

Case study

Fly-in Fly-out

Details

What:

Fly-In Fly-Out (FIFO) is a comic drama that examines the effect of the mining boom in a small Queensland community from the perspective of its young people. Debase productions toured the work in 2013 and 2015.

FIFO was developed in consultation with students, teachers, parents and community representatives within communities in central Queensland. The project was commissioned and supported by the Priority Country Area's Program (Central) and the Education Community Alliance. A key objective of the project was to create a work that was highly relevant for the touring destinations and grounded in the lived experiences of the communities. The work was a finalist in the 2013 Rodney Seaborn Playwright's Awards.

In 2013, FIFO toured to 10 Queensland communities. The success of this tour and the strong interest from other Queensland communities resulted in a second tour during 2015.

The 2015 production further engaged communities with a guided forum for the public which focused on story-sharing and a discussion about the themes and experiences in the play. Workshops were also held for school students on storytelling and play building.

When and where:

Premiere tour 2013 (April to May 2013) = Brisbane, Emerald, Blackwater, Capella, Moranbah, Clermont, Biloela, Springsure, Yeppoon and Maryborough.

2015 tour (February to June 2015) = Charters Towers, Townsville, Redlands, Brisbane, Miles, Roma, Toowoomba and Nambour.



Image credit: Lukas Davidson

Key stats for 2015 tour:

- 1926 attendees
- 3 new locations
- 95% of respondents rated the work as good or excellent

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$52,684 (2015 tour) – Playing Queensland Fund

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Links: www.debase.com.au/shows/flyinflyout

Outcomes

- debase successfully mounted and toured a production informed by, and developed with FIFO communities. The work has been well received by audience members and peers.

I was surprised how affecting the show was, I was laughing and crying and sometimes both at once. – Audience member

Light-hearted and hard-hitting. A razor sharp insight into the highly-strung emotions of a FIFO household ... of any household. – XS Entertainment

- The tour has helped debase to cement existing relationships as well as build new relationships with regional venues, local government, arts councils and schools. This has resulted in discussion around performances of the production for 2016.
- Following the 2013 tour, the FIFO script was published by Playlab and a DVD was created. The play is now used in several schools including in a number of the communities that were part of the 2015 tour. Seventeen copies of FIFO DVD were sold to schools and community organisations during the 2015 tour.



Image credit: Lukas Davidson.

Learnings and reflections

FIFO tours have resulted in outcomes for both debase and the communities involved in the tour.

debase noted experience in touring in 2013 resulted in changes to the set and costumes for the 2015 tour to make the tour easier and more economical. New approaches were also adopted by debase in preparing this tour.

The tour was a 'patchwork' collaboration between debase and a number of partners, presenters and communities. The 'patchwork' consisted of a co-producing and co-logistics relationship with arTour, straight buy-in relationships with some presenters, co-presenting with others, a mixture of relationships directly with schools and presenters, as well as partnerships within the tour – for example working with USQ to present the Southwest leg of the tour.

A number of internal administrative processes were refined and reworked as part of this tour and some areas for improvement identified.

The timing of the production in some communities was problematic, particularly school groups. debase noted:

If we were to organise this tour again we would strive to avoid the exam periods and lock in performances at least six months ahead to give schools a better chance to confirm their attendance.