

SANDFLY CIRCUS — A MOVEABLE FEAST

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [12.06 pm]: I would also like to pay my respects to Mr Leggett and acknowledge his contribution to our Australian story.

I rise to inform the house of a spectacular show I attended recently in Broome. The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries recently granted Theatre Kimberley just over \$39 000 to promote participation and active engagement in a new circus production. The community engagement project's \$15 000-plus grant provided Theatre Kimberley with the opportunity to offer the Pitts Family Circus an extended residency, offering local artists, who are isolated geographically, the rare opportunity to develop their skills and relationships with experienced and well-connected artists.

A Moveable Feast is a Sandfly Circus skills and creative development residency and production, directed by Bronte Webster and Gareth Bjaaland. Over six weeks, the highly acclaimed Pitts Family Circus principals, Bronte Webster and Gareth Bjaaland, were in residence with Theatre Kimberley's Sandfly Circus. They engaged with local artists to develop important skills, which culminated in the major production *A Sandfly in My Soup* in collaboration with Theatre Kimberley's artistic team. This project provided further opportunities for arts engagement, including two mentorships, additional Pitts and Sandfly performances and trainer training. This grant allowed locals in Broome to see a performance that not only was great fun, but also showed off the talents of people in their community.

After seeing *A Sandfly in My Soup*, I am glad this funding was able to support the development of new work and new skills for performers and those working behind the scenes in Broome. I was amazed at the aerial acrobatics and the brilliant talent on display by local children of the Kimberley. Theatre Kimberley has a two-year waitlist in Broome and it is not hard to see why. Not only was it a highly entertaining production, but also it supported the local community and boosted the local economy. It embraces the arts and encourages personal development through play. I must congratulate Jael Johnson, the Theatre Kimberley manager, and Meredith Bell, the artistic director, who worked tirelessly to get this production up and running.