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## Brisbane writer David Megarrity announced as winner of the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2018-19 with *'The Holidays'*

From over 90 entries for the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2018-19 (QDPA), and the trio of finalists revealed earlier this year, Brisbane writer **David Megarrity** has been announced the winner with his tender and lyrical family-oriented play, *The Holidays*.

Megarrity's work was selected ahead of fellow finalists **Hannah Belanzky** for *'don't ask what the bird look like'* and **Anna Yen** for her work *Slow Boat*. Delivered through Queensland Theatre, the QDPA is a prestigious and important award for Australian Theatre in that it guarantees a professional production of the winning entry.

*The Holidays* introduces us to 12-year-old Oliver Holiday and his Mum and Dad who are suddenly on their way to his Grandfather's beachside cottage. However, as more clouds loom, it appears that the Holidays, instead of getting away from it all, have taken on a burden - or a legacy - they are unsure how to manage.

"David Megarrity's *The Holidays* is a disarming meditation on mortality and father son relationships. It's a delicious combination of high-tech ambition and low-fi theatricality. David's unique imagination and command of all of the elements of storytelling will create a deeply affecting sensory experience for audiences when we bring it to the stage", said Queensland Theatre Artistic Director Sam Strong, who was part of the judging panel for the awards.

"The QDPA sits at the centre of Queensland Theatre's ambition to lead from Queensland in the nurturing of new stories and new talent. This cycle of the award featured a wonderfully diverse range of works from writers from all around the country, including an all-Queensland shortlist of an impressively crafted debut play from Hannah Belanzky, and an epic multi-disciplinary historical story from Anna Yen. Congratulations to all the artists who contributed to and worked on the award," he said.

"We're also thrilled to announce that to even better reflect the importance of new stories to Queensland Theatre, we will be presenting a full production of *The Holidays* as part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season in 2020."

David Megarrity, who was also a finalist the 2012-13 cycle of the QDPA is an experienced theatre practitioner, writer, composer, musician and academic. Describing his winning play, Megarrity said, "this visual theatre piece combines live performers, projection, audience participation and music to explore the impact of dementia, as experienced by one family, focussing on the connections between son, father and grandfather - told through the eyes of a young person."

Since its inception, Queensland Theatre has developed 30 plays as part of the QDPA, employed more than 180 actors, writers and directors, and generated audiences of more than 30,000 to new Australian plays. Previous winning works include *Rice* by Michele Lee (2016-17), *Oedipus Doesn't Live Here Anymore* by Daniel Evans (2014-15), *Trollop* by Maxine Mellor (2012-13) and *Fractions* by Marcel Dorney (2010-11).

Judges for the 2018-19 Awards include **Mr Matthew Rigby**, Executive Director Integrated Communications and Protocol, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; **Mr Sam Strong**, Artistic Director of Queensland Theatre; **Mr Isaac Drandic**, Resident Dramaturg of Queensland Theatre; **Ms Lee Lewis**, Artistic Director of Griffin Theatre Company and **Mr Ian Lawson**, Artistic Director of Playlab.