

Arena Theatre Co
presents

robot song

Education Pack





Contents

- About this pack
 - About Arena Theatre Co
 - About the Play
 - Cast & Creatives
 - Characters
 - Songs
 - Themes
 - Theatre Styles
 - Script
 - Video content
-

About this Education Pack

Arena knows that learning is important for all young (and not so young) people. Seeing theatre is an immersive fun experience and Arena believes it can transform young people's lives.

This education pack contains general information about Robot Song, and downloadable education resources for primary students and VCA students.

Robot Song in your school

As part of this education pack, Writer/Director/Designer Jolyon James will be hosting a Q&A session with your students. To book in your session please email preferred dates and times to info@arenatheatre.com.au.

Original notes created by Meg Upton, Arts-In-Sync, edited by Alexandra McAlister-Bills 2019.



About Arena

We create art and deliver programs that encourage children and young people to imagine new futures beyond the world defined by previous generations. We equip young people with the creative tools they need to contribute meaningfully to their community, and build a positive new world. Through our Creative Leaders program we also help the local teaching community engage better with students.

We know that our work has powerful impacts on children and young people because they tell us, because their teachers tell us, their parents tell us, and academics who study our work tell us. Above all, we know our work has powerful impacts because we see it with our own eyes.

The world we share isn't a simple one. It is often a world of challenges, of differences, of injustices and contradictions that children and young people are experiencing, along with the adults in their lives. Through theatre, we are able to explore their world in unique ways that are revealing, empowering and entertaining.

We approach young people under the cover of robotics, or augmented reality, or drones, or motion capture technology, and together – us, experts in making art, them, experts in being children and young people – together, we accidentally-on-purpose discover a whole lot of things about ourselves, about each other, about the world that we all share.

Arena Theatre respectfully acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung people, and the Taungurung Peoples of the Kulin Nation, the first peoples of country on which Arena Theatre stands. We pay our respects to all of Bendigo's First Peoples, and to their ancestors and elders. Indigenous sovereignty has never been ceded and we acknowledge that we continue to make art on what always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.

About Robot Song

When eleven-year-old Juniper May receives a petition signed by her entire class stating that she is 'the most hated person in the school' her life is thrown into complete meltdown. Juniper stops eating, she refuses to return to school and her parents become increasingly desperate. Finally, after exhausting all other avenues, her parents' resort to the only thing they have left, a giant singing robot.

Based on a true story, Robot Song illustrates the profound, transformative nature of creativity that when combined with unconditional love, becomes an unstoppable force. For Juniper, creativity opens doors into places she never knew existed allowing her, for the first time, to be defined on her own terms.

Robot Song is a deeply personal story. It shares an honest, intensely funny and often unconventional window into writer, director Jolyon James' experience parenting a child on the Autism Spectrum. The show poses and attempts to answer the question, how do we support, foster and celebrate difference in our children in the face of an increasingly rigid and homogenised world?

Robot Song is a genuine family show. It is joyful and full of hope. It is for any child who has ever felt isolated and any parent who is desperate for tools to help. The show employs cutting edge digital technology, startling animatronics and a beautiful original musical score.



Cast and Creatives



Sophie Smyth
Juniper



Phil McInnes
Juniper's Dad



Nate Gilkes
Musical Director



Battletac
As himself



Jolyon James
Writer/Director/Designer

Credits

Written, Directed and Designed by
Assistant Director
Dramaturg
Composer/Musical Director
Script Consultant
Costume Design
Lighting Design
Production Manager
Stage Manager
Performed by

JOLYON JAMES
SARAH BRANTON
CHRISTIAN LEAVESLEY
NATHAN GILKES
ANTHONY CROWLEY
BETH SAYER
PAUL LIM
BEN VAN DILLEN
ANNA PIDGEON
SOPHIE SMYTH
PHILLIP MCINNES
JO ABBOTT (MUSICIAN)

Characters



Juniper May

An eleven year old girl, also known as Junee, Pixel and a heap of other names. Juniper also plays the Principal Mr Scryber.



Dad

Juniper's Dad, an artist. Also plays Miss Cummings, Miss Hope, Classmates and Battletac



Mum

Juniper's Mother, the musician



Battletac

A famous giant robot from the 1980's, performed and operated by Dad.



Gomi

A large industrial recycling bin, played by herself



Miss Cummings

Juniper's art teacher, played by Dad



Principal Scryber

Principal of Juniper's school, played by Juniper

Songs in the show

Weird

The Tragic True Story of the Poo and the Tupperware

Battletac Theme

The Joy that Rubbish Brings

People say I'm like a Robot

If I Sing

Themes and ideas

Recognising and celebrating difference

Modern Parenting

Bullying

The power of creativity

Friendship

Defining your own identity

A note on Autism

Whilst it is never stated in the show, Juniper May is on the Autism Spectrum. Her character has been developed based on Writer/Director/Designer Jolyon James own experience parenting a child on the Autism Spectrum and extensive research and consultation, particularly in regards to girls and women with Autism.

We hope this play encourages you and your students to celebrate difference in all its forms.

Resources

Click on the symbols to view the documents in your browser.



[Download script](#)



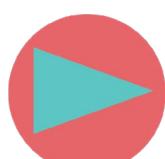
[Download primary resources](#)



[Download VCE resources](#)



[Robot Song Trailer](#)



[Robot Song Full Show
\(Password required\)](#)

For further information or queries, contact Arena Theatre Co

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