

# QUEENSLAND THEATRE

## MEDIA RELEASE

**Lee Lewis, Roxanne McDonald and Hannah Belanzsky unite for the world premiere of *don't ask what the bird look like* at Queensland Theatre**

Queensland Theatre will elevate the voice of an exciting First Nations writer Hannah Belanzsky this July with the world premiere of *don't ask what the bird look like* guided by the direction of Artistic Director, Lee Lewis and Artistic Elder, Roxanne McDonald.

Sharing the story of Joan, a young First Nations woman from the city, as she travels to remote Australia to reconnect with her estranged father, Mick, and learn about her family, their history and the undiscovered aspects of identity.

"I'm so proud to be given the opportunity to share the story of *don't ask what the bird look like* on a main stage like the Bille Brown Theatre. This play is about discovering culture and creating a place within ourselves for that culture to grow," said Belanzsky.

"By supporting this play, Queensland Theatre has entrusted me with the profound responsibility to contribute to the ever growing story of our state and to touch hearts and minds through the power of storytelling."

Co-Director and Queensland Theatre Artistic Elder, Roxanne McDonald, is excited to be amplifying the voice of a young First Nations creative.

"Nurturing the voices and talents of young First Nations women is not only a cultural responsibility and honour, but also a vitally important mission. These stories have the power to strengthen our communities and pave the way for future generations to find their voices and celebrate our heritage," said McDonald.

"The story Hannah has shared in *don't ask what the bird look like* is about family and reconnection. It's something that is universally relatable, but also innately personal. It's beautiful and I can't wait to read everything she continues to create in her career."

A finalist for the 2018-19 Queensland Premier's Drama Award, *don't ask what the bird look like* was postponed during the 2022 Season due to the floods which devastated Queensland Theatre.

The story is ready to come to life with Matilda Brown (*The Sapphires*) stepping into the lead role of Joan, Michael Tuahine (*Country Song*) playing opposite her as Mick and Shakira Clanton (*Barbara and the Camp Dogs*) as Pattie.

"*don't ask what the bird look like* is a gentle, funny, almost gothic tale about land, family and reconnection. It has such a skilled light touch of humour and philosophical undercurrent that speaks volumes for the writing talent in our state," said Lewis.

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“Hannah is just one remarkable measure of the undeniable quality that our state can produce when our talent is invested in and nurtured. This story deserves to be seen.”

Discounted tickets for the First Nations community are available through MOBTIX for all performances and all are encouraged to join Hannah Belanzky and Roxanne McDonald for a Yarning Circle on Tuesday, September 5.

Tickets are available now for performances from Saturday, August 19 to Saturday, September 9 at <https://queenslandtheatre.com.au/plays/dont-ask-what-the-bird-look-like-1>.

## ENDS

### **For Media Enquiries or Requests Please Contact:**

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### **don't ask what the bird look like**

*By Hannah Belanzky*

*Directed by Lee Lewis and Roxanne McDonald*

19 August – 9 September 2023  
Bille Brown Theatre

### **Cast**

**Joan** Matilda Brown  
**Pattie** Shakira Clanton  
**Mick** Michael Tuahine

### **Creatives**

**Set and Costume** Chloe Greaves  
**Lighting Design** David Walters  
**Composer/Sound** THE SWEATS

**Stage Manager** Angela Roff  
**Assistant Stage Manager** Tia-Hanee Cleary



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.