

Mount Isa forms one of world's most remote symphony orchestras

Mount Isa now boasts one of the world's most remote symphony orchestras thanks to a 16-year partnership with Queensland Music Festival (QMF), with the new group to perform a new composition inspired by the city during the 2015 festival.

Mount Isa Celebrates will see the city's new symphony orchestra perform under the umbrella of Mount Isa Community Ensemble (MICE) for the world premiere performance of Australian composer Matthew Dewey's latest work in two special concerts on 23 and 24 July at Mount Isa Civic Centre.

MICE was established in 2014 to unite the city's concert bands, string orchestras and community and school choirs to form an ensemble comprising more than 300 locals.

Since 1999, QMF has worked with Mount Isa City Council to stage five major concerts, while hundreds of workshops, rehearsals and other small events have touched the lives of thousands of people across North West Queensland.

Mount Isa Mayor Tony McGrady said establishing MICE was a huge milestone for the city's people and hoped it would benefit generations to come.

"The arts play a major role in fostering healthy communities, including providing work opportunities, attracting tourism, promoting cultural diversity and opening the eyes of young people to alternative forms of creativity and self-expression," Cr McGrady said.

"There are some really exciting arts projects happening in Mount Isa and we are thrilled QMF has commissioned a new work especially for MICE, celebrating our city.

"QMF was fundamental in the formation of our symphony orchestra, dedicating more than a decade of work to bringing music, art and passion to our city and its people."

Directed by international composer and conductor Sean O'Boyle, *Mount Isa Celebrates* will also feature world-renowned artists James Morrison, Emma Pask, Ian Cooper, Ambre Hammond and John Morrison Trio, with design by Maria Cleary.

QMF Artistic Director James Morrison said *Mount Isa Celebrates* was a huge legacy achievement for the Festival and Queensland arts in general.

"After visiting Mount Isa for so many years we saw a huge amount of talent and really wanted to showcase it by commissioning a work for the city," Mr Morrison said.

"The final piece to the puzzle was a symphony orchestra and last year I simply asked if creating one in Mount Isa was possible and before I knew it, they were already in rehearsals and planning an end-of-year gala concert!"

“It has been really rewarding after all of our work in Mount Isa to see the community come together with its love of music to form MICE, now complete with a symphony orchestra. The city can really rejoice and take pride in this achievement.”

Mount Isa Celebrates is presented by Queensland Music Festival and Mount Isa City Council and is proudly supported by Major Partner Mount Isa Mines, The Buffs Club, Conexus Consulting and The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Date: Thursday 23 and Friday 24 July 2015

Venue: Mount Isa Civic Centre

Queensland Music Festival is an initiative of the Queensland Government and a state-wide celebration of music with a vision to transform lives through unforgettable musical experiences.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through: the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body; and by the Regional Arts Fund, which supports sustainable cultural development in regional, rural, and remote Australia to give artists and communities better access to opportunities to practice and experience the arts.

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