




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, The Arts

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (10.04 am): The Palaszczuk government is ensuring Queenslanders have access to vibrant arts and cultural experiences no matter where they live in our great state. The North Australia Festival of the Arts, hosted in Townsville in July this year, was an incredible example of exciting arts events taking place in regional Queensland. The Palaszczuk government's \$200,000 investment in the festival for this year and next year demonstrates our commitment to bringing the arts to Queenslanders right across the state.

We are also redefining support for the arts. In its first year of operation the new Regional Arts Services Network continues to go from strength to strength. Our government is investing \$6.5 million over four years to establish local arts service providers in eight regions across Queensland, offering a new approach to delivering regional arts and cultural initiatives while also boosting local jobs. The eight local arts service providers are run by local organisations to promote artistic development and support social and economic outcomes in each region.

In the past year we have seen arts providers working collaboratively with local councils to maximise benefits across various regions. For example, synchronised art trails are being created that tell the stories of their region through water tower murals, painted silos and other public art commissions. One of these arts trails, called Trailblazing the West, is transforming water tanks into public art in nine locations across Western Queensland, including Mount Isa, Charleville and Cunnamulla. These trails will do great things to promote and increase tourism, supporting local jobs and local economic investment. That is the great contribution the arts can make in regional Queensland.

We are also supporting job-generating infrastructure projects, including a new \$150 million theatre to be constructed at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre here in Brisbane that will deliver a new world-class facility for our state. We are also investing in the refurbishment of the Centre of Contemporary Arts in Queensland. In consultation with the local arts community and traditional owners, the venue will feature a redesign of the building's façade and entry to reflect the building's focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing arts. The Palaszczuk government recognises that our local communities know their regions best, and that is why it is vital we have programs that promote the role and value of regional arts and cultures as key drivers of inclusive and strong communities.