

QUEENSLAND THEATRE

Queensland Theatre announces regional tour for smash-hit *Drizzle Boy*

Queensland Theatre's award-winning *Drizzle Boy* is set to stun audiences near and far as it tours the regions this October and November – following the story making history in 2023 by debuting Australia's first ever neurodivergent character portrayed by a neurodivergent actor on a main stage.

Written by neurodivergent playwright, Ryan Ennis, and directed Queensland Theatre's Associate Artistic Director (Programming) and three-time Matilda Award winner, Daniel Evans (*The Almighty Sometimes*, *Vietgone*, *Medea*), the production first shot to success being named the winner of the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2022-3.

In its 2023 mainstage premiere, the smash-hit production then took home two Matilda awards (Best Mainstage Production, Best Direction) with judges claiming the story marked a 'ground-breaking moment in Australian theatre'.

Queensland Theatre will now take the show on tour to provide diverse stories and accessible arts to more communities across the country, stopping at seven locations across the East Coast, kicking off in Caloundra (18 October) and finishing in Redlands (21 November).

The story 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. As a biting satire that blends magical realism with a Kafkaesque journey of self-discovery, the story follows 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 Judy Hainsworth (*Fourteen*, *The Twits*) and Anthony Gooley (*Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *Boy Swallows Universe*), adapt to his burgeoning independence and even his first love.

Taking its name from the 1987 film *Rain Man* (starring neurotypical actor Dustin Hoffman as an autistic person), *Drizzle Boy* is a write back against the film and the idea that other people can speak for or play autistic people, which director Daniel Evans said led them to look at authentic casting as a non-negotiable.

"There's no such thing as the universal experience – everyone is made up of a multitude of experiences – and for people who are neurodivergent those experiences are vast, sometimes painful and complex, but equally beautiful. When you work with someone who is neurodivergent, that lends the story and experience far more credibility and authenticity but also power," he said.

"*Drizzle Boy* is an anthem for anyone who's ever felt different or ever been made to feel like they don't belong in this world. It's a work for people with autism, for people who are neurodivergent, not just in terms of the audience but for the artists alike, and it's an important story for us to share with as many Australians as possible.

Drawing on his own lived experience, Daniel R. Nixon is excited to be once again picking up the torch and sparking important conversations with a wider audience.

"If you want to tell a story like this, it can only really happen through expression of authenticity. In recent times, a lot of stories have been told but always through the perspective of a neurotypical lens

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and then often being performed by actors who don't share the same lived experiences. So as a result, we see an interpretation and exaggeration," said Nixon.

"When you talk about a sensory experience or accessibility in theatre, it's often a secondary layer, a relaxed viewing or Auslan interpretation – they often come at the end of the process. However, Ryan has written a script that incorporates some of those sensory experiences within the play.

"If you're someone who is sensitive to sound and light, all of that has been taken into consideration and you'll still get a theatrical experience without feeling like we've removed things in order to cater for people with sensitivities. So, everybody in the audience feels comfortable!"

Drizzle Boy will show one night only performances at select locations across Queensland and for three nights in Canberra (13-16 November).

Drizzle Boy Tour

Caloundra 18 October 2024 | The Events Centre Caloundra | Tickets [here](#)

Bundaberg 23 October 2024 | Moncrieff Entertainment Centre | Tickets [here](#)

Proserpine 26 October 2024 | Proserpine Entertainment Centre | Tickets [here](#)

Townsville 1 November 2024 | Townsville Civic Theatre | Tickets [here](#)

Cairns 8 November 2024 | Cairns Performing Arts Centre | Tickets [here](#)

Canberra 13 -16 November 2024 | Canberra Theatre Centre | Tickets [here](#)

Redlands 21 November 2024 | Redlands Performing Arts Centre | Tickets [here](#)

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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.

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Drizzle Boy

By Ryan Enniss

Directed by Daniel Evans

Cast

Drizzle Boy Daniel R. Nixon

Mother/ Juliet/ Valentina Tereshkova/ Dustin Hoffman/ Google/ Doctor Judy Hainsworth

Father/ Hans Asperger/ Baphomet/ Google/ Doctor Anthony Gooley

Creative

Director Daniel Evans

Designer Christina Smith

Composer/Sound Designer Guy Webster

Lighting Designer Matt Scott

Video Designer Nevin Howell

Associate Designer Madeleine Barlow

Lighting Associate Christine Felmingham

Stage Manager Maddison Penglis

Assistant Stage Manager Tia-Hanee Cleary

Assistant Stage Manager/Dresser Georgia Gould

Contributing Artists

Choreographer Dan Venz

Dialect Coach Gabrielle Rogers