



Benjamin & Me

October 6 – 24, The Blue Room Theatre



AWARD-WINNING PERFORMER MARK STOREN BRINGS MUSICAL STORYTELLING TO LIFE

Benjamin is Will's best mate in the whole wide world. Benjamin is also a dog.

Cheeky, bold and slightly irreverent, **Benjamin and Me** is the latest work from Mark Storen and is the debut production for his new company Whiskey & Boots. The work will be presented at The Blue Room Theatre as part of the AWESOME Festival from **6 – 24 October 2015**.

One morning, Will wakes up with an idea. He has decided to build the first ever boy-dog operated flying machine. And so, this coming-of-age adventure takes to the skies...

Benjamin & Me is the first family show Storen has created. "I want to give people an intimate storytelling experience, like we've gathered the family into the lounge-room for a good yarn," says Storen.

This story features a smattering of songs, crazy contraptions and raw, childlike illustrations by visual artist and performer Jacinta Larcombe.

Follow a young boy, his dog and their wild imagination in this coming of age musical adventure.

Writer & performer Mark Storen | **Mentor** Finegan Kruckemeyer | **Illustrator** Jacinta Larcombe | **Design Consult** Fiona Bruce | **Producer** Georgia King | **Stage Manager** Meabh Walton

WHISKEY & BOOTS

Housing the work of performer, director, writer and musician Mark Storen, Whiskey & Boots is Perth's newest performance company dedicated to storytelling with music.

"A talented, theatrical all rounder" – The West Australian (*A Drunken Cabaret*)

"Yarn spinning of a high order" – The West Australian (*The Polite Gentleman*)

WHAT Benjamin & Me

WHEN October 6-11 11am & 2pm, October 13-24 6pm

WHERE The Blue Room Theatre, Perth Cultural Centre, Northbridge

BOOK blueroom.org.au, 08 9227 7005, \$15 group bookings available

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For images, interviews and information.

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CAST AND CREW

MARK STOREN

Has over 15 years' experience as a performer, writer, director and educator both nationally and internationally. Mark's previous solo works include *The Polite Gentleman* at The Blue Room Theatre (nominated for 5 Blue Room Theatre Awards including Best Production and Best Performer), and *A Drunken Cabaret*, presented at Melbourne, Adelaide and New York Fringe Festivals. He presented *Killing Nellie* at The 100 Degrees Festival in Berlin, The Winnipeg Fringe Festival and at the New York International Fringe Festival. Mark has directed, performed and created work for many companies including Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Deckchair, Curtin University and Perth Theatre Company. Mark was part of the In The Chair program, a director's lab initiated by Perth Theatre Company and His Majesty's Theatre in 2009.

JACINTA LARCOMBE

Jacinta is a contemporary dancer, performer and visual artist. Her performance credits include five major season performances with Steps Youth Dance Company, *The Little Mermaid* (The Blue Room Theatre), *One Five Zero Seven* (Barking Gecko and Perth International Arts Festival), and *The Song Was Wrong* (Perth Theatre Company). She opened and presented at the APACA conference in Canberra in 2013 and won the PAWA Best Newcomer award in 2014. Jacinta studied art at the Central Institute of Technology in 2012 and has since used her work to market shows she has been involved in, including *The Little Mermaid* and *RabbitHead*. Jacinta had her first group exhibition in March this year.

FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER

Finegan has had over 71 commissioned plays performed on five continents, and was an inaugural recipient of the Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship. To date, his plays have had seasons in: over 50 Australian and international festivals; five consecutive IPAY North American invited showcases; all Australian states/territories; five UK national tours; and at Australia's Sydney Opera House, Ireland's Dublin Theatre Festival, Scotland's Imagine Festival, Shanghai's Malan Flower Theatre, New York's New Victory Theater and NYU, and DC's Kennedy Center for the Arts. Finegan and his work have received (among others) the 2012 Helpmann Award for Children's Theatre, 2010 Rodney Seaborn Award, 2010 Best New Work Ruby Award, 2009 Australian Writers Guild Award (AWGIE) for Best Children's Play in Australia, 2009 Mystate Young Tasmanian Artist Award, 2009 Ruby Award For Innovation and the 2008 Best Children's Theatre Playwright Oscar.

FIONA BRUCE

Fiona Bruce is a freelance set and costume designer currently based in Darwin and Perth. Companies that Fiona has collaborated with include Black Swan State Theatre Company, Deckchair, STRUT, Performing Lines, The Blue Room Theatre, Steamworks, theMOXYcollective, Little y, Red Ryder Productions, Happy Dagger, SOAG Productions, John Curtin College of the Arts and WAAPA. Fiona has received an Equity Guild Award for Best Design in 2011 and 2014. Fiona trained at Curtin University and WAAPA (2009 Design Award).



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The Blue Room Theatre is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. Our development seasons are supported by the City of Perth.

BENJAMIN AND ME CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Benjamin and Me is a fantastic show to generate discussion and stimulating activities in the classroom. Benjamin and Me is a theatre show created for children, it's about friendship, love, music, imagination and of course storytelling!

Mark Storen has engaged in classroom activities with WA school children whilst developing the show. Below are some suggestions of activities that can be tailored to suit any classroom!

ACTIVITY 1

Continue the story! Sit down and write a short story about Will and Benjamin's next adventure. What sort of mischief can they get up to next and where will their flying machine take them?

ACTIVITY 2

Write your own smattering crazy song in music class! Pick up some odd objects, or bring some in from home! Pots and pans, plastic containers and some sticks, you don't need much to make a beat! Create a rhyme and get in time!

ACTIVITY 3

Draw a storyboard of Will and Benjamin's adventures.