

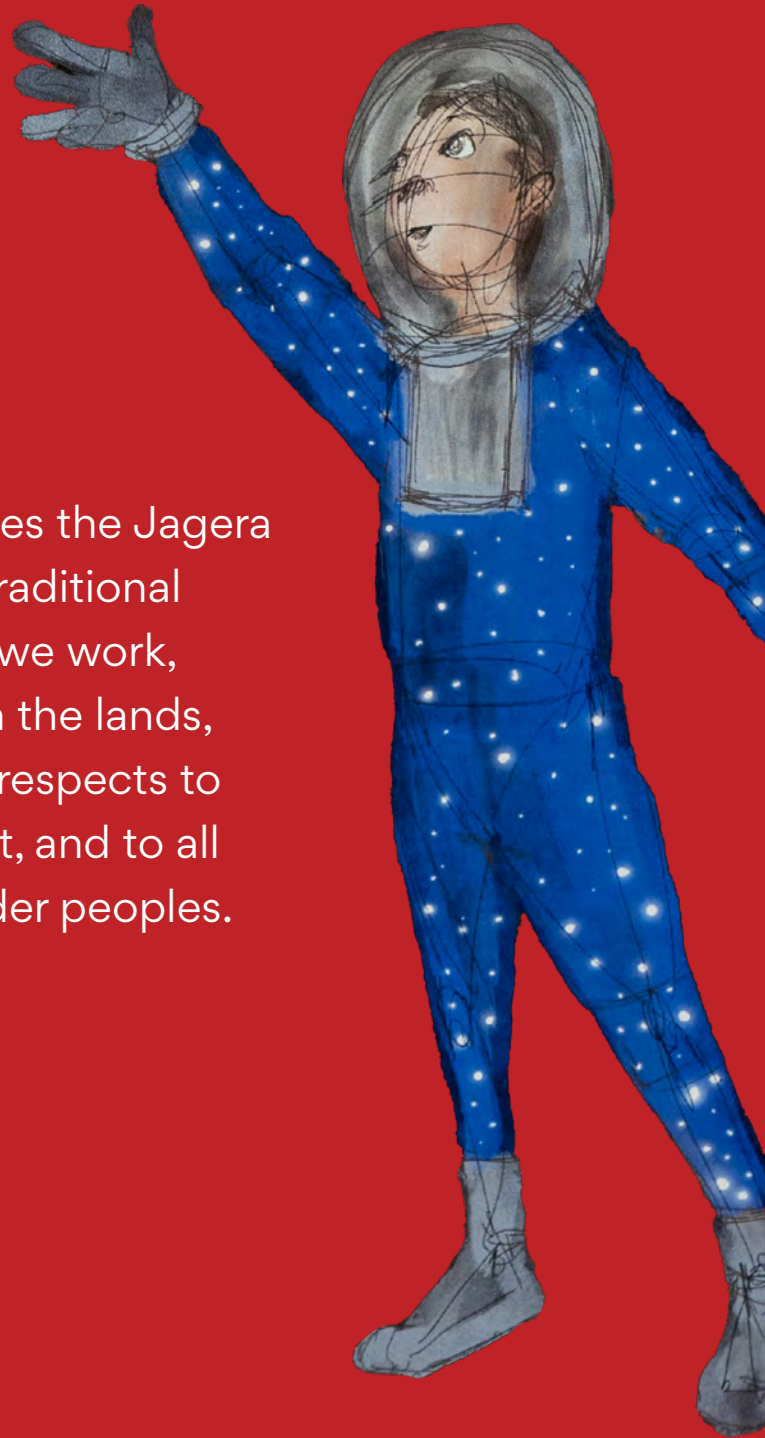
DRIZZLE BOY



EDUCATION RESOURCES

QUEENSLAND THEATRE

Queensland Theatre acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, and their unique relationship with the lands, seas and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Queensland
Government

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These resources were created by Eylece Blaikie in conjunction with Queensland Theatre. Assistance from: Mrs Hayley Mitchelson (MEd (Research), MArts (Research), GradCert (Autism), BEd), Ms Raechel Smart (MEPS (Research), GradCert (Autism), BEd), Dr Stephanie Malone (Senior Lecturer, Autism Centre of Excellence, Griffith University), Dr Kate Simpson (Program Director of the Postgraduate in Autism Studies Program, Griffith University), Fiona Goodall Bed, MSpEd, Autism Consultant: Making Connections Toowoomba



Daniel R Nixon, Naomi Price



INFORMATION

PLAY BRIEFING

MONDAY 6 MARCH 6.00pm

DURATION

1 hour and 25 minutes with no interval

CURRICULUM LINKS

Suitable for Years 9-12, Tertiary



Daniel R Nixon

WARNINGS

This play contains frequent coarse language, strobe lighting and loud noises. There will be a series of warnings within the action of the performance that highlights when the volume or intensity of lighting will change.

There are 13 references to the F word and 1 reference to the C word. If the use of language precludes your school from attending the performance, please contact Queensland Theatre as a redacted performance date may be attainable.

Sensory access:

Audio and visual warnings have been built into this production to provide audiences with sensory sensitivities time to adjust and prepare before extreme lighting and sound cues are activated. If you have audio or visual sensitivities or are concerned about the content of the play we recommend looking through our *spoiler sheet* and *visual story*. Additionally a break out space will be available at the venue in our Diane Cilento Studio for those seeking a low sensory environment separate to the foyer and theatre. Disposable ear plugs will be available on entry to the theatre if required.

Production Warnings:

This production contains: references and frank discussion about autism, high level coarse and ableist language including the word “retard”, aural depictions of bullying, depictions of medical mistreatment, references to suicide and occasional (and forewarned) loud noises and moments of visual intensity to reflect parts of the autistic experience.

Technical Warnings:

This production contains: smoke, haze, strobe, dead black outs, dynamic sound and the use of electronic cigarettes.

If you or someone you know needs information or support, these organisations are there to help:

Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636

Headspace 03 9027 0100

Lifeline 13 11 14



CURRICULUM LINKS

DRAMA GENERAL SENIOR SYLLABUS 2019

UNIT 2: REFLECT

The power of drama to reflect the lived experience: Realism, Magical Realism

How can Drizzle Boy be used to document the lived experience/s of autistic people?

UNIT 3: CHALLENGE

Exploration of how drama can be used to challenge our understanding of humanity over time: Theatre of Social Comment – Absurdism, Epic Theatre, Forum Theatre.

How can Drizzle Boy be used to both educate and challenge the absurdity of our fears, especially in relation to neurodivergent people?

ACARA, YEAR 10 DRAMA

Manipulate combinations of the elements of drama to develop and convey the physical and psychological aspects of roles and characters consistent with intentions in dramatic forms and performance styles

Structure drama to engage an audience through manipulation of dramatic action, forms and performance styles, and by using design elements

Evaluate how the elements of drama, forms and performance styles in devised and scripted drama convey meaning and aesthetic effect

| PURPOSE | CONTEXT | THEMES | 21ST CENTURY SKILLS |
|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathise • Celebrate • Challenge or provoke • Empower • Educate or inform • Document • Entertain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociological • Personal • Dramatic • Generational • Psychological • Imaginative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neurodiversity • Autism • Family • Love • Belonging • Coming of age • Identity • Depression • Expectation anxiety • Identifying purpose • Isolation • Pride | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking • Creative thinking • Communication |

FORM AND STYLE

- Realism
- Magical Realism
- Absurdism
- Cracked Absurdism
- Theatre of the Oppressed
- Post Modernism – intertextuality/intratextuality
- Verbatim – confessional theatre/auto memoir
- Physical Theatre
- Forum Theatre

KEY CONVENTIONS

- 2 and 3-dimensional characters
- Fragmentation - character/costume/props
- Episodic structure – Epic Theatre
- Breaking 4th wall
- Juxtaposition of realistic and illogical dialogue
- Intertextuality -slam poetry/television ads
- Convergence of Styles
- Virtuoso performativity
- Multiple role playing



CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

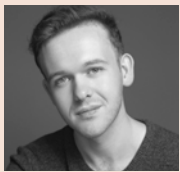
CREATIVES

Writer Ryan Enniss
Director Daniel Evans
Set and Costume Designer Christina Smith
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Composer/ Sound Designer Guy Webster
Video Designer Nevin Howell
Stage Manager Kat O'Halloran
Assistant Stage Manager Nicole Neil

CAST

Drizzle Boy Daniel Nixon
Baphomet/Father/Speaker/Doctor Kevin Spink
Juliet/Mother/Valentina Tereshkova/Doctor/Dustin Hoffman Naomi Price

CREATIVES



Writer
Ryan Enniss



Director
Daniel Evans



Set and Costume Designer
Christina Smith



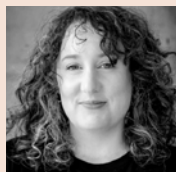
Lighting Designer
Matt Scott



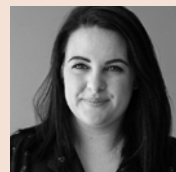
**Composer/
Sound Designer**
Guy Webster



Video Designer
Nevin Howell

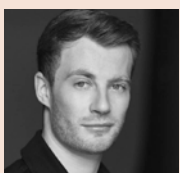


Stage Manager
Kat O'Halloran

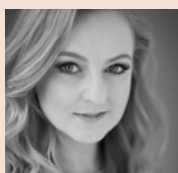


Assistant Stage Manager
Nicole Neil

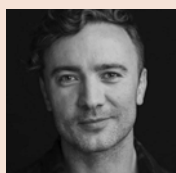
CAST



Drizzle Boy
Daniel R Nixon



**Juliet/Mother/
Valentina
Tereshkova/Doctor/
Dustin Hoffman**
Naomi Price



**Baphomet/Father/
Speaker/Doctor**
Kevin Spink



ABOUT

Drizzle Boy is about to begin a new chapter in his life. He's starting university, making new friends, hoping to find love, and learning who he wants to be in the world.

Drizzle Boy accepts his Autism with pride, but it seems to be a problem for everyone else. His mum heard that drinking bleach might cure him, his father reckons he's just a mini-version of Rain Man in search of what makes him a savant, his doctors prescribe Drizzle Boy pills while his university lecturer (who looks suspiciously like Hans Asperger) is worried he'll fail his first semester. Then he meets Juliet and his world begins to expand. She likes space too. Suddenly a childhood dream of finally launching into outer space seems wildly possible.

With dark humour and a frank authenticity, this play deftly flips the narrative to show just how weird, rigid and obsessive neurotypical people can be! Drizzle Boy wants the same things everyone wants; love, respect, freedom, and to feel at home on planet Earth.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES EXPLORE THE THEMES OF:

Neurodiversity, Autism,
Identity, Expectation
Anxiety, Isolation.



DISCUSS:

- What do you think the title, *Drizzle Boy*, means?
- What thoughts/understanding does the term neurodiversity prompt in you?
- What is the most outrageous claim to ‘cure’ something you’ve ever heard on tiktok/social media?
- When have you ever been challenged to speak to someone outside your comfort zone?
- Can you think of a social situation you’ve ever been in where you’ve been challenged to change your behaviour to ‘fit in’?
- What hurdles do you think you may come up against when transitioning from High School to university? What might make this more difficult?

SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

(the ability to understand how a situation appears to another person and how that person is reacting cognitively and emotionally)

- Can you describe a time you’ve been asked to walk in another’s shoes? Did you feel challenged by that experience?
- To what lengths would you go to fix someone you believe doesn’t ‘belong’ in your world?
- When is a moment in your life that you have felt like an ‘alien’?

We have talked about developing a kind of language that Drizzle Boy has for himself. How he relates to and balances himself in the way in which he engages with the world. This story is told from Drizzle Boy’s perspective. We wanted to give him control over how his world moves – it’s an internal/mental space. He can change and move the world instantaneously. That’s a big part of the sonic language we are building.

Guy Webster – *Composer Drizzle Boy*



PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

To inform participants of the difficulties neurodivergent young people face when confronted with unexpected changes to routine.



DISCUSS:

- How participants felt when more balls were added
- What problems did they encounter when the unexpected happened?
- How did participants feel in the last game in comparison to all the others? Were they more comfortable with the predictability of knowing people's names?



Research articles and Youtube links which reaffirm learning from the connected activity:

- [Educational Experiences and Needs of Higher Education Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)
- [Too Much Information and Us | Unexpected Changes](#)
- [Autism and routines | Purple Ella](#)

BALL PASS

Stand class in circle with one ball. Decide on a grouping of names, for example: capital cities, girls names, sports, etc... Throw the ball randomly within the circle. The person throwing the ball must call out an example from the group of names decided upon. Once the ball has been thrown to everyone, repeat this pattern a couple of times calling out the same name each time.

VARIATIONS:

1. Make it more complex by changing the grouping of names ie: repeat the same pattern of ball toss but change the names from capital cities of the world to sports.
2. Challenge students to complete the activity in a time limit.
3. Once they have done this a few times, add a second ball in the circle and commence the game again with another group of names, then add a third ball etc... The complexity increases as more balls are added.
4. Teacher doesn't tell the students about rule changes they are making and then continuously changes rules of the game throughout. ie: starts calling out random 'nouns', throws the ball out of sequence, holds the ball and doesn't throw it...etc..
5. Same game but this time throw the ball to a person and say their name at the same time.

Many young autistic people thrive in environments that have structure, predictability and patterns. These routines assist autistic people to learn to cope with the uncertainty that can confront them in their daily life.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

To educate participants on the predictability that role playing games offer autistic young people and the collaboration skills gained through shared connection.



DISCUSS:

- Within the game, why did you think the three ‘fantasy’ characters physical attributes and actions were described so clearly?
- How did it make you feel when you were able to imaginatively ‘create’ a new character?



Research article which reaffirms learning from the connected activity:

- [Making Meaningful Worlds: Role-Playing Subcultures and the Autism Spectrum](#)

GIANTS, WIZARDS, ELVES

This game involves two teams who will act as one of 3 characters: giants, wizards, and elves. When a player acts out a character, he or she does the specific hand motions and also makes the noise associated with the character.

Giants: Stand on your tippy toes, raise your arms like a giant, and make a menacing growling noise: “Rarrrr!”

Wizards: Crouch slightly, as wizards are a bit shorter. Wave your fingers as though you’re casting a magical spell, and make a magical noise: “Shaazaam!”

Elves: Crouch down very low, cup your hands around your ears, and make a high pitched elf noise: “Eeeee!”

Make sure everyone knows the motions and sounds. Feel free to practice until everyone knows how to become each character. Split everyone into two teams and divide them into separate sides of the room. For each round, both teams huddle and secretly choose, as a group, to become a giant, wizard, or elf. When ready, both teams then line up and stand facing each other, about five or six feet apart. At the start of each round, the leader says “Three, two, one, go!!”

At this point, each team acts out the character they chose (giant, wizard, or elf). As soon as they do this, the winner tries to grab the loser — as many people over to their side as they can. The loser tries to retreat back to their own side to be safe for that round. If captured, a person now belongs to the other team. The following determines who beats who:

- Giants beat elves because giants can “squash” elves.
- Elves beat wizards because they outsmart them. Elves chew at their legs.
- Wizards beat giants because they can zap them with a magic spell.

If both teams show the same character, no one wins. Rounds keep repeating until one team wins (the other team is completely captured).

VARIATIONS:

1. Within the gamified structure, create another character with related movement. Give this character power over the elves.
2. Create a backstory for each of the mythical characters indicating why they want to cause harm to one another.

Fantasy role-playing games can be valuable for some autistic people because they bring structure to a relatively unstructured and chaotic experience – social interaction.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

To inform participants of the difficulties neurodivergent young people face when sensory stimuli overwhelms their ability to cope.



DISCUSS:

- When did the 'keeper' feel the most confronted in their attempt to guard the keys?
- How did the stakes rise as each 'sense' was overloaded?



Research articles and Youtube links which reaffirms learning from the connected activity:

- [Sensory Overload](#)
- [Aspergers and sensory - #Autism Sensory Overload | The Aspie World](#)
- [Autism TMI Virtual Reality Experience](#)

KEEPER OF THE KEYS

Invite the group to create a standing circle around a stool or chair. Choose a player to be 'Keeper of the Keys' and invite them to sit on the seat with a set of keys underneath and instruct them not to move off the chair during the game. The 'keeper' wears a blindfold and has a rolled up newspaper in their hand. Invite all other players to sit in a circle 2 meters in diameter around the person in the chair. Players can sneak forward and attempt to get the keys without the 'keeper' hearing them. If the 'keeper' hears them they are allowed to hit the newspaper in the direction of the noise. That person must go back to the outer circle and the game begins again with another person trying to 'steal' the keys without the 'keeper' knowing. If one person gets the keys they are to go back to the circle and place them behind their back. All players then sit with their hands behind their backs and the blindfold is removed. 'Keeper of the Keys' gets three guesses to figure out who has taken the keys.

VARIATIONS:

1. Whilst one person is trying to 'steal' the keys, the others are making random 'eerie' noises at differing levels of volume.
2. Participants trying to 'steal' the keys can lightly touch the 'keeper' on the shoulders, or similarly a 'blow' in the ear.
3. Two people at once are able to work together to 'steal' the keys.

If the 'keeper' is willing, you could negotiate to add some variations without them being aware of what is going to occur.

Knowing your own class set appropriate boundaries in terms of 'touch' within this game.

Autistic people experience sensory information differently. Autism is associated with hypersensitivity to sensory input, making sensory overload more likely.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

To educate participants to the triggers which may lead to an anxiety induced 'emotional overload' amongst children on the autism spectrum.

COKE CAN

Ask participants to stand in a circle and give one student an unopened can of coke. As you read out the 'Day in the Life' script included below, students are to identify where '**roadblocks**' or '**assists**' occur

(Side note: the script has been prepared with pause marks which indicate 'roadblocks' and 'assists' may occur)

On each 'roadblock' (indicated by //) the person holding the can of coke shakes it furiously and then passes it on to the next person. When an 'assist' is identified, the students are to pass on the can without shaking it. At the end of the script take can and stand in the middle of the circle, asking students what would happen if they were to open the can. *(Address: pressure building, internalisation, heightened anxiety)*

(A further suggestion if coke can isn't an option: Have a bucket and students place balls in the bucket each time Sam experiences a stressor - or remove a ball on the occasions he is happy/understood. Maybe some of the balls are bigger than others. Eventually the bucket will become overloaded and the balls overflow, even though some have been removed.)



DAY IN THE LIFE - TEACHER SCRIPT

Sam is in Year 12. It is the first day of his last year of school! He checked the bus timetable during the holidays and knows the bus leaves at 7:30 am. However, he forgot to set his alarm and it's now 7:15 am and mum is yelling at him to get up and get ready.// He doesn't have time for breakfast and he hates the smell of eggs that his brother is cooking, so he quickly gets dressed and runs out the door to catch the bus.//

When he gets on the bus, he sees his friend Anni and sits beside her. She's been working on anime drawings over the holidays. Anni even has a picture to give him for his room. // He takes it and files it carefully in his bag.

When Sam gets to school, he goes to his usual mentor room. However, there have been renovations over the holidays and it's closed.// He doesn't see the notice on the door with the new room location. The school is noisy with the Yr 7s who are passing by.// He can't see anyone from his usual class. //

Eventually he goes to the office and Marjorie at the front desk greets Sam and takes him to his new room.//

Sam's first lesson is mathematics, his favourite. As the teacher is outlining the first assignment of the term, Jennifer starts to tap her pen on the desk, repeatedly.// That's when Sam realises he's forgotten his AirPods and he can't block out the noise.//



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

The next lesson is chemistry. When he turns up, his usual teacher is not there.// Sam learns that she has left the school and he has a new teacher this year. During the lesson, the new teacher moves around the room to check on the students' work. Sam can't quite move on from the fact that the teacher smells like raw egg.// Sam says loudly, 'What's that smell?' and pokes his nose into his jumper so he can continue working. One of his classmates asks him a question about the work. Sam easily explains the answer. His classmate says, 'Thanks man, you're so smart!'

At morning tea, Sam looks for Anni but can't find her anywhere so he sits with some other kids he knows. They're talking about the holidays but nobody engages him in the conversation.// Sam tells them about the digital anime program he's been learning over the holidays. Nobody asks him a question, but he talks at length about it until the bell goes. He hears someone mumble something under their breath. He says, 'What was that?', but they don't answer.

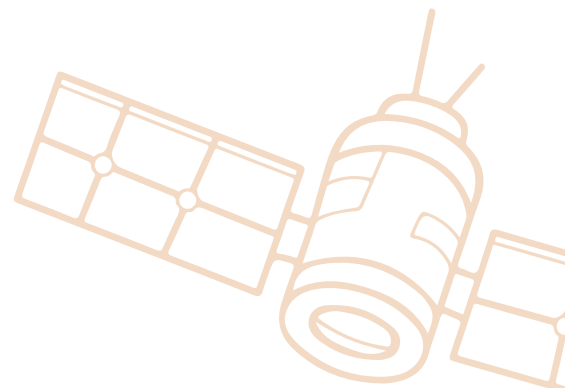
Sam finishes the day and waits to be picked up by his Mum. She's late and his phone is flat so he can't call her.// Sam can feel his heart rate increase and he looks in his bag for his Airpods, which aren't there.// Then he hears a familiar voice, Anni. She waits with him and is fascinated by the digital Anime program he tried in the holidays, and they discover that she tried a similar one too!// Sam's mum turns up 30 minutes late and he reminds her to set her alarm so she's on time next time. She reminds him that he needs to work on his organisation, particularly in preparation for 'next year'. Sam hates talking about life after school. //



DISCUSS:

- What would happen if the can were opened straight after reading the 'Day in the Life' script?
- How could the experience of 'roadblocks' have been reduced?

Anxiety is one of the leading causes of emotional overloads amongst children on the autism spectrum. When faced with stressful, uncomfortable situations, a child with autism might experience high levels of anxiety which can trigger meltdowns.



TASK 1: SOUND ALLEY

As a class read through the section of text below and the reference articles. After reading, discuss what is understood about the difficulties autistic young people face when confronted with environments, sounds, smells, touch that is unfamiliar.

SCRIPT EXTRACT 1.

DRIZZLE BOY is plunged into Uni. We hear the buzz of students, vehicles, and general ambient noise.

STUDENT (V/O) So I told her, they're just study drugs!

STUDENT (V/O) Would you like to join the Campus Christian Club?

STUDENT (V/O) Hey, watch where you're going! Weirdo.

As he navigates the space, voices become louder, lights flash brightly to stop him in his tracks or turn him away. He pulls out a map of the campus, but it is no help. He gets more and more frantic as this goes on until he slumps to the ground, trying to calm himself and drown out the cacophony of stimulation. He takes out Space Bear. Pause. JULIET appears.

Convention of absurdism: sound and noise as spectacle

Technique employed by actors combined with use of SFX. Meaning is created through use of sound



Research articles and Youtube links which reaffirms learning from the connected activity:

- [Read This If You Don't Know How to Talk to Someone Who Has Autism](#)
- [When a Cactus Meets a Rose - Why Autistic Neurotypical Friendships Often Fail \(and how to prevent it\)](#)
- [Avoiding Ableist Language: Suggestions for Autism Researchers](#)

TASK

Split the class into 2 groups and get them to stand in two lines facing each other to create an alley. Blindfolded, one student will go into role as a different character who must walk down the alley. The rest of the class will create a 'soundscape' and make sounds/noises in different volumes as character navigates down the alley. The purpose of the ensemble is to 'embody' sensory overload. Once the character reaches the end, break role and ask the student to explain how it makes them feel.

Knowing your own class, set appropriate boundaries in regards to the sense of touch/sound for students in the alley.

We tell our story, but we want to ensure that people feel engaged with and considered in their safety.

Guy Webster – Composer Drizzle Boy

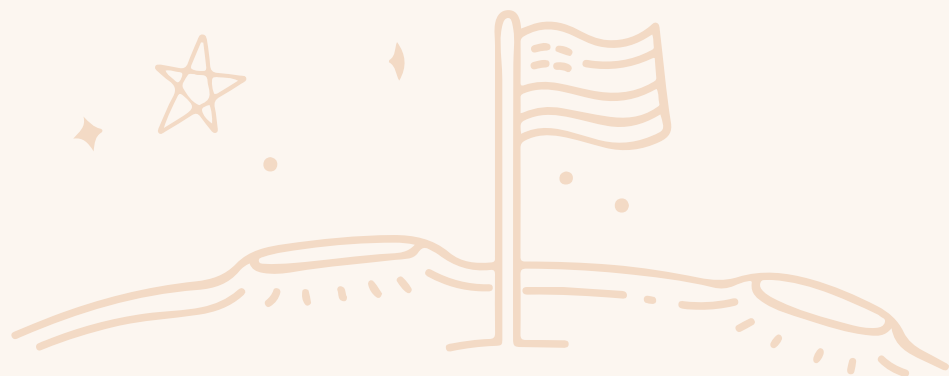


PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

TASK 2: FORUM THEATRE

SCRIPT EXTRACT 2.

- JULIET** Is it just me, or is that lecturer super weird? Or is that mean to say, it's not because he's German I'm not- I love schnitzels. And Dachshunds. He kinda smells like rotten eggs though.
- DRIZZLE BOY** It's a chemical. Sodium Bisulfite.
- JULIET** I'm Juliet, by the way. I probably should've introduced myself earlier but I....call me Julie though, everyone calls me Julie. What's your name?
- DRIZZLE BOY** Drizzle Boy.
- JULIET** Huh. Interesting name.
- DRIZZLE BOY** It's something my Dad came up with.
- JULIET** Can I just call you DB? I'm studying a bachelor of applied science, and thinking of focusing on microbiology at the moment. What are you studying?
- Pause.
- Are you okay? You look a little nervous.
- DRIZZLE BOY** I am a bit. I don't do so well with new people, and I think I would honestly rather cut my fingers off than tell you five fun facts about myself - That should've been an inside thought
- JULIET** I'll go first then. Fun facts, fun facts...I had toast for breakfast...
...which isn't a very fun fact.I named my car Suzanne. She's a Suzuki Swift. I like art galleries, and I'm an amateur music theatre performer, mostly because I suck at dancing too much to be a professional one.
- DRIZZLE BOY** Art galleries are cool.
- JULIET** Yeah? Do you have a favourite artist or- I saw this really great Chinese art exhibition about the significance of water in relation to the kidneys and bladder-
What kind of art do you like?
- DRIZZLE BOY** I like- Um, sci-fi concept arty kinda stuff? Space is cool.
- JULIET** I love space!



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

CONVENTION OF THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED: FORUM THEATRE

Spectators influencing and engaging with the performance as both spectators and actors, with the power to stop and change the performance after reflection. The aim is to explore the 'oppression' featured in the performance



After considering the script from Exercise 2, have students divide into pairs. Acting as director and actors, students are to workshop and perform script in its current written form taking one of the given circumstances listed below for the character of Juliet:

- Juliet has limited awareness that Drizzle Boy is an autistic person and may find her questioning and pace of questioning too much to process
- Juliet is also autistic and doesn't have the social skills needed to read the situation.

After reflection, workshop the scene again. Present as a polished improvisation which focuses on changing Juliet's approach to speaking with Drizzle Boy. Juliet is now aware that Drizzle Boy has autism and adjusts her approach in speaking to him to make him feel more at ease in this encounter.

- How would Juliet's language change?
- How would Juliet's vocal delivery change?
- Juliet has awareness of the importance of routines
- Juliet has awareness of sensory needs (eg: echoing of locker room – overstimulating and overwhelming)
- Juliet uses descriptive praise
- Juliet uses positive directions – minimise the use of 'don't' and 'stop'



Daniel R Nixon



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

TASK 3: WRITTEN ACTIVITY

- Write a scene that comes directly before **Script Extract 2**. What have the characters of Juliet and Drizzle Boy just been doing? How does this affect the intention of the scene? Perform it and see how it works.
- Write a scene what comes directly after **Script Extract 2**. What do Juliet or Drizzle Boy take away from their encounter? How does this scene flesh out their feelings towards this interaction? Perform it and see how it works.



IN CONVERSATION WITH RYAN ENNIS – WRITER

You've firmly placed the audience in another shoes and allowed them to see a perspective that challenges their own – has your own perspective ever been challenged? If so could you give us an insight into what that experience was...?

Drizzle Boy and the journey he goes on that alters his perspective is similar to the one I went on. I was diagnosed as autistic at 19 and in a similar place to where Drizzle Boy starts in the play. I felt very afraid, very uncertain and nervous and felt I had to change to fit. The perspective shift was my understanding that it didn't work, I still felt out of place. The next reaction I went to was anger – I felt frustrated...why won't the world change? The world has to change. It's not me that has to change, it's the world that must change. The third perspective shift, what I've only just come to in the last year of two is that it's neither of those things. It's not the world that has to change, it's not me that has to change, it's both. You have to compromise, you have to come together. It's not fear, it's not anger. If you present fear and anger I find that it's what you'll be met with. It's about softening. It's about meeting the world and people with kindness and love. If you present kindness and love and feel that ...that's what will come back to you. That perspective shift was my journey over the last few years.



Ryan Ennis



CREATIVES



PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS

- What is your initial impression of the set?
- What is it about the set that gives you a sense of time and place? (*the world that Drizzle Boy inhabits*)
- When looking closer at the set, what do you notice?
- How do you think the set will be used



POST SHOW DISCUSSION – DESIGN ELEMENTS

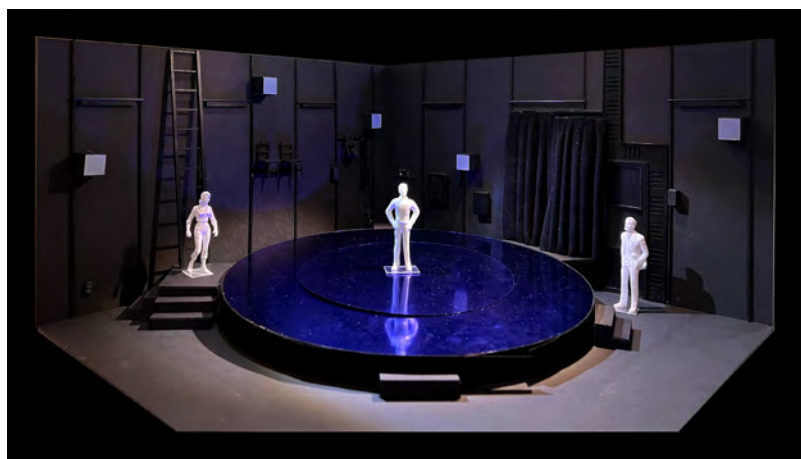
- How was the set, combined with performance technologies, used to enhance key narrative plotpoints or heighten the dramatic elements?
- What aspects of symbol were found in the set design?
- How was this set design realised?
- How did the actors interact with the set?

DESIGN

A set designer is responsible for the design including all the scenery, furniture and props that the audience will see. It is the role of the set designer to help to draw the audience into the world of the play, helping to convey the specific time and place.

TASK

Consider the set design below by Christina Smith and answer the following questions.





IN CONVERSATION WITH CHRISTINA SMITH – Drizzle Boy Designer

I studied Set and Costume Design at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), far too long ago! I knew it was exactly what I wanted to do with my life, so a specialist course such as that one allowed me to concentrate on the skills needed to become a designer for live performance.

Upon graduation I spent a couple more years in Perth working for various companies before moving across to Melbourne to try my luck in a bigger city. It was slow going at first with several years working in fringe theatre for very little money! Eventually people saw enough of my work to give me progressively larger opportunities, and I've never stopped working.

I'm fortunate enough to have designed for many companies across several performance genres including opera and events, though the majority of my work has been in text-based theatre for major performing arts companies (such as Melbourne Theatre Company and Queensland Theatre).

The ability for the space to accommodate fluid shifts in time and location was a key factor in conceiving the world of Drizzle Boy. The playwright Ryan Enniss had already planted some wonderfully suggestive motifs in his early drafts that referenced orbits, constellations and space travel. The notion of the ring revolve came to the design team early as a response to these prompts, allowing us to physically realise the constantly shifting memories and time periods present in the text.

This is a space that Drizzle Boy as narrator can control so he can tell us his story. It is literally his world, a concentric circular 'Copernican' style disc that allows him to have elements exactly where and when he needs them. Sitting within the exposed theatrical story-telling environment of the Billie Brown Studio, this deep blue mirrored circle embodies both order and the potential chaos orbiting him.



MUSIC COMPOSITION



IN CONVERSATION WITH GUY WEBSTER - COMPOSER DRIZZLE BOY

The performance shifts so quickly and dramatically between differing moods throughout, how did you go about bringing the sense of the heightened emotional response through your soundscaping?

In terms of offering different 'moods' throughout, we talk about reference songs for different moments within the play. In many cases to soundtrack particular characters in ways so that they have a definitive atmosphere in the space. Anytime they enter the atmosphere is controlled by their character. That's an element of DB giving control to those characters. One of the characters is Russian, so there'll be Red Army songs – something that evokes that sentiment. Another character is a reference to the cover of a heavy metal album that DB once saw that made Drizzle Boy feel something, so that particular character is reference with heavy metal sounds – heavy distorted guitars. It also allows me to give those characters an entrance – like they have their own fanfare. Before they enter the space they know they're coming. We know there's a shift, there's an internal dialogue – they create a dialogue with Drizzle Boy.

There are elements in our sonic language that we've placed in the performance as 'safety markers'. People who are sensitive to sound, sudden changes in sound, sudden changes in light, we've built language in the play to give them some sense of warning. People who are extremely sensitive to light and it can trigger them in a neurological way, we want them to know that we are going to be theatrical with light in a couple of seconds time, and if you need to protect yourself from the changes in light – you go for it. We tell our story, but we want to ensure that people feel engaged with and considered in their safety.

Were there any instruments you felt underscored your composition for Drizzle Boy specifically? If so, what were they and how did you use them in the soundtrack?

I was drawn to the possibility to electronic sound. Because Drizzle Boy speaks so much of space, sci-fi and storytelling, the use of electronic sounds really make sense to me. To be able to sit us in that futuristic work. Because there is the engagement to the idea of machine and many machines have beeping electronic sounds, many of those sounds are a design of the score. There are certainly other sounds that are acoustic, like piccolo and violin. There will be strings sounds, but not big horns. Particularly as the story sits in a modern context the electronic sound gives us access to that futuristic sci-fi element of the world which is very much part of Drizzle Boy's hopes and dreams.



If designing for the theatre/film industry is a career you're interested in, consider the following university courses:

- [QUT – Bachelor of Fine Arts \(Technical Production\)](#)
- [NIDA – BFA \(Design for Performance\)](#)
- [WAAPA – Production Design](#)
- [The University of Melbourne – Master of Production Design](#)



POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES



DISCUSS:

- When a flower doesn't bloom do you fix the flower or the soil? What does this mean in relation to children with autism?
- Could anyone else have made Drizzle Boy's journey easier?
- What are some of the challenges Drizzle Boy experienced that you never thought someone with autism would have to face?
- How is Drizzle Boy like you/how is he different to you?
- How does Drizzle Boy as a play challenge your perception on people with autism?
- How do different generational attitudes reflected inside the play? (eg: the *Rain Man* scene/ the character of Hanz Asperger)



Daniel R Nixon, Naomi Price



POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

DRAMATIC MEANING

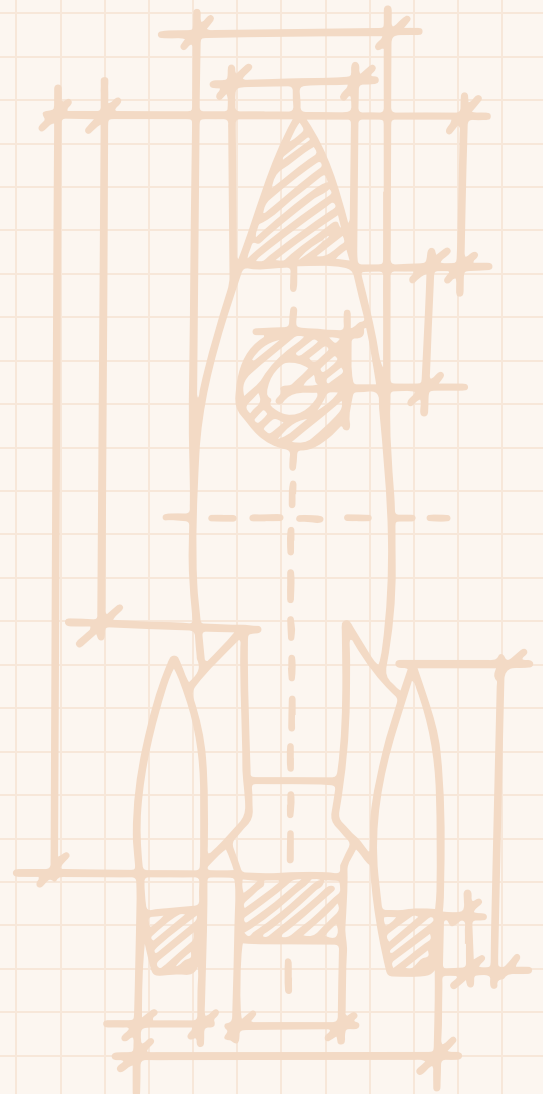
What meaning/message/moral is the performance of *Drizzle Boy* aiming to impart to the audience?

By manipulating the dramatic languages to create dramatic action, the director may have a meaning they are attempting to communicate. The audience may receive multiple meanings according to their own experiences and interpretation of the dramatic work.

After viewing the performance of *Drizzle Boy*, interpret a **dramatic meaning** the performance challenges you to face in relation to a question posed by your teacher. Write this dramatic meaning as a one sentence summary which connects meaning with **PURPOSE** and **CONTEXT**:

*eg: **Drizzle Boy**, performed by Queensland Theatre under the direction of Daniel Evans, challenges the audience to step into the imaginative inner psychology of the protagonist, **Drizzle Boy**, and understand the struggle he faces as he navigates a new world of university learning, simultaneously educating all who spin into his orbit along the way.*

| PURPOSE | CONTEXT |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empathise• Celebrate• Challenge or provoke• Empower• Educate or inform• Document• Entertain | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sociological• Personal• Dramatic• Generational• Psychological• Imaginative |



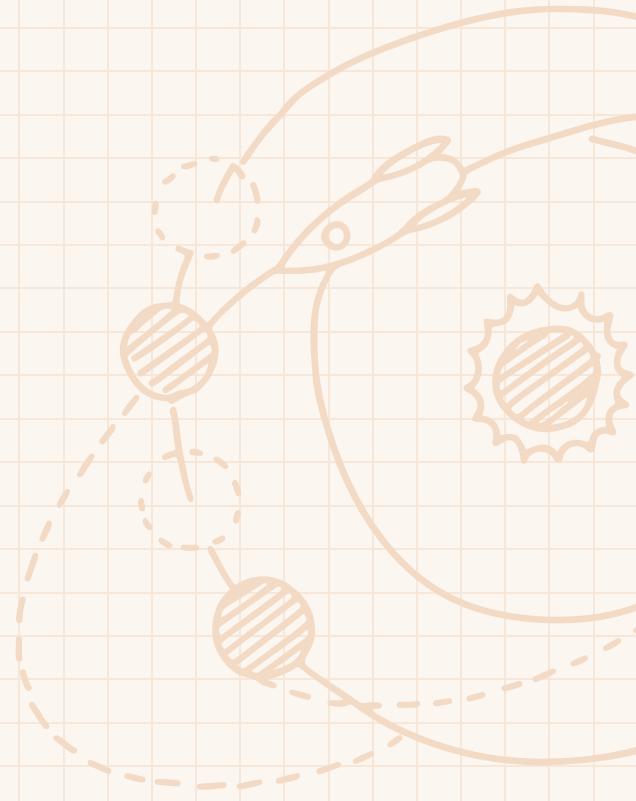
POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

PIVOTAL PLOT MOMENTS

Connecting performance with dramatic languages

In groups, students are to reflect on the performance and discuss what they believe to be the most pivotal moments from the narrative.

- Why were these moments pivotal?
- How do the moments contribute to the dramatic meaning of the performance?
- How did they contribute to the narrative, construction of character and enhancement of dramatic meaning?
- What tension was evident within the scene?
- What aspects of the human condition/ human context were foregrounded?



IN CONVERSATION WITH RYAN ENNISS – Talking plot points

*The first scene, **Infinity**, is pivotal because we're doing there is a lot of heavy expository lifting – we're introducing the character of Drizzle Boy, we're introducing the format - that he will talk to the audience, and we're also introducing some of his rules and his system of rules so we can keep building them up until we break them. We're doing a lot of the 'world building' in that first scene.*

*The second pivotal plot point for me who be **Synaesthesia**, which is the scene with Juliet. It's a very intimate scene and it's where we see Drizzle Boy at his most vulnerable, but also his most joyous and carefree. We build him right up to his highest point in the play...which brings up to the third pivotal moment, which would be **Overload** – where you take it from the highest point and drop him all the way down to the very bottom where he's almost a breath away from oblivion. In his lowest point we get so much of the tension between Drizzle Boy and his family, Drizzle Boy and Juliet, Drizzle Boy and his university, Drizzle Boy and himself. You see all those multiple points of attack. The final one would be **Starlight** - the ending scene. That is a culmination of everything else that has happened. You see the resolution, but you also see the growth. You see how Drizzle Boy has changed and also get a tiny glimmer of hope for the future. It's key that we end in a place of hope.*



POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

TASK

- Ask students to choose four moments and present these as freeze frames.
- Ask students to identify conventions of styles which could be highlighted in these four key moments from either the list below, or additional conventions the student identifies as linked to **Unit 3**:
 - 2 and 3-dimensional characters
 - Fragmentation - character/costume/ props
 - Episodic structure - Epic Theatre
 - Breaking 4th wall
 - Surrealist time (the blending of two time periods - understanding that two universes can co-exist simultaneously)
 - Cyclical time
 - Juxtaposition of realistic and illogical dialogue
 - Intertextuality -slam poetry/television ads/movie quotes
 - Convergence of Styles
 - Virtuosoic performativity
 - Pulling attention to theatrical conventions
 - Accents
 - Multiple role playing
- Repeat the exercise, this time bringing the freeze frames to life in short scenes which incorporate the selected convention.
- Ask audience to respond to the use of the convention in the short scene in terms of dramatic meaning, ie: *how did the use of the convention highlight dramatic meaning in each scene?*



POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

TASK

Identify three dramatic elements and use questions as a base to analyse dramatic action. The elements of Role and Time have been completed as examples for you.

Use the table below as a template:

| ELEMENT | GENERAL QUESTIONS | DRAMATIC ACTION |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Role/Character and Relationship</p> <p><i>Definition:</i></p> <p><i>The performer adopts the values, attitudes, status and motivations of one or more roles; performers act and react to the given circumstances of the drama, and their relationships with others are defined by the values, attitudes and behaviours particular to the type or status they represent.</i></p> <p>Performers take on more than one role throughout the dramatic action of Drizzle Boy. This requires them to embody someone or something beyond themselves to make a believable and credible character for the audience.</p> <p>It is also important to think about their role in the dramatic action. What physical attributes did they embody in creating the role? Movement, physicality, speech...how were these used to establish differing roles. How was the design of the performance (set/lighting/soundscaping/costume) used to enhance creation of role?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the piece character or plot driven? • How was the creation of roles used help create the performance? • Did the actors play more than one role? How did they do this? What changes were evident in their performance? • How were the roles established or maintained? | <p>Role is important in Drizzle Boy as although the performance is written from one perspective, the three actors play multiple roles all of whom help shape the character of Drizzle Boy for the audience. This multiple role playing is enabled through changes in speech modulation, accents, physical movements.</p> <p>Drizzle Boy’s parents are crafted through accent, realistic subtextual nuances and movement blocking. In contrast, when the same actors change roles to embody Tereshkova and Baphomet - the manifestation of Drizzle Boy’s antithetical sides which clash together to cancel each other out – they are underscored with their own fanfare, have sharper more comical melodramatic movements, stronger accents and use language which situates them in a particular imagined environment.</p> |
| <p>Time</p> <p><i>Definition:</i></p> <p><i>An element of drama; refers to the time or period in which dramatic action is set and the management of tempo, pace and rhythm in dramatic action.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What aspects of time did you identify within the performance? • How did the performance demonstrate changes in time? • Why was it important within Drizzle Boy to not have the story depicted as linear? | <p>Time within Drizzle Boy was non-linear – using flash backs/flash forwards/flash sideways - and included a surrealist element where two periods of time coexist - Drizzle Boy breaks the forth wall and speaks directly to the audience stepping out of the time period he’s in.</p> <p>Cyclical time is also used, connecting the start and the finish in the same place in time. Drizzle Boy’s initial language, calm tone and controlled instruction of rules, duplicated at the beginning and end, alluded to the entire performance being played out inside the mind of Drizzle Boy.</p> |



Symbol

Language

Mood



Daniel Evans, Ryan Enniss



POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES



IN CONVERSATION WITH RYAN ENNISS – Writer

Drizzle Boy utilises the element of **time** effectively, with the sense of performance and narration interwoven throughout...Could you briefly describe the thought/writing process you go through which enables this element of **‘time’** to be highlighted?

Time will always be a factor as it's one of humanities stronger compulsions. The non-linear nature of time comes about through the writing process. We present 'symbol' and 'motif', and inevitably you want to see where that originated. You could talk about it, but it's better to 'show' rather than 'tell' so the next logical step is that you step back to see where to see where 'Space Bear' came from; you jump forward to see what Drizzle Boy's dream becomes, have a flash sideways to a memory of that day. This movement through time activates the text.

The use of cyclical time, where the piece ends where it begins, is part of routine for me and for a lot of people who are autistic. Routine is incredibly important. It's how you frame your world view.

In my opinion I think that time is cyclical – you can see the patterns that appear. Another thing about autism is that you recognise patterns. Your brain cues into them slightly quicker than a neurotypical brain does. If you play out a cyclical time or these reoccurring ideas it is another way to show the autistic experience.

The characters of Tereshkova and Baphomet not only bring comic relief to the performance but have symbolic relevance within the play. Could you briefly describe the symbolism of these characters in your own words, and how the inclusion of symbolism throughout Drizzle Boy allows deeper connection and understanding for the audience?

To me they are antithetical to one another – Tereshkova representing DB's desire to prove himself – his unbending will to 'get things done'. Baphomet being the complete opposite to that spectrum is symbolic of the relinquishing of all duty – the reluctance to move out of the comfortable zone, to take a risk and just stay at home. What symbols do, especially in Drizzle Boy, is they allow the audience to own a piece of the story, because when you present those symbols, your interpretation of the symbol will be different for each person, so it forces the audience to critically evaluate what symbols they're seeing, and then creatively and imaginatively engage so they can form an opinion on what they think that symbol is. The symbols of Tereshkova, Baphomet, space and stars allow the audience another link into the story.



TASK – SUGGESTED PRACTICE RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- In the scene where Drizzle Boy plays both himself and the doctor who diagnoses him at the same time, discuss how the convention of **multi roleplaying** is used to challenge the idea that some medical professionals may be unreliable experts in the field of behavioural diagnosis.
- Use the convention of **multi-role play** to challenge a sociality 'norm' ie: young people are lazy, stereotyping of young people, gender roles, mental health, social media, someone who's neurodivergent, public vs private on social media.



IA2 DRAMATIC CONCEPT

TASK

Working as a theatre maker, you will view Queensland Theatre's directed live performance of Ryan Enniss' *Drizzle Boy*. Using this performance as stimulus you must identify one key convention of Contemporary Political Theatre – (*Theatre of Social Comment*) used in the performance and devise an original dramatic concept that expresses a contemporary political view. Your storyboard images must be photographed key moments that demonstrate dramatic action in relation to the application of the selected convention in expressing a clear social comment.

Your dramatic concept must organise information under the following headings:

- Analysis and evaluation (400 words)
 - How was the one key convention manipulated to contribute to the communication of a contemporary political view/social comment?
- My Concept (800 words, 10-12 images of dramatic action)
 - Identify a chosen purpose and context
 - Make specific reference to the original chosen convention
 - Argue how the dramatic language have been used to communicate dramatic action and meaning
 - Develop a storyboard with explanatory paragraphs and annotations that document your dramatic ideas
 - Photograph key moments for your storyboard images that demonstrate dramatic action in relation to the application of the selected convention (in addition to other conventions) in expressing a clear social comment.



Daniel R Nixon



APPENDICES SCRIPT EXTRACTS

Perform a section of script of the published playtext *Drizzle Boy*:

SYNAESTHESIA

Enter JULIET, she goes for a hug, but DRIZZLE BOY stops her.

DRIZZLE BOY Sorry, I'm having a bit of a bad day.

JULIET That's okay, are you alright?

DRIZZLE BOY Yeah. Touch just feels like a lot of input at the moment. I cut all the tags off my shirts so they don't scratch and there's no way in hell I'm wearing socks or shoes.

JULIET Is there a reason for the bad day?

DRIZZLE BOY Everything. They cut the grass this morning and the smell is making my eyes water, the fluoros in every room give me a headache, and there's so much of the colour yellow around today which is just... upsetting.

JULIET What's wrong with yellow?

DRIZZLE BOY Yellow is the colour of my Mum screaming, and jaundice, and it makes my teeth itch.

JULIET Yikes. Your Mum screaming is yellow?

DRIZZLE BOY Yeah. Synaesthesia's not exactly an autism thing, although it is more common. For me, sounds make colours.

JULIET And yellow sucks.

DRIZZLE BOY Yellow is the worst.

Pause.

JULIET Hey, why did the robot cross the road?

DRIZZLE BOY Why?

JULIET Because it was carbon bonded to the chicken!

DRIZZLE BOY That's not too bad. But you did steal it from Lost in Space.

JULIET You got me.

DRIZZLE BOY Why are you here?

JULIET Like, existentially, or...?

DRIZZLE BOY I mean why are you here. Still not a hundred percent on why you like me. I mean, you're so clever-

JULIET Stop!

DRIZZLE BOY And beautiful-

JULIET Go on.

DRIZZLE BOY And you're really funny.



APPENDICES SCRIPT EXTRACTS

JULIET Even though I can't land a joke.

He smiles.

I love your smile. It's going on the list.

Drizzle Boy Ryan Enniss

DRIZZLE BOY *(Aside)* Don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining. Just dunno what she sees in me.

Pause.

JULIET Quiet music?

DRIZZLE BOY Go for it.

JULIET puts on a song from a very old musical. It continues softly in the background.

JULIET This was my favourite song when I was really little.

DRIZZLE BOY Why's that?

JULIET My Dad. He used to play it in the car when he would pick me up from primary school. I know all the words. We'd sing the whole thing over and- He used to do this thing where he'd try and sing the soprano part, and when he did, he'd make all these funny faces... It was just- It was fun.

DRIZZLE BOY You guys don't do that anymore?

JULIET He um- He died last year.

DRIZZLE BOY Oh that's... You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to.

JULIET No it's okay. He had a stroke. Mum was at work, I was at school, and he had the day off. He'd been gardening in the backyard. He was trying to grow iris', his favourites. When I left for school, he was there. And when I got home, he wasn't.

DRIZZLE BOY D'you miss him?

JULIET Every day. But he's there every night. And there, and a bit over there. Because if he's stardust, then he's not really gone.

DRIZZLE BOY No he's not.

JULIET The star I bought him is easier to think about, 'cause it's in one spot.

DRIZZLE BOY He probably has space bears to keep him company.

She smiles. Pause.

DRIZZLE BOY I failed our first quiz.

JULIET Oh, um- Okay?

DRIZZLE BOY And I'm kind of terrified that I might fail the whole semester. But I won't, I'll just work harder.

JULIET But you already work so hard.

DRIZZLE BOY It's not enough. I have to double down, hell, I have to triple down. I can't fail.



APPENDICES SCRIPT EXTRACTS

JULIET Does it matter? One semester doesn't make or break your life. I'm not sure you can win or lose at life anyway.

DRIZZLE BOY Well I don't want to lose you.

JULIET Lose me?

DRIZZLE BOY I- I don't always read people the way they think I will or- Maybe the way they should be read, which is why I couldn't text you after our date. But... I am learning, about you. What you mean, and what you mean to me...

JULIET You should know that I like you, a lot.

DRIZZLE BOY I like you too. A lot.

He listens for a moment. We see the colours of the music very subtly.

This is a really nice combination, lots of complimentary colours, with a little bit of static from the old recording.

JULIET That must be so cool. I wish I could see it.

DRIZZLE BOY Well, it looks something like...

The music fades up, the colours of the song intensify until they are vibrant and full of life. JULIET enjoys them for a moment. He watches her as she sings a line or two. The colours of her voice bleed into those of the song.



Daniel Evans, Daniel R Nixon

