

MEDIA RELEASE

5 June 2018

Local Children Create and Star in Unique New Musical

For six months, a group of local children have been working to devise their very own musical as part of Tuggeranong Arts Centre's Community Arts and Cultural Development Program. The result, *Just Like Clockwork: A Musical*, will debut on the Tuggeranong Theatre stage on Friday 22nd June.

Under the direction of Tim and Nathalie Bevitt, the children, aged between 7 and 13 years, began work on the musical in January. After two school holiday intensives and a semester of Saturday workshops they're now in final rehearsals for the production, which promises to be truly one of a kind.

The Arts Centre created the six-month performance development project in response to a demonstrated need for affordable, accessible arts activity for children in the south of Canberra. The aim of the project was to offer children from all backgrounds the opportunity to participate in a rewarding, self-esteem building, and creative arts experience without the high costs or competitive nature often associated with extra-curricular activities.

Of particular concern to the Centre was the need for the program to reach participants who would not normally have access to this kind of program. Instead of promoting the program through traditional channels, the Centre first reached out to its partners in schools and community organisations to identify local children who would most benefit from the opportunity.

Tuggeranong Arts Centre CEO Rauny Worm sees the program's length and scale as key to its success, commenting, 'offering children the opportunity to devise a piece of theatre, a musical even - is an amazing creative process to be involved in. Self-devised children's theatre takes time, resources and much commitment from children and families. The process relies on theatre practitioners, who understand their craft as inspirational direction givers and nurturers of the young imagination.'

Director Tim Bevitt says, 'the format of the program has given us the space to create a place for the children to really shape and craft the story, characters and songs in a way that normally would be much more superficial. One of the benefits is that they have participated in the creation of a musical from the very start of the process to the finished product. This is a rare experience for any performer and we think it will really affect the way that they see theatre and its creation.'

Parent to two of the production's stars Roberta Curr says, 'My kids have loved the level of creative involvement, from story creation and script development right through to acting and singing. Mr Tim and Miss Nat have weaved the kids' thoughts and ideas into a musical comedy production like no other. We all know how creative kids are and it will be wonderful to see that shine through in this musical comedy.'

Responding to the Arts Centre annual theme 'entropy' the children have devised a plot which revolves around curious inventor Alberta Clausius Thompson Morowitz and her philosophical snow leopard friend Morbid Redfrost as they join a motley crew of Questers drawn by trickery through a clock faced portal into a decaying theme park. Featuring a cast of unicorns, talking pizzas, jumping jellybeans, a moustachioed dinosaur and a sentient fart, *Just Like Clockwork* is certain to draw a giggle from young ones of all ages, and the young at heart!

***Just Like Clockwork* will premiere at Tuggeranong Arts Centre.**

Shows: 6.30pm Friday 22nd June AND 3pm Saturday 23rd June

Tickets: \$12 each

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/VSJV