



Introductory Notes: Moss Piglet

1. Introductory information

Event name: Moss Piglet

Event presenter: Windmill Theatre Company in association with Adelaide Festival Centre.

Event date and time:

The audio-described performance is on **Saturday 19th October 2024** at 10:30am with a touch tour commencing at 9.45am.

Event location:

The production takes place in the **Space Theatre** at the Adelaide Festival Centre.

Runtime: 40 minutes (with no interval)

Event synopsis: This theatre piece is all about Tardigrades!

Small but mighty, they have withstood multiple extinction cycles, surviving boiling temperatures and the freezing temperatures of space. Some people call them 'Water Bears', others call them 'Moss Piglets'.

Moss Piglet is a show about these small and curious critters. Taking us from jelly-filled petri dishes to the depths of a volcano to Arctic glaciers to the moon, this show explodes the mysteries of the wildly weird tardigrade.

Warnings: At times during the performance there will be flashing lights, haze effects and loud music. You can bring headphones and can exit the theatre at any time.

Installation: An interactive installation will be set up in the Space Theatre foyer, where children (and fun-loving adults) can view various materials through high powered microscopes. You'll also see a stunning filmed collage, created with and by the students of Ocean View College and local artists Emmaline Zanelli and Liam Sommerville. The installation will be open 30 minutes pre- and post-show.

Audio Describers: Carol Wellman Kelly and Jules Fielke

2. Set description

The stage has a dark painted floor and black curtains around the sides. The set is like a large circle, that is pale yellow on one side and has a green wedge on the other. There are two walls across the back slightly offset, the one on the left is pale yellow and has a large white round screen (about 1.2m across) in the top left corner. At the beginning it shows a logo of the Scientific Research Company on it. A bright green wall sits slightly in front of the yellow one and its front edge slants towards the right. The space between them is the entrance that the actors use to come on and off, into the playing space.

On the left, is a science laboratory with a metal bench. It has a bright green countertop and a curved sink on the right, close to the entrance at the centre of the stage. The sink has a tall bright-green gooseneck tap, and real water comes



through it when it's turned on! The bench is covered with lots of interesting science apparatus; from glass test tubes and orange safety goggles to a large conical flask held by a clamp, beakers, a Bunsen burner, a microscope and round glass petri dishes. There is also an old-fashioned orange telephone, with a handset connected to the phone by a twirly stretchy cord.

Another prop used in the lab is the *Freeze Master 5000*. It is a large white handheld machine that blasts very cold ice. It is carried by a top handle and another at the back of the machine. It has a clear central chamber which blows around white flecks, and lights up with blue Lazer lights, the front nozzle shoots out extremely cold air, that fogs up the atmosphere.

In front of the angled green wall stands a tall metal volcano. The volcano is triangular, has a blunt top and small wheels or castors on the bottom so it can be moved around easily. When the volcano erupts, thin red glove-like balloons fingers, fill with air and wave about on the top of the cupboard, like flames and lava. It can split in half, creating two separate triangular cupboard-like shapes. Sometimes they are turned on their sides and become a ramp or a runway. At other times they split apart like a crevasse or deep ravine in a mountainside, or the automated doors of a spaceship. A blue shadow puppet screen is also pulled out between them and the silhouette of various puppet creatures are projected onto this.

Alongside the volcano is a low wedge-shaped green platform. Above the platform are some very tall (3-5m), inflated tubes of green plastic, that curl around; they look just like giant strands of the moss seen through a microscope.

There are two camera's that work in real time and project images up onto the large round screen in the top left-hand corner of the set (above the actors' heads when they are standing in the laboratory). One camera is on our left, next to the bench in the laboratory and captures images of things happening at the bench. The other one is at the front of the stage on our right facing the green wall and floor circle. The green background acts like a green screen in the movies, allowing for special effects and computer-generated imagery (CGI). The subject in front of the green screen (often Scientist #1 acting as a Moss Piglet), and the special video background effects, are layered together. The result is one magical picture on the round screen above the laboratory.

The lights Blackout as the stage is reset for the next scene. Other times lighting effects and projections can take over the whole stage, covering the walls and floor, creating whole environments like a dry sandy desert, the centre of a volcano engulfed in flames or fire, the icy snowy South Pole, underwater in the sea or the expanse of outer space.

Shadow puppets are used in The Deep Ocean Trench scene. There are lots of fish, sharks and a huge whale, a small submarine and a diver. There is also a white

translucent jellyfish with long tentacles that suddenly lights up with a pink neon glow, it drifts and bobs about, suspended on a long flexible fishing rod- like pole.

3. Characters and Costumes

There are two actors, dressed as scientists.

Scientist #1 Gareth Davies – Gareth is older and wiser and has an expressive face and short brown hair thinning a bit on top. He wears a green Adidas soccer jersey with white trim and long green shorts with pale purple leggings underneath.

Scientist #2 Dylan Miller – Dylan is younger in his mid-twenties. He has a mop of dark hair on top, a curly fringe, short at the sides and a tidy moustache. Dylan has a twinkle in his eye and gets up to mischief wearing a long-sleeved green Adidas tracksuit top and long green cargo pants, pulled in with elastic at the ankles.

Both Gareth and Dylan have on chunky high-top Nike trainers with electric orange and yellow features. They both wear long white science Laboratory coats with green collar, cuffs and pocket stripes.

Moss Piglet appears in many shapes and sizes throughout the play. Both actors manipulate the Moss Piglet puppets.

To start, Moss Piglet is a purple and yellow **microscopic** lumpy elongated blob, like a semi-transparent slug, projected up on the circular screen.

Miniature Moss Piglet is a tiny purple ball on a stick in the ice sculpture, or small puppet on the slalom slopes, skiing.

Infant sized Moss Piglet, operated by Dylan's hand, is pale- purple, pillowy and cute. Rings of puffy purple fabric from head to foot, make up the body with four sets of short puffy legs with soft claws. This Moss Piglet has a short stubby nose like a pig.

Adult sized Moss Piglet is like a big purple puffy sleeping bag with Gareth inside. His own hands are the top two legs with the other three sets of legs wagging from the costume in front. Gareth becomes big Moss Piglet with his face peeking out from inside big purple hood.

In the shadow puppet play, Moss Piglet is a **2D** cut out shape who swims under water and encounters whales, sharks and divers.

Throughout the play we hear a voice telling us the story, like a narrator, this is called a "Voiceover"; a recorded voice or someone that speaks but doesn't appear on stage.

4. Creatives



Director & Co-Creator: Clare Watson
Co-Creator: Elena Carapetis
Performer Scientist 1 & Co-Creator: Gareth Davies
Performer Scientist 2: Dylan Miller
Designer: Meg Wilson
Lighting Designer: Chris Petridis & Richard Vabre
Composer & Sound Designer: Luke Smiles
AV Designer: Michael Carmody
Puppetry Directors: Jonathon Oxlade & Nathan O'Keefe
Movement Director: Larissa McGowan

5. Access information

The production takes place in the **Space Theatre** at the Adelaide Festival Centre.

There is an accessible drop off area located off Festival Drive under the River-bank Footbridge, with a lift to the promenade level.

A designated disability drop off is also available 45 minutes before performances. To access the drop off area, turn onto Festival Drive from King William Road, pass the Festival Plaza car park entrance and stay left, driving through the EOS Hotel visitor drop off loop to arrive at the Space Theatre access drop off.

Adelaide Festival Centre is easily accessible by public transport, including the tram (stop at Railway Station), trains, buses and a free bus service that operates on a loop throughout the City and North Adelaide with stops on the corner of King William Road and North Terrace.

You can enter the Space Theatre by foot from North Terrace, Adelaide Railway Station, Adelaide Oval, or King William Road.

From North Terrace, walk down the laneway alongside SkyCity Casino. From King William Road, you can walk over Festival Plaza (there's a lift and escalator down to the Dunstan Playhouse and Space Theatre level) or along the Walk of Fame from Elder Park.

Assistance: assistance is offered by venue staff. This is an assistance dog friendly venue.