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## MEDIA RELEASE

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED 6PM TUESDAY 30 MAY, 2017**

Queensland Music Festival selects 11 female singer-songwriters from Mount Isa, Gladstone and Mackay to participate in mentorship program

Queensland Music Festival (QMF) Artistic Director Katie Noonan has selected 11 finalists for the inaugural *Songs That Made Me* mentorship program, which aims to empower and support emerging female singer-songwriters in the Mount Isa, Mackay and Gladstone regions.

After submitting video entries performing two songs – an original song and a song that inspired them to become a singer-songwriter, a song that made them – three finalists from Mount Isa, four from Mackay and four from Gladstone have been selected to participate in an exciting mentorship and performance program. The finalists' details will be announced later this week.

Part of QMF 2017, this rare opportunity will see finalists learn from some of Australia's most celebrated female musicians including Katie herself, Deborah Conway, Clare Bowditch, Hannah Macklin and Leigh Carriage.

The *Songs That Made Me* program seeks to address the low percentage of registered female Australian musicians. Recent APRA AMCOS (Australasian Performing Right Association and Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society) statistics highlighted a female membership of only 21.7 per cent.

QMF Artistic Director Katie Noonan is a passionate advocate for female musicians.

"I am very committed to empowering and supporting female musicians. Women are currently under-represented in the music industry, and challenges are compounded in regional areas through a lack of access to resources and mentors," Ms Noonan said.

"*Songs That Made Me* will help connect emerging artists in regional Queensland to established female musicians, developing vital skills that could launch new careers."

Queensland Premier and Minister for Arts Anastacia Palaszczuk congratulated all three finalists on their selection and applauded QMF's initiative *Songs That Made Me* for celebrating women in music and providing emerging artists with significant development opportunities to help realise their full potential.

"*Songs That Made Me* shines a light on our emerging female musicians – particularly in remote and rural areas – and offers finalists an incredible opportunity to perform in their hometowns alongside signature artists," Ms Palaszczuk said.

“Katie’s vision of providing our community with a voice through music is inspiring. QMF is an extraordinary celebration of music bringing the best talent to our towns, cities, regions and remote centres. I encourage people to attend the *Songs That Made Me* regional concerts and finale show in Brisbane to show their support.”

This year the Queensland Government is proud to support QMF to realise music programs that seek to engage and shape positive change in our community with a focus on social cohesion, women, youth engagement and community revitalisation.

The *Songs That Made Me* mentorship program will kick off in June when the finalists participate in a mentoring workshop in their hometown with Katie Noonan and music educator Leigh Carriage (21–22 June in Gladstone, 23–24 June in Mackay and 28–29 June in Mount Isa). They will also receive mentoring from local talent: Megan Sarmardin in Mount Isa, Kristin Berardi in Mackay and Hayley Marsten in Gladstone.

In July, the finalists will participate in a local masterclass with Deborah Conway, Clare Bowditch and Hannah Macklin before performing alongside these signature artists, their local mentor and an all-female rhythm section featuring Myka Wallace (drums), Jess Green (guitar) and Helen Svoboda (bass guitar) in a local concert. The concerts in Mount Isa (11 July), Mackay (13 July) and Gladstone (15 July) will also include a local choir or ensemble.

The *Songs That Made Me* tour will conclude with a very special concert at The Tivoli in Brisbane on Sunday 16 July, where audiences will be treated to a sizzling all female line-up featuring Deborah Conway, Clare Bowditch, Hannah Macklin, the all-female rhythm section, Brisbane choir Cheep Trill and regional mentors Megan Sarmardin, Kristin Berardi and Hayley Marsten.

Songs That Made Me is presented by Queensland Music Festival, Brisbane City Council, Mount Isa City Council, Gladstone Regional Council and Mackay City Council, and supported by the Queensland Government, APRA AMCOS, Australia Council for the Arts, RODE Microphones, Glencore Mount Isa Mines and The Tivoli.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. Queensland Music Festival is an initiative of the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. This project has also received support through the Playing Queensland Fund.

For more information and to book visit [qmf.org.au](http://qmf.org.au).

#### **EVENT DETAILS**

EVENT: *Songs That Made Me* concert Mount Isa

DATE: Tuesday 11 July 2017

TIME: 7:30pm

VENUE: Mount Isa Civic Centre

TICKETS: Free

EVENT: *Songs That Made Me* concert Mackay

DATE: Thursday 13 July 2017

TIME: 7:30pm

VENUE: Mackay Entertainment Convention Centre (MECC)

TICKETS: Adult \$25, Student / Concession \$20, Groups 6+ \$20, Friends of The Festival / MECC \$20, Children (12 years old and under) \$10, Children (2 years old and under) free

EVENT: *Songs That Made Me* concert Gladstone

DATE: Saturday 15 July 2017

TIME: 7:30pm

VENUE: GPC Parklands Marina Stage

TICKETS: Free

EVENT: *Songs That Made Me* finale concert Brisbane

DATE: Sunday 16 July 2017

TIME: 7pm

VENUE: The Tivoli, Brisbane

TICKETS: Adult \$45, Student / Concession \$42

## ENDS

Queensland Music Festival is an initiative of the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Queensland Music Festival is a state-wide celebration of music with a vision to transform lives and communities through music.

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Queensland Music Festival is an initiative of the Queensland Government