

UPDATE: Waterloo's Jessica Bregenhoj wins Miss Universe design comp

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Winner: Jessica Bregenhoj

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A LOCAL designer has been given the opportunity of a lifetime after her distinctive gown was selected to be worn by Australia's Miss Universe contestant Renae Ayris in Las Vegas next month.

Jessica Bregenhoj was one of 400 designers who entered a national competition and the designs were whittled down to four by votes from viewers of Channel Seven's *Sunrise* program, which announced the winner this morning.

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The designer, who has been mentored by Alex Perry, said her costume was a symbol of Australia, with its golden sun, desert sands and Opera House motif.

Ms Bregenhoj, who works in Waterloo and has a strong background in fashion and design, said she first heard about the competition after her family saw it advertised on television.

"My auntie and sister told me I should enter after they saw it and I basically had the idea in my head that I wanted to create something that really showed off what Australia is," she said. "Since I have an art background, I took a lot of my inspiration from architecture in Sydney and I tried to recreate a lot of it in the dress. I also wanted it to be really fresh and bright and also represent the sunsets of Australia."

With the three other entrants coming from across the country, Ms Bregenhoj said she was not only competing to create a winning dress for Australia but also for Sydney.

Ms Bregenhoj's hard work was almost in vain as she nearly missed the cut-off for submitting her dress.

"The last week into it was the biggest challenge because I was a bit behind and I didn't realise it needed to be delivered to Melbourne and it was during the Melbourne Cup weekend. So I had to book a flight on the actual day it was due and rush it to the competition delivery point," she said.

"It took a month to make the dress and I missed two flights on the way down there so it was such a panic and a drama. I literally got the last seat on the plane being such a busy weekend. I was just so relieved when I dropped it off and knew everything was ok."