

Case study

Tour of three shows

Details

What:

Melissa Western and Antony Dyer toured three works to 20 regional Queensland communities in 2015.

Works included:

- **Barbara & Barry's Sweet, Sour and Saucy**, a musical comedy cabaret
- **Oh, Lady Be Good**, a jazz cabaret featuring the stories and songs of legendary 20th century chanteuses
- **Lissa & Nee Nee's Adventure Time**. Highly interactive and engaging song, dance and story for under 8s and their families.

Offering 'two shows for one', the tour targeted both children and adults by offering an evening adult show combined with a daytime family show in each community.

Additional community engagement activities were also provided including: workshops on musical improvisation/theatre, singing and puppetry, post-show Q&As, casual performances at community-run aged-care facilities and supporting local artists to develop 'curtain raiser' acts.

The tour was evaluated using the Culture Counts audience surveying platform.

When:

February to July 2015

Where:

Maleny, Tambo, Roma, Wandoan, Miles, Maryborough, Gympie, Redcliffe, Charters Towers, Hughenden, Cloncurry, Julia Creek, Longreach, Dysart, Moranbah, Sarina, Childers, Warwick, Mackay and Blackwater



Lissa & Nee Nee' Adventure Time. Image: Bryan Crawford - Longbow Productions

Key stats:

- 32 performances and 21 engagement activities
- 2,122 attendees and 972 participants
- 99% of attendees and participants rated the work as good or excellent
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed the performance was absorbing and held their attention and was well thought through and put together
- 100% would attend another show by these artists

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$48,217 – Playing Queensland Fund

Contact for further information:

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Website:

Barbara & Barry's Sweet, Sour and Saucy

www.barbaraandbarry.com

Oh, Lady Be Good www.melissawestern.com

Lissa & Nee Nee's Adventure Time

www.lissaandneenee.com

Outcomes

- Positive audience and peer feedback has provided excellent data to include in future pitches to more new touring locations, both in Australia and overseas.

"We hope to see Melissa and Tnee out west again sometime soon - in fact our community has been demanding it and the show has become their benchmark for expectations of all that visit us." CDO, Hughenden

"The two halves of the show - one scripted, one interactive - work so well together, since the performers are both great improvisers! – Audience member

- The tour successfully engaged a large number of new audiences and communities for the artists. Of the 20 communities visited, 16 communities (80 per cent) and 1974 (93 per cent) of attendees were new to the producer.
- Artists are currently in discussion and planning future opportunities as a result of the tour.
- The new model to deliver three products in one tour with a small artist team was successful. The format proved to be an economical way to attract wide and different target audiences within a limited timeframe and deliver value-for-money for their presenters.



Barbara & Barry's Sweet, Sour and Saucy. Image: Bryan Crawford - Longbow Productions

Learnings and reflections

The successful tour of the three shows has resulted in increased exposure and reach, positive feedback and new touring opportunities.

In terms of what they would do differently next tour, further and deeper engagement was key.

- *Next tour we will aim to spend more time overall in each location so as to share more of our skills and engage more deeply with the community (minimum of three days in each town).*
- *Many more opportunities became apparent: eg. working with other areas of the community (primary & secondary schools, local talent schools, casual performances at aged care and disability centres, maternity wards at local hospitals, library visits).*
- *Engaging with, supporting and celebrating local groups and local performers will be a focus for our next tour.*
- *Synchronising with other town celebrations will also be sought (eg. town reunion, historical celebration).*

Melissa and Antony also had the following tips for others artists looking to tour:

- *For regional and rural Queensland communities who are often volunteer led, a long lead time for marketing and promotion is needed.*
- *Try locking into existing groups and areas of community not historically targeted for live performance.*
- *Always ask around town for the local celebrity or popular event to go to in a week (eg. touch footy, bowls, school parade).*
- *Document the tour and take photos and video footage of the local area and local personalities. Create Tour Diaries you can share with the communities and generate ongoing goodwill and relationships.*