

JOPUKA
[PRODUCTIONS]

JOPUKA PRESENTS

**Very Happy Children with
Bright and Wonderful
Futures**

BY JOSHUA MAXWELL

RED TREE THEATRE, DARKINJUNG COUNTRY

SEPTEMBER 2023



RED
TREE
THEATRE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Jopuka acknowledges we reside on the stolen lands of the *Darkinjung* People. We pay our respects to their elders past and present.

Always was, Always will be, Aboriginal Land

Joshua Maxwell's

VERY HAPPY CHILDREN WITH BRIGHT AND WONDERFUL FUTURES

Commisioned by
JOPUKA

Director + Designer
JOSHUA MAXWELL

Assistant Director
TAHLIA ROSE

Dramaturg and Additional Material
JAMIE HORNSBY

Composer
AMY FLANNERY

Stage Manager
ANTHONY WALL

Welfare
KELLY MAXWELL

Developed with
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN YOUTH ARTS
CALLAN PURCELL
ETHAN DALE
IZZY RAJ SEPPING
LEILA MANGOS

Photographer
JAMES BEGGS

Props
LISA POWER

Original Production Supported by
CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

This production supported by
WATERMELON JAM
RED TREE THEATRE

This performance runs 72 minutes with no interval

FROM THE WRITER + DIRECTOR

Four years ago, I was standing on the steps of Parliament House in Adelaide, surrounded by a group of 3,000 inspiring young people. There were hundreds of thousands of their peers protesting globally, demanding action on climate change. I was blown away by how they were using their voice to demand change.

A light bulb lit up in my mind. I reached out to our great friends at South Australian Youth Arts and pitched them an idea, and we got to work on a piece of theatre about the schools' strike movement.

However, it wasn't until the devastating Black Summer fires and the incredible courage of so many young people during that time that this show truly found its voice and evolved into what you see today.

We first staged this show in 2021, under the direction of Callan Purcell and Ethan Dale. We loved the show so much we knew one day we'd be back. Since then it's been published via Playlab and has been nominated for an Australian Writers Guild AWGIE Award.

When we had to drop a project from the season, we felt it was the right time to bring the show back. This is a brand-new staging of the work, and we are thrilled to be welcoming a bunch of new faces into the family, as well as welcoming back a few original cast members.

I want to thank the young people who inspired this show and contributed to its creation. Namely, Izzy Raj-Sepping and Leila Mangos; while we don't tell their exact stories in this work, we've been able to borrow enough inspiration to give these characters life.

We've had a brilliant cast who have truly embraced the creative process in such a short period of time. I'm super proud of them all.

Personally, I want to thank my dramaturg and "here-is-a-scene-better-than-your-entire-show" assistant writer, Jamie Hornsby, for being with me on this journey and letting me bounce my crazy ideas off him, as well as my Assistant Director, Tahlia Rose, who has been an absolute godsend in the rehearsal room. She brings such warmth and care to the space, and I couldn't have put this show on again without her.

This isn't just a piece of theatre or a political statement; this is a battle cry. Please take the message of this show, and if you haven't already, join the fight for our future.

The future generations depend on us.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joshua Reynolds". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'R'. Below the signature is a solid green horizontal line.



CAST

Izzy

MILO POWER

Leila

ELODIE TIPTON AKERS

Earth

AYVA BELGRE

Moon

LIBBY BLAKE

Hunter

JAKE NEALE

Jace

WREN HOPKINS

Annie

LAURYN HAYHURST

Vocalist

LUCY TAZAWA

The Embers

LINSEY ANDERSON

HAYLEY CHIVAS

HANNAH PRESTON

SKYE GLEESON

MAX LINDHARDT-WARD

ROSE LEIGH

ABBY MUDDLE

THOMAS SCHRAMM

SOPHIE WRIGHTSON

ABOUT JOPUKA

Jopuka Productions one of Australia's most celebrated youth theatre bodies. It was established specifically to provide performing arts training and development to a wide array of emerging artists, aged 12-26, from all across Darkinjung Country, on the Central Coast of New South Wales. Jopuka provides a safe and peer-driven space for emerging artists to hone their craft and forge their own pathways into the arts industry.

We present unique and innovative seasons, filled to the brim with new works, Australian classics, cutting-edge musicals and Fringe favourites. Jopuka has staged over 45 acclaimed productions, including a range of new and established works. We've commissioned over a dozen new Australian works from emerging writers and theatre-makers across Australia, and even won a couple of awards in the process. Since launching we've provided arts opportunities for over 1500 young people across many areas of production.

Now neatly tucked away in our own venue, The Launch Pad, Jopuka is committed to creating innovative, inclusive and exceptional work with our community of emerging artists.

Jopuka is a registered charity

JOPUKA GOES GREEN

This year we're ramping up our efforts to become more sustainable. One of the newest ways we are changing how we operate is scaling back our programmes, flyers, and posters. We'll now only be providing digital for our production and only be printing limited stocks of posters and flyers and were possible on 100% recycled paper.

Flash, Video, Still Photographer are strictly prohibited

with thanks to

XTRACT DRAMA

RED TREE THEATRE

CREATE NSW

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

BENDIGO BANK

PLAYLAB

ATYP

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN YOUTH ARTS

ELDERSLEE FOUNDATION

HEADSPACE GOSFORD

THE ORIGINAL 2021 COMPANY

the board of jopuka

chair **ROSIE ROSS**

secretary **KELLY MAXWELL**

treasurer **CHERYL AMEY**

director **ANTHONY WALL**

director **ANNA CARTER**

director **DANIELLE BRAME WHITING**

director **JAMIE HORNSBY**

director **JOSHUA MAXWELL**

director **TAHLIA NOTT**

director **TAYAH BLACKAMN**

director **PAUL ZAIA**



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