



**UK/AUSTRALIA**

**AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE/PREMIERE**

DNA Puppetry and Visual Theatre Co  
**ATISHOO!**

Family and Education  
Program Partner

**RioTinto**

Directed and Designed by	<b>Rachel Riggs</b>
Puppeteer	<b>Adam Bennett</b>
Performer	<b>Ann-Marie Biagioni</b>
Soundtrack composed and performed by	<b>Haviel Perdana</b>
Lighting Designer	<b>Aaron Stirk</b>
Puppets made by	<b>Rachel Riggs</b> <b>Georgina Solo</b>
Childs voice	<b>Rebecca Riggs Bennett</b> (age 6)
Production Assistance	<b>Francis Italiano</b> <b>Amity Culver</b>

*Atishoo!* was originally developed with The Lowry arts centre, Manchester, UK, with support from the Arts Council of England.

We would like to thank Parry St Studios, Fremantle, and Joanne Foley.

**ATISHOO!**

*A box of tissues – wiping runny noses and dabbing at tears ...*

*What could be more uncomfortable and boring than a cold?*

*In your dreams, what amazing scenes and brilliant creatures can be imagined?*

Using innovative visual theatre techniques and delightful puppetry, DNA Puppetry and Visual Theatre Co lead young children through imaginative landscapes and stories, using light and shadow, paper and performance; accompanied by a stunning musical soundscape by acclaimed Indonesian composer Haviel Perdana.

**ABOUT ATISHOO!**

The fantastic journey we take together in *Atishoo!* is led by the child's imagination – through their 'healing' process. Using simple play with everyday materials and objects, a box of tissues and the bedroom furniture transform into dream-like lands. Each environment

symbolises the symptoms of a cold and the different stages of being ill, right up to the time of recovery. Through the positive experience of live theatre, a young child can explore the feelings and emotions triggered by high temperatures, aches and pains, and a runny nose. What journey will you take in your imagination next time you are ill in bed with a box of tissues?

The creation of *Atishoo!* for young children began with the exploration of tissue paper to stimulate imaginative play, and to engage children as participants and the audience members in the process of creating characters, stories and worlds. This creative program of engagement is called 'Imaginary Leaps', DNA's ongoing research program for Early Years Learning. From regular sessions with young children, new theatre work is created. The methodology draws on over 15 years of creative practice, as developed by Rachel Riggs.

**DNA**

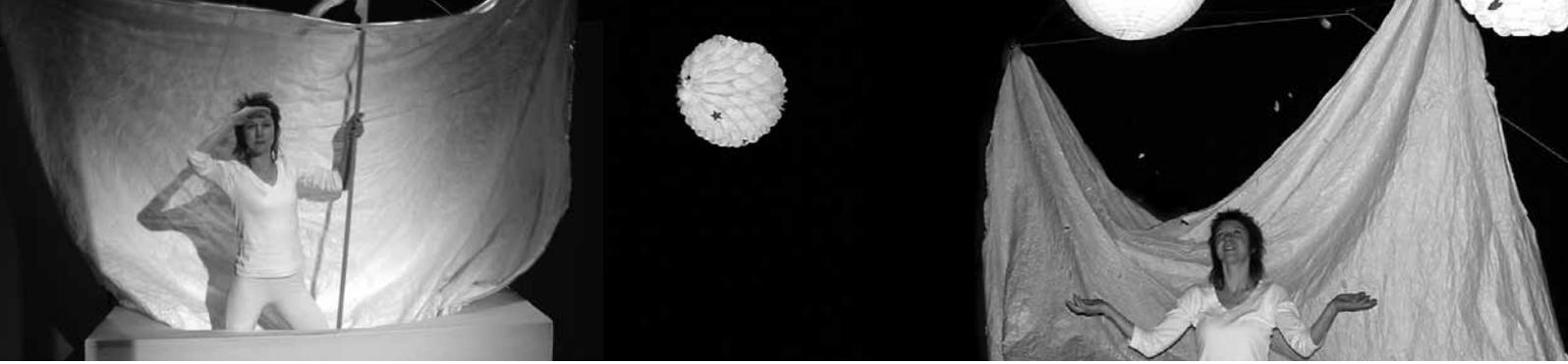
Formed in 1994, DNA Puppetry and Visual Theatre Co is a touring theatre company with a rich history of productions for children and adults. The company's main activities include: audience development through national and international touring; artistic development through collaboration with other arts organisations and artists; and Early Years theatre development through the 'Imaginary Leaps' program.

DNA's productions and projects aim to interest, excite and stimulate the creative imaginations of Early Years learners, encouraging them to engage in imaginative play with the objects and materials they would find around them in their own lives. DNA aspires to provide an experience that offers families the opportunity to engage with the performing arts both as an audience and as participants.

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**DNA Puppetry and Visual Theatre Co is a good example of a contemporary company that moves easily from work aimed at children to work aimed at a general theatre audience to adult cabaret.** TOTAL THEATRE MAGAZINE

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## **RACHEL RIGGS**

### **Artistic Director**

Rachel Riggs has a MA in Fine Art (Site and Archive). She is a visual theatre artist/director from the UK who designs and directs work using traditional and contemporary puppetry techniques. She creates theatre projects in indoor spaces and outdoors, collaborating with the environment to visually tell stories. Rachel trained in Advanced Puppetry at Central School of Speech and Drama, London, where she met Adam Bennett and formed the DNA company. Career highlights include being resident education artist at Tate Britain (Tate Modern and Tate Liverpool); taking the 'Imaginary Leaps' methodology to Toihaus Theatre, Salzburg, Austria; and receiving a bursary award to the 2009 Assitej Children's Theatre conference by La Barracca Theatre, Bologna, Italy. With DNA she has created over 15 productions and toured to many theatres and festivals, including Glastonbury, the National Theatre (UK) and 'Elemental' British Theatre presentation at Chalon dan la Rue, France.

As part of her Early Years professional status qualification, Rachel spent a year (2009–10) as Artist in Residence at Child and Family Centres in the UK, where she researched and developed open-play activities. As an Early Years Arts creative consultant she brings high-quality theatre arts for Early Years into cultural settings. With delivery partners both in the UK and in Australia, she has advised the Art Gallery of Western Australia (in 2010) and the Better Beginnings team at the State Library of WA (in 2011) on developing child-led participation for families with young children. She is currently writing the 'Imaginary Leaps with Better Beginnings Good Practice Guide'.

## **ADAM BENNETT**

### **Puppeteer**

Adam trained in theatre at WAAPA and puppetry at Spare Parts Theatre in Perth before his twenty-year career as a performer, dramaturge and devising producer in Europe and Japan. Adam has performed in Japanese in Japan, French in France, Spanish in Spain, and non-verbal puppetry and visual theatre worldwide. After completing a post-graduate Advanced Diploma in Puppetry at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London, Adam formed the DNA company with Rachel Riggs in 1994 and has since devised and created 15 productions for DNA, as well as shows for Theatre Rites, the Unicorn Theatre for Children, the English National Opera, the Little Angel Theatre and the Lyric Hammersmith. Adam currently devotes time helping to produce and manage the Western Australian Youth Theatre Company, as well as being the lead puppeteer at DNA, where he also contributes to the development of new theatre projects.

## **ANN-MARIE BIAGIONI**

### **Performer**

Ann-Marie Biagioni has been on the stage for 10 years, in performance as well as musical theatre. Currently in her final year of a double degree

in Contemporary Performance and Theatre Studies at ECU/WAAPA, she has featured predominantly in scripted work for older audiences, such as *Clark in Sarajevo* for WA Youth Theatre Co (directed by Jenny Davis) and the Finley Award winning production of *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers* (best play, directed by Andrew Warrick). Ann-Marie is really enjoying stepping out of her comfort zone and performing with puppets in a visual theatre production. *Atishoo!*, her first performance in children's theatre has challenged her physically and emotionally, but best of all, she is thrilled to perform to a family audience !

## **HAVIEL PERDANA**

### **Sound Track Composer**

Since 1980 Haviel has worked as musical director, composer, arranger, co-producer and guitarist for theatre, film, television, dance, advertising and recorded performance works, many of these on a large scale. Much of this work was in collaboration with Mas Harry. In Indonesia he was a lecturer in improvisation, at the University of Pasundan, Bandung, and educational activities, at DKSB, and has taught Computer Music and sharing skills with street children. In 2001 Haviel arrived in London to observe the methods of various higher education programs for popular music. He joined Indigo Moon Theatre in March 2002 and is now artistic co-director: co-devising shows, composing original scores, touring shows, leading workshops, directing and creating scenery and puppets.

## **AARON STIRK**

### **Lighting Designer**

Aaron is a Lighting Design graduate from the WAAPA and over the years has built up a successful design repertoire of over 150 productions, from the recent productions of *Blood Brothers* and *Aladdin* with Janus Entertainment to theatrical pieces like *Clark in Sarajevo*, *Sweat and Tears* for the WA Youth Theatre Co. Aaron has worked for many companies in Perth both as a lighting designer and technical operator, from Class Act Theatre Co and BSX to being the lighting technician at the Don Russell Performing Arts Centre in Thornlie. Aaron also has had an insight into the realm of Architectural and Architainment Lighting while programming various installations from 'Waterford Plaza' and the Perth Train Station facade, to designing for Agelink's production of *Swan River Saga* at St George's Cathedral. Aaron has also been involved in the training of up-and-coming artists: lecturing part time at Helena College, Notre Dame University, and other young-adult orientated companies such as KYTC and The Actors Apprenticeship. Recently Aaron has also been involved with Janus Entertainment for *The Magic Pudding* and *Music from the Whirlwind*.

