



DATE: February 2017

## **JOH'S BACK TO BRING HIS PUMPKIN SCONE DIPLOMACY TO ALL OF AUSTRALIA**

Hot new musical *Joh for PM*, a co-production between JUTE Theatre Company, Brisbane Powerhouse and Queensland Music Festival, launches this July to take Queenslanders on a musical romp through the life of ex-Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen, the Queensland icon who set state politics alight.

The musical comedy aims to satirize the bizarre events that occurred in Australian and global politics during the Bjelke-Petersen rein.

Broadway Director and Artistic Director of Brisbane Powerhouse Kris Stewart is proud of the Queensland-based team and looks forward to opening night.

"I can't wait to unveil the performance at the Brisbane Powerhouse. We don't get too many home-grown productions in Queensland and I think our cheeky take on local and global politics will be a real hit."

"We've got some great talent on stage and behind the curtain. With a team like this, Queensland audiences are in for a treat," said Mr Stewart.

*Joh for PM* includes performances from Colin Lane, Barb Lowing, Chloe Dallimore, Kurt Phelan, Stephen Hirst and Simon Burvill-Homes.

The script is written by Brisbane-based award winning playwright Stephen Carleton (*The Narcissist*, *The Turquoise Elephant*, *Bastard Territory*) with an all-original score by Broadway composer Paul Hodge (*Clinton: The Musical*).

"Joh was obviously around for quite a while and so in writing the score, I've tried to make it move forward with the time period, covering a range of styles like late-60s protest songs, disco and some gloriously tacky 80s music," said Mr Hodge

"We couldn't have a Joh musical without some of his classic lines. So expect songs like *Don't You Worry About That*, *Feed The Chooks* and *Pumpkin Scone Diplomacy*, along with a lot of surprises!"

The play debuts 7 July 2017 in Brisbane, opening the *Queensland Music Festival*, and runs until 15 July, before touring to Cairns for a much anticipated season later in the year.

The creatives for the project include **Director** Kris Stewart, **Playwright** Stephen Carleton, **Music & Lyrics** Paul Hodge, **Designer** Anthony Spineze, **Musical Supervision and Orchestrations** James Dobinson, **Lighting Designer** Jason Glenwright, **Choreographer** Dan Venz.

In commissioning the work from Stephen Carleton, Suellen Maunder, CEO and Artistic Director of JUTE Theatre Company said they always knew that Joh and his political rein was a potent story to tell.

"These colourful and controversial political characters from our not too distant past are larger than life and made for musical comedy. JUTE adds a good dose of regional Queensland's vibrant rhetoric to cast a shining light on this new Australian work which is shaping up to be a highlight of its 25th anniversary year," Maunder said.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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*Joh for PM* is a co-presentation between Jute Theatre Company, Brisbane Powerhouse and Queensland Music Festival.

Queensland Music Festival Artistic Director, Katie Noonan is looking forward to featuring the premiere of this new musical in the 2017 program.

“Making art and having a diverse political opinion was an act of genuine anarchy in the 80’s and I am super excited to hear this spirit come alive in this new production. I am sure the fervent political landscape of the Joh and Flo era will be a veritable goldmine of inspiration for Kris, Paul, Stephen and their stellar cast to explore,” said Noonan.

“You seriously couldn’t write this stuff (!) but I am really looking forward to seeing these crazy stories brought to life through song. Paul Hodge is steering the ship of new and exciting musical theatre here and around the world, and we at the Queensland Music Festival are very proud to support this talent alongside the rest of the fabulous Queensland cast.”

Cairns based JUTE Theatre Company is in the business of making great theatre and developing exceptional diverse new works. Brisbane Powerhouse is Queensland’s home for contemporary culture, a power station of the 1920’s reborn as an iconic arts centre on the Brisbane River.

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**Joh for PM, 7-15 July 2017, Powerhouse Theatre, Brisbane Powerhouse**  
**Book now [brisbanepowerhouse.org](http://brisbanepowerhouse.org). Presented by Jute Theatre Company, Brisbane Powerhouse and Queensland Music Festival.**

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