

Little Wing Productions presents

# Spike

*An Echidna's  
Journey*



*This project is proudly commissioned by the Australian Children's Theatre Foundation and supported by Regional Arts Victoria.*

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# Spike *An Echidna's Journey*

*Spike* is the story of a young echidna who hatches from his egg, only to find he is in the wrong nest. He has no spikes yet, he doesn't know who he is and doesn't know where he belongs. He finds himself in turn in the nest of a crocodile, an emu, a lyrebird and a pelican. He is in danger. He feels frightened, rejected, alone. He meets a young girl playing alone in the bush because she is bullied by other children. She is shy, clumsy and awkward, but she helps him discover where he belongs. Spike finds his place in the world in a way that parallels her own story.

Told through the art form of contemporary shadow theatre, *Spike* is an dynamic interactive experience. It is entertaining and fun, as well as a catalyst for a discussion about bullying, difference and belonging. It offers students tools for overcoming these barriers. It is also environmental education about the remarkable biology of Australian animals, especially the echidna, which is one of the only egg-laying mammals in the world. After the performance, there will be demonstration of the techniques of shadow puppetry, introducing students to an expressive hands-on story-telling medium that is very accessible to young people.

*Spike* was co-written with acclaimed author Anne Brooksbank, whose work has been shortlisted for the *Prime Ministers Children's Book of the Year 2012* and Highly Recommended in the *Family Therapists' Association Awards 2006*. *Spike* has been created under the mentorship of Richard Bradshaw, an internationally regarded puppeteer who received an Order of Australia for Service to the Arts.

## JENNY ELLIS

Jenny Ellis has been a puppeteer for over fifteen years. She has a Post-Graduate Diploma in Puppetry from the Victorian College of the Arts. In 2011 she studied with master shadow puppeteer Richard Bradshaw as part of the national *Jump Mentoring* program. In 2012 she was awarded a major fellowship with the Mike Walsh Foundation to research contemporary puppetry in Europe.

Jenny was a Researcher for the NSW Minister for Education from 2003-2005. She has a Bachelor's degree in Social Ecology with a major focus on Environmental Education. As Artistic Director of Little Wing Puppets she has created two solo shows *A Little Bit of Blue* and *The Owl's Apprentice*. As co-founder of Company Gongoma, their show *The Mermaid's Daughter* won the Melbourne Fringe Festival Award for *The Best School Holiday Program*. Jenny's performances have been enjoyed by over 35,000 kindergarten and primary school students in every state and territory of Australia.

Written by Jenny Ellis and Anne Brooksbank  
Directed by Jacob Williams and Clare Batholomew  
Puppetry Mentoring by Richard Bradshaw  
Music by Mal Webb  
Set Design by Dayna Morrissey  
Lighting Design by Danny Pettingill  
Puppets by Jenny Ellis and Freya Pitt



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|             | Content Descriptions / Outcomes  |
|-------------|--|
| DRAMA       | identify features & purposes of drama  |
| PDHPE       | evaluates personal decisions   |
| ENGLISH     | connects own experiences with the world of texts; experiments with imagery & language patterns |
| HSIE        | explores common characteristics & differences  |
| VISUAL ARTS | looks at and imagine patterns and forms  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>DURATION:</b> 40 Minutes + Q & A time                 | <b>SUITABILITY:</b> Years F - 4   |
| <b>PERFORMANCE COST:</b><br>Per Student \$4.50 (gst n/a) | <b>PERFORMANCE MINIMUM:</b> 120 Students*<br>Per Session \$540.00 (gst n/a) |

\*PLEASE NOTE EVERY STUDENT OVER 120 PAYS \$4.50 GST N/A

## Young Australia Workshop

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