram-wielding mothers try and decide why they never saw the tragedy coming.

"The Queensland Premier's Drama Award is the only playwriting award in Australia which guarantees a professional production of the winning entry," said Premier Campbell Newman.

"Last year we called for entries from artists for a performance of quality and relevance to Australians today. Evans has taken a well-known Ancient Greek myth and brought it into modern times, with inspirations from pop culture and today's headlines. The work explores how we respond to tragedy in 2014 and is highly entertaining, engaging and pushes the boundaries.

"Evans is an accomplished local writer, director and producer who has worked across Australia in theatre, festivals, print and television, and currently teaches Applied Theatre at Griffith University. I congratulate him on this highly regarded achievement," Mr Newman said.

Arts Minister Ian Walker said, "The future for theatre in Queensland is very bright with talent like Evans, Shorey and Benzie, and we are assured of our place as a leading arts state."

"The Queensland Government is committed to making our state a cultural hub and that is why we are proud to support the Queensland Premier's Drama Award, through our partnership with Queensland Theatre Company.

"Since its inception, Queensland Theatre Company has developed 21 plays as part of the award; employed more than 160 actors, writers and directors; and generated audiences of more than 17,000 to new Queensland work.

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QTC Artistic Director Wesley Enoch said the play was selected by the judging panel as the winner for its creativity, its muscular style of writing and its forward thinking.

“The play speaks to a new audience with a young and vital voice, and invites the next generation of makers and lovers of theatre into the building; it’s exciting, heartbreaking, thrilling and uncomfortable – everything great theatre should be,” he said.

The Queensland Premier’s Drama Award has recognised outstanding playwrights since 2002, with previous winners including Maxine Mellor (*Trollop*), Marcel Dorney (*Fractions*), Richard Jordan (*25 Down*), David Brown (*The Estimator*), Adam Grossetti (*Mano Nera*) and Sven Swenson (*Road to the She-Devil’s Salon*).

Previously a producer on the Chanel Nine reboot of *Big Brother*, and currently teaching Applied Theatre at Griffith University, as well as producing, writing and directing for his performance collective, The Good Room, **Daniel Evans** said *Oedipus Doesn’t Live Here Anymore* was a work about how we respond to tragedy in 2014.

“The play is about how we deal with tragedy today; how we swallow it, how we sell it, how we ignore it, how we inflict it (often on the ones we love most) and how we move on (or, scroll on - clicking on a cat meme),” Evans said. “The tragedy of the House of Labdacus is transplanted to the outer suburbs; a space that has always felt mythic to me. It asks, what if Oedipus lived next door? If his wife Jocasta shopped at the same Coles you did? And his sons, Polynices and Eteocles, were in your biology class at school?”

“It’s a proposition that isn’t so hard to imagine – especially given the spate of murders, bashings, disappearances and backyard horror stories that continue to grip and mortify us via the 24-hour news stream; unspeakable tragedies becoming disturbingly commonplace.”

Judges for the 2014-15 Awards include **Ms Anne Moffat**, Executive Director Strategic Engagement and Protocol, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; **Mr Wesley Enoch**, Artistic Director of Queensland Theatre Company; **Dr Kate Foy**, a prominent independent theatre artist; **Ms Lee Lewis**, Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company and **Ms Louise Gough**, a leading Australian-based freelance script editor and dramaturg.

For more information visit www.queenslandtheatre.com.au

For more media information, interviews, imagery please contact Kath Rose & Associates for the Queensland Theatre Company on 0416 291 493 or email kath@kathrose.com