

BACKBONE  
THEATRE FOR BABIES



# WHAT'S IN THE WOODS?

A GENTLE WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF THEATRE  
FOR BABIES, INFANTS AND TODDLERS

## PRESENTER PACK 2025

PRODUCTION CONTACTS:

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Dedicated to a better Brisbane



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

BACKBONE and Brymore Productions  
acknowledges the traditional  
custodians of the land where we  
belong, play, and create, the land of the  
Jagera and Turrbal people, and pays  
respects to Elders — past, present, and  
emerging.

BACK  
BONE



*Backbone Theatre For Babies has been  
assisted by the Australian Government  
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*Backbone is supported by the Queensland  
Government through Arts Queensland.*

*Backbone Youth Arts is proudly supported  
by Brisbane City Council.*

*'What's In The Woods?' is a 2025 Fringe Fund  
recipient supported by Arts Unlimited and  
Arts South Australia.*



# WHAT'S IN THE WOODS?

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*Coming in to this project I wanted to answer the things I had called for as a new mother. After birth I found myself very isolated and detached from my community and the things that brought me joy, I also longed to share exciting experiences and activities that were both beneficial for me and my son, as a family unit.*

*In discussion with some of my peers and colleagues I also discovered parents and carers, even within the theatre industry, weren't taking their children to the theatre in their early years, with some not experiencing their first show until seven years old or more. Our son attended his first show when he was nine months old and he's since attended over fifty performances as he's toured around the world with us. This exposure to being in the theatre and experiencing the conventions and norms of that space has made him an enthusiastic and respectful audience member aged 2. I feel confident taking him into that space and know it is an experience that he is used to and comfortable in.*

*I'm aiming to create a similar experience for families, to not only cultivate an environment where they can enjoy a creative and exciting experience as a family, but also to build their confidence so they know theatre is a space where they are welcome, that they belong, and that they will feel comfortable to continue to attend far into the future.*

*With this project my goal was to create a safe and inclusive environment that matched the vast and ever changing developmental stages children go through between the ages of zero and three years old.*

*The Backbone Theatre For Babies program is structured to facilitate these early years theatrical experiences with guidelines for developmentally appropriate material, and provide a platform for artists working in the Theatre For The Very Young space to connect with enthusiastic audiences of local parents and caregivers.*

## Hollie Bryan

Program Manager:

Backbone Theatre For Babies

Co-Founder: Brymore Productions





# WHAT'S IN THE WOODS?

## **About The Production: (Synopsis not for publication)**

*Be transported to a soft and cosy woodland, right out of a picture book, full of natural wonders waiting to be discovered by young, inquisitive minds.*

*Audience members are welcomed by Leaf, our storytelling Gnome, to a soft and cosy woodland setting, where they will join them around the campfire on stage to experience their first taste of theatre and some of it's conventions.*

*Depending on age/development group attendees will enjoy one of twelve gentle stories, performed with ranging characterisations, facial and body gestures, hand puppetry, shadow puppetry and a variety of themed props, before embarking on their own sensory adventure throughout the various elements provided on stage. When the camp fire fizzles out, it's time for everyone to leave the woods and head home.*

*Tailor made for babies, infants and toddlers with unique, developmentally appropriate experiences for three distinct age groups (0-1, 1-2 and 2-3 year olds) 'What's In The Woods?' is a gentle welcome to the world of theatre filled with performance, puppetry and play.*

## **Production History:**

### **-Trial Season**

*12 performances, Aug-Sep 2024, Backbone, Brisbane, AUS*

### **-Backbone Festival - Premiere**

*12 Performances, Oct 2024, Ron Hurley Theatre & Backbone, Brisbane, AUS*

### **-Backbone Return Seasons**

*20 Performances, Nov-Dec 2024, Backbone, Brisbane, AUS*

*16 Performances, Jan-Feb 2025, Backbone, Brisbane, AUS*

*16 Performances, Mar-Apr 2025, Backbone, Brisbane, AUS*

*16 Performances, May-June 2025, Backbone Brisbane, AUS*

### **-Adelaide Fringe 2025 (Fringe Fund Grant Recipient)**

*9 performances, Feb-Mar 2025, Marion Cultural Centre, Marion, AUS*

*6 performances, Feb-Mar 2025, Parks Library, Angle Park, AUS*

*3 Performances, Feb 2025, Murray Bridge Performing Arts Centre, AUS*

# WHAT'S IN THE WOODS?

**Run Time:**

45 Minutes per session

(Approximately 25 minutes of storytelling & 20 minutes of play)

No interval

**On Stage Capacity:**

Maximum 50 people (includes adults and infants)

If venue has auditorium seating we welcome additional observers for a cheaper ticket price. Often utilised by grandparents or other additional family members with older children. We usually cap this at 20 people to not overwhelm on stage attendees.

**Performance Schedule**

3-4 performance sessions in one day,

(One of each age group, with an additional 0-1 performance on demand.)

Suggested times- 8:00am/8:30am, 9:30am/9:45am, 11:00am, 2:00pm

Works effectively on Weekends or Weekdays, and not beholden to school holidays.

4 Different programmable 'Seasons' (Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn) with specific content for each age group, allowing for single day, or multi day/regular programming across a week, month or year.

Christmas and other festive holiday performances available on request.

**Brief Technical Information:**

Production tours with 4-8 small battery operated LED Birdy lamps & Bluetooth Speaker. Sound runs off Company Laptop.

Can utilise venue LX and SND to harness production if available, but not required.

Set can adapt to different sized spaces, modular matting is utilised for floor covering.

**Bump In Time:** Minimum 1 Hour

**Bump Out Time:** Minimum 1 Hour

**Touring Company:**

2-3

1 performer

1 Front Of House Liaison

1 Production Support

Show tours in a

KIA Sportage with

roof rack case

height approx 1.8m



# WHAT'S IN THE WOODS?

## **Highly Engaged Audience:**

- 75% attendance capacity across all seasons to date.
- 0-1 Age Group has consistently sold out across all available performances.
- Audience feedback reports a lack of activities (especially within arts and culture) for the 0-3 age group for shared family experiences, especially on week days.
- Incredibly popular with social mother's groups, who are often repeat attenders.

## **Repeat Attendance:**

From performances held across 3 seasons of "What's In The Woods?" at Backbone between August and December 2024:

- 23% of our families returned for at least one additional performance.
- 7% of our families attended all four performances in a season.
- 4% of our families attended more than four performances, across multiple runs of the show at Backbone.

## **Accessibility:**

- Welcome speech from a member of our team explaining the experience to the audience prior entering the theatre.
- Change table provided in space so audience members do not need to leave the theatre to change their child and miss any of the performance.
- Breast Feeding welcome within the space
- Where possible we request a break out or quiet space for attendees that may need to step out or take some time to find calm before re-entering the theatre.
- Where possible we request a designated space for pram parking
- Where performed on a flat floor, the onstage experience is wheelchair accessible.
- Carer support materials and collateral from a variety of organisations are available.

## **For Children:**

- Targeted, developmentally appropriate content, performance delivery and sensory/play activities for three distinct age groups (0-1s, 1-2s and 2-3s) promoting engagement and interactivity.
- Safe, designed environment to explore and discover sensory elements.
- Technical elements (LX, SND etc) designed with infants in consideration.

## **For Parents, Families and Caregivers:**

- Connects parents, families and caregivers with other likeminded people going through similar experiences, promoting connection and community.
- Combats isolation suffered post-partum or as new parents and caregivers.
- Builds confidence in taking children to other theatrical productions or events.
- Encourages good mental-health and awareness of support available through relevant carer support materials provided.

## **For Venues:**

- Builds new audience and community for your venue.
- Encourages repeat and regular attendance, while building awareness of theatrical conventions and theatre etiquettes.
- Builds awareness of your venue and it's accessibility while encouraging attendance of other future events within your calendar.



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