# **Phi Theodoros** is a musician and cabaret performer whose new show ***Finding Me*** will be premiering at the Adelaide Fringe on the 27th of February, before heading to Port Lincoln to do a run of shows there.

**Mark:**  *I’m here with Phi Theodoros, Hi Phi!*

**Phi:** Hi, how you doing?

**M:** *You’re doing a show this Fringe.*

**P:** I am!

**M:** *It’s called Finding Me.*

**P:** Yeah. That’s it.

**M:** *It’s your second solo – is it a solo show?*

**P:** Well it’s myself and my cowriter James Dean, so he’s playing the piano and we’ve written the monologues and all the music together, so… And he was involved in Depression the Musical, which was the show I did a few years ago and that’s the last time I did and original work like this.

**M:** *So this is your second show.*

**P:** My second original show, yes, and the first time I’ve performed in the Fringe in like eight years myself.

**M:** *Wow.*

**P:** Yeah, I’ve been running around producing other people’s work every Fringe, but [laughs]

**M:** *Are you excited to finally get back into it?*

**P:** I am, yeah. It’s really exciting to get back on the stage, and I think… I mean the style of the show is all about sharing stories from… I guess people you don’t often hear from. And that’s a lot of the work I do in the community sector and community arts and the sort of things I’ve produced for Fringe over the last eight years. But um yeah, this is kinda taking the shift and – not that I’m looking for the limelight, but it’s really nice to get back on stage and be able to sing and perform and be a storyteller.

**M:** *Absolutely. So was the process different this time around?*

**P:** Very different from Depression the Musical. So when I did that show I did a call out through Community Arts Network and invited people to share their stories, whereas this show kind of formed while I was in a gym class and I was dancing around and I was like “oh, that’d be a good idea for a show”. And it’s really transformed since the initial idea, so… Finding Me is set in a support group so as you come along and sit in the audience you are part of the Happiness Sunshine Support Group, otherwise known as Finding Me where it’s a safe space for people to connect and share their stories of identity, self-acceptance, and self-love. And… yeah, so we basically looked at well “who are the characters.” And we really wanted to have a strong LGBT focus, so three out of the four characters are clearly identifying as LGBT in some way or some kind of – there’s gender fluidity, there’s um… yeah, balancing your religion and your sexuality as well, so there’s some really interesting characters. And we just wanted, yeah, we wanted to have this whole snapshot of different people you don’t usually hear from

**M:** *So it’s gonna be a t Raj House. How has Raj House been, because…?*

**P:** Oh, they have been amazing. I actually was a bit of a refugee from a venue that will not be named. Last year they… uh… pulled out just before Christmas and unfortunately my email was not on the email list to say “hey artists

**M:** *Oh wow.*

**P:** So I got a call from the lovely Jason at the Fringe, and he said “so, have you found a new venue?” And I went oh my goodness I have to find a new venue and Raj House have just been so beautiful.

**M:** *Yeah.*

**P:** And Joel and the team are so lovely and I feel so welcome there. And... not that I necessarily wanted to take a show that has lots of queer content to the queer space but it was just the best fit.

**M:** *Yeah, Raj House is really shaping up to be a decent – like a very good space this year.*

**P:** Yeah. There’s so many beautiful little spots and lots of great shows and as Joel said at the Fringe launch they hosted a few weeks back, all the shows have some sort of throughline about identity, so it doesn’t even necessarily have to be about sexuality, it’s just about come along and look at these strong humans being who they need to be, which is so aligned with this show.

**M:** *So you’re premiering your show on the twenty…*

**P:** Twenty seventh.

**M:** *Seventh of February. And then after the premiere, you’re taking it to Port Lincoln.*

**P:** Yeah, that’s right. So for all you listening here in Adelaide, you’ve got one chance to see it during the Fringe unless you wanna hit the road for seven and a half hours with me heading over to Lincoln. But because this is a new show concept – and there’s so many amazing shows on during the Fringe, there’s so much noise – I thought well let’s just do a short season, put it out there and see what people think and see if this is a concept that we can look at redoing. And maybe invite new characters to come out and speak at the group in future festivals. But… let’s just get through this season first before we start dreaming too much about the future. But one show in the city at Raj House and then we’re going to And the Rebel, which is the new venue for The Rogue and Rascal in Port Lincoln.

**M:** *Yeah. Why Port Lincoln?*

**P:** Um, well, I’m best friends with the two lovely ladies who own the space. And when I pitched the show – ‘cause they are a very happy rainbow space themselves at the rogue and rascal um and yeah, they essentially said yes please, make this show a thing, bring it over. We’ll make it happen and so there’s a bit of buzz growing In Port Lincoln, which is pretty exciting. And it’s gonna be real exciting to play in their new space

**M:** *So I guess you’ve got a little song to share with us*

**P:** I do! So this is um… A few weeks ago – and some people that have had me on Facebook might have seen the whirlwind that putting a post about trigger warnings created – so basically I wanted to know what people think about trigger warnings, and why they’re important, because there are some confronting themes in this show and we do really encourage people to look after themselves. We have in our guide some resources like headspace and lifeline so if something does come up for you by watching any of these characters we really want to make sure you’re okay. But these are real stories - well most of them are real stories – some of them are inspired by people some of them we created and then went “oh my goodness, that’s actually this person’s story, how did that even happen? Must be onto a good thing.” But yeah, this song is the opening song for the show, and it gives you a little bit of a heads up of what the show is gonna hold so maybe you might wanna come along and hear the rest of the show.

*Trigger warnings are often met with tension
Yet we’re fine with classifications, ratings
and advised viewer discretion
we’ll use content warnings, no harmful intention
Not about censorship this is also not protection
Something too much for you today… its totally ok to walk away

Content warnings aren’t hard to do
Generally a kind thing for people who
Have dealt with tough shit and might need a minute or two
To prepare, to see the session through

Find new ways to reclaim our dreams
Pull apart gender concepts, by the seams
identity, misogyny and internalized tyrrany

We’ll meet those who refuse the title victim
And others who are over self justification
Silence, partner violence, religion and defiance

Profanity, vanity, newfound hope and humanity

Trigger warnings are often met with tension
Yet we’re fine with classifications, ratings
and advised viewer discretion
So use your viewer discretion*

**M:** *Thank you so much Phi. You can catch Phi’s show on the 27th – Tuesday the 27th of February for one night at 7pm at Raj House before she heads over to Port Lincoln.*

**P:** Woo hoo!

**M:** *Thank you so much.*

**P:** Thank you so much! Hope to see you there!