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VICTORIA'S FIRST REGIONAL CENTRE FOR CULTURE TO SHOWCASE LOCAL CREATIVITY ACROSS 2018

## First program highlights alongside Victorian Government Local Grant recipients announced

**Larrak Dja Dja Wurrung Kundingja**  
*Home of the Dja Dja Wurrung People*

The announcement of the first program elements for Victoria's first ever **Regional Centre for Culture** reveals an unprecedented showcase of local creativity set to enliven the cultural communities of four municipalities in central Victoria across 2018 - **The City of Greater Bendigo, Central Goldfields, Mount Alexander and Hepburn Shires**

Officially kicking off on Valentine's Day with ***Love Letters to the Heart of Victoria***, a large-scale public event in Bendigo's Rosalind Park, the year long celebration of culture in all its forms will offer plenty to get hearts pumping and communities involved.

Representatives from the **Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners**, the Regional Centre for Culture Producers, **Mount Alexander Shire Mayor Bronwen Machin** and local artists joined **Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan** and **Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards** in Castlemaine for the first Regional Centre for Culture program announcement.

Producers **Jo Porter** and **Elizabeth Walsh** said the 2018 Regional Centre for Culture program will be built around the six seasonal times observed by the Dja Dja Wurrung People and focus on events that celebrate communities and locales across the region.

Porter and Walsh have been working with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, local councils, new and established creative practitioners and the local communities to shape the Regional Centre for Culture program.

'The year-round program invites locals and visitors to explore, meander and celebrate the region's arts, culture and creative communities. There are plenty of surprises being planned across the region and we are thrilled to release the first of many program announcements', said the producers.

Four of the program highlights announced today include celebrations in small towns across the region. **Waterhole** will be held on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and is the perfect opportunity to dive into Newstead for a circus in the pool. In May, it's Smeaton's turn to light it up at **Anderson's Mill** with an immersive video work **Now You See It...** and then it's roll up roll up to the big smoke in Maryborough as Circus Oz Rolls into Town for some very special shows. Finally **Trumpit Up and Drone On** sees hundreds of pipe and brass players from communities right across region in a mass music event in Hepburn Shire.

Also announced were the Victorian Government grants totalling more than \$500,000 for 36 new projects by local artists and groups that will be presented across the region in 2018.

Designed to attract tourism and highlight innovation and diversity in the regions, the supported projects will form the backbone of the Regional Centre for Culture program providing tourism opportunities with a wealth of cultural experiences for locals and visitors alike.

In addition to the grants, two leading Victorian creative teams have been awarded \$260,000 to create high-impact new outdoor performance works in Bendigo that will employ local artists and develop audiences.



REGIONAL  
CENTRE FOR  
CULTURE  
2018

## THE CREATIVE HEART OF VICTORIA

Hailing from Natimuk in the state's west, **Arapiles Community Theatre** – known for transforming their small town silos into giant creative spectacles - will work with local artists, community groups and organisations on an event combining aerial circus, projections and music, centred on Bendigo's iconic Poppet Head in Rosalind Park.

Clunes-based creative duo **Rebecca Russell** and **Ken Evans** will work with a range of artists, musicians and performers to create an outdoor performance based in, and around, a real-life building that is slated for demolition. Across several nights, audiences will see a story unfold and as the structure is gradually demolished.

A range of much-loved local events – from Trentham's Spudfest to the Tiny Towns Trail – will also receive a boost to extend their activities in 2018.

The producers said the announcement of the first events is an exciting prelude to future program releases.

'The depth and breadth of talent in the region has been inspiring. It's not just a building or a town, but a whole region of art, community, music, food and, of course, wonder.'

'We are delighted to work with regional Victorians and shine a spotlight on these amazing places and people during 2018,' said co-producers Porter and Walsh.

An initiative of the Victorian Government, the inaugural Regional Centre for Culture is being delivered in partnership with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, the City of Greater Bendigo and Mount Alexander, Central Goldfields and Hepburn shires.

For Regional Centre for Culture program information or to get involved visit [www.rcc2018.com](http://www.rcc2018.com) details of the Victorian Government grant recipients go to [www.creative.vic.gov.au](http://www.creative.vic.gov.au)

### Quotes

#### Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"From leading professional artists, to community groups, enthusiasts and creative kids, there is a place for everyone to get involved in next year's Regional Centre for Culture program."

"Together, we'll put on quite a show, one that will attract visitors from near and far and leave a lasting legacy for our communities."

#### Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"Next year we will embark on a journey of creativity and wonder, one that will highlight the extraordinary creative community that calls this region home – from our major centres to our smallest towns."

"The Regional Centre for Culture gives us the opportunity to showcase our region like never before, and build our reputation as the creative heart of the creative state."

### ABOUT

**Jo Porter** Management roles at Circus Oz, STC followed by 13 years of commercial theatre management in New York and London, Executive Producer of Malthouse Theatre, former Chair of Back to Back Theatre, consulting roles with Paw Po (Nhill), City of Ballarat, Theatre Works, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Museum Victoria & more.

**Elizabeth Walsh** Artistic Director and CEO of Tasmania's state wide international arts festival Ten Days on the Island. Programming & senior roles with Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Director of Footscray Community Arts Centre, Sydney Festival and Sydney Opera House. Consulting roles with Upwelling (Portland), Regional Arts Victoria and former Chair of the Dance Board of the Australia Council for the Arts.

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