

Case study

Cypher

Details

What:

*A Cypher is hip hop's most important ritual, the circle that happens at b*boy jams with dancers vying for the open space in the centre to dance their set one at a time.*

arTour toured Nick Power's new work *Cypher*, produced by Britt Guy, to Queensland regional communities during 2016.

Cypher featured four high level b*boys (break dancers) pushing the boundaries of their art form using movement, gestures and energy to challenge, communicate and celebrate the culture of hip hop.

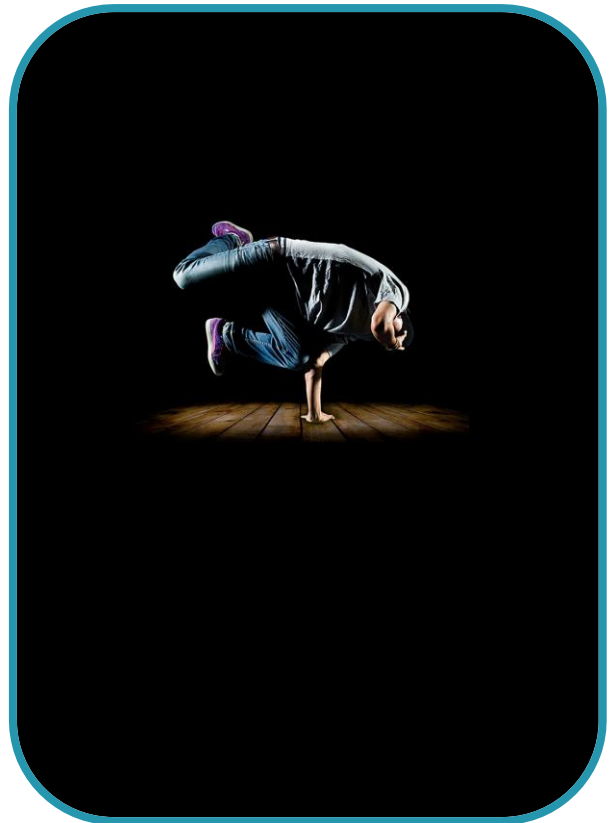
The tour included 54 workshop opportunities for young people to learn and practice their skills with these internationally respected artists. These ranged from workshops with prep students at schools to master classes for students with a dance background.

When:

18 May to 16 June 2016

Where:

Toowoomba Taroom Theodore Biloela Baralaba
Moura Mount Perry Biggenden, Coalstoun Lakes
Dallarnil Mulgildie Abercorn Eidsvold Brisbane Roma
Quilpie Winton Longreach Barcaldine Tambo Blackall



Cypher. Image: Nick Bassett

Key stats:

- 5 paid artists/ arts cultural workers
- 15 performances
- 54 community engagement activities
- 1807 attendees

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$65,000 – Playing Queensland Fund

Contact for further information:

<http://www.artour.com.au/artists/cypher-by-nick-power>

Outcomes

- Students of all ages and skills levels developed new skills through involvement in workshops. Students from the master class workshops had the opportunity to perform a small sequence learnt at the workshops at the beginning of the *Cypher* show.
- The tour provided professional development opportunities to local dance instructors. Two dance instructors from Barcaldine and Longreach shadowed the company at their workshops and performances.
- *Cypher* engaged many young men and was able to promote the importance of resilience through self-confidence. The male dancers were also a role model for young people living in regional Queensland, as they demonstrated that hip-hop dance requires a lot of strength and fitness.

A positive outcome of the workshop included students seeing males dancing and the athletic skills that are required to complete some of the dance moves. Teacher

It was pleasing to see our secondary boys (aged 12 to 15), who are usually reluctant to undertake any form of dance, participate and interact with the presenters.” - Teacher

- Working with councils to deliver multiple workshops within schools, over a week was a new approach for arTour and worked very well with *Cypher*. This approach will be explored further with future projects, which introduce students to new skills, and/or up-skilling of students.



Cypher. Image: Amy Hethrington

Feedback

The dancers having fun made us have fun. - Quilpie

Students were positive and buoyant with the feeling of accomplishment on the new skills they acquired. - Teacher

Performers and workshop instructors related to the youth very well. During the performance, they kept the audience engaged and very interested. Audience loved the interactive format of the performance. All communities where the workshops and performances were held were very pleased. - North Burnett Regional Council.

Learnings and reflections

arTour found the workshops, in particular school workshops, were crucial in the success of the performances

The evening shows were always the quietest, but shows programmed straight after school, or at the end of the school day with general public invited, had the most energy and were received the best by the audience, especially if the team had just delivered workshops. arTour would strongly recommend that any work for a youth demographic touring to regional and remote towns work closely with the councils and schools to program in-school activities. Feedback from one school included splitting the students based on ability rather than age. However, the teacher also realises that would make timetabling difficult and disrupt classes over a longer period

arTour found working closely with local governments to be very effective.

A slightly different approach was used to build the tour, focussing on local councils and tapping into their community development needs. The arrangement in Banana and North Burnett were particularly effective allowing us to access new schools and communities not usually involved in touring productions.