

SYDNEY  
THEATRE  
CO

'Enough wit  
and magic to  
keep all  
the family  
spellbound.'  
The Aee

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE PRESENT  
A WINDMILL THEATRE AND STATE THEATRE COMPANY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA PRODUCTION

# PINOCCHIO

BASED ON THE BOOKS BY CARLO COLLODI  
CREATED BY ROSEMARY MYERS WITH WRITER JULIANNE O'BRIEN

11 APR – 4 MAY 2014  
DRAMA THEATRE, SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

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FOR AGES 7+

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Photo: Shane Reid

## CREATING A CHILDREN'S THEATRE PERFORMANCE

### WHAT IS CHILDREN'S THEATRE?

Children's Theatre is a hybrid form of theatre that features an eclectic mixture of styles and their governing conventions. The form (the way a production is made) of a Children's Theatre show is a mixture of many styles working together to create Dramatic Meaning. The hybrid nature of Children's Theatre also allows it to serve as an example of Contemporary Theatre.

Children's Theatre is plays specifically created and performed for children. Children's Theatre is usually targeted for children between the ages of three to eleven. It has specific performance conventions that are incorporated to engage the audience and reinforce meaning. Such elements include direct address, chorus and audience participation.

### THEATRICAL FORM AND STYLE OF CHILDREN'S THEATRE

- Educational, moral, just for fun
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Use of non-Realism styles such as Musical, Puppetry, Heightened Realism or Magical Realism
- Elements of humour
- Audience participation, direct address
- Easy to follow narrative structure
- Rhythm – short, sharp scenes

### WHAT DO THE AUDIENCE MEMBERS WANT?

When devising a piece of Children's Theatre it is important to consider who the audience members are so the performance is able to meet their needs and desires. Stakeholders in Children's Theatre include the parents and their children. It is important to consider what a parent and a child want from a theatre piece when writing and devising.

#### Parent

- Educational value
- Appropriate content
- Ability to keep the child engaged
- Ignite imagination of the child
- Humour that appeals to adults such as the use of double entendres

#### Child

- Storyline that is relevant
- Visually stimulating
- Humorous

### HOW CAN A PIECE OF CHILDREN'S THEATRE AFFECT A CHILD?

**Identification** – Empathetic bond between the character on stage and the child's self.

**Attachment** – Child may identify and 'attach' implications to various actions, e.g. not swimming between the flags can be fatal.

**Change in Attitude** – It is my responsibility. "I now know I should..."

**Imagination** – The theatre feeds a child's imagination and can inspire them in creative play.

Compiled by Hannah Brown for Sydney Theatre Company. Copyright protects this Education Resource.