



# THE GRUMPIEST BOY IN THE WORLD

RELAXED PERFORMANCE  
VISUAL STORY

The Marian & E.H. Flack Trust  
William Angliss Charitable Fund

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# WELCOME TO ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE

*Arts Centre Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we gather, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. We also acknowledge the neighbouring Kulin Nation groups, the Boonwurrung and Bunurong people, and pay our respects to elders, past and present.*

*Both land and sovereignty have never been ceded. It always was and always will be Aboriginal Land.*

## RELAXED PERFORMANCE

Victorian Opera and Arts Centre Melbourne are committed to providing performances that allow everyone to experience the wonder of theatre. This Relaxed Performance is especially designed to welcome visitors with disability or sensory sensitivities, their friends and families to the theatre.

The atmosphere is 'relaxed,' with some house lights remaining on during the performance. A quiet space will be available in the foyer if a break is needed. Enthusiasm is embraced and it's okay to move during the performance.

## CONTACT

This visual story has been prepared by Victorian Opera in consultation with Arts Centre Melbourne. If you would like any additional information in the lead up to your visit, please contact Arts Centre Melbourne on 1300 182 183 during business hours or email [tickets@artscentremelbourne.com.au](mailto:tickets@artscentremelbourne.com.au).

# PRODUCTION

*The Grumpiest Boy in the World* is composed by Joseph Twist, with the libretto by Finegan Kruckemeyer.

This show features our hero, Zachary, who questions his own ordinariness as he discovers an imaginary world of giants, hairy creatures and flying things.

This Relaxed Performance has been made possible through the generous support of the Marian and E.H. Flack Trust and the William Angliss Charitable Fund.

## VENUE

This production of *The Grumpiest Boy in the World* will be performed at the **Playhouse**, which is inside Arts Centre Melbourne. The Theatres Building has a large spire on the roof.

## LENGTH

The opera is 50 minutes with no interval.

## AGE RECOMMENDATION

Victorian Opera recommends attendees be aged 5 and over.

Families are encouraged to review warnings and talk to staff in order to assess appropriateness of content.

## CONTENT AND SENSORY WARNINGS

- This opera not only features singers who can sometimes sing quite loudly, but it also uses a small orchestra made up of nine instrumentalists. If the music gets too loud during the performance, you can cover your ears with your hands or put on some headphones.
- During the performance some haze will be used. If the haze becomes a little overwhelming, you're more than welcome to leave the auditorium to have a break.
- In this production, the singer playing the character of the Zachary can appear to be quite grumpy or angry at times. He sometimes yells as well. It's important to remember that he is not really angry, he's just pretending. This is the same for the characters in Grumptown. All the performers are actually good friends.



- This opera includes puppetry and performers wearing unusual costumes to create the characters in the story, such as animals. The puppets and characters might seem strange - we've provided drawings of what some of them will look like in the visual story, to help you prepare.

## THEATRE GUIDELINES

- Photography and mobile devices are not permitted during the performance, however if you need to use a device to assist with communication (such as an iPad), please inform the ushers. It's always fine to use a device in the foyer or quiet areas.

- During the Relaxed Performance, a relaxed attitude is taken to movement and noise in the auditorium.

- If you need to take a break during the show, you are welcome to come out into the foyer area where a quiet space with low lighting will be made

available. You can return to the theatre when you are ready – trained staff are available to assist as required.

- To ensure COVID safety, sensory items and earmuffs will only be available upon request. We encourage audiences to bring their own items that will help make you feel comfortable in the theatre, such as headphones, fidget toys etc.

- Face masks are recommended indoors

## THE THEATRE

*The Grumpiest Boy in the World* is being performed in the Theatres Building at Arts Centre Melbourne. The Theatres Building has a large spire on top.

There are many theatres inside Arts Centre Melbourne. Follow the directions or ask staff to find the **Playhouse**.







## THE BUILDING

You might go into the building through the car park on Kavanagh Street, or through the doors at the St Kilda Road entrance. When you get to the building you will see other people who are also going to see shows. Some of them might be seeing *The Grumpiest Boy in the World* like you.

You will also see people wearing black uniforms. They are called ushers. They can help you with directions or answer any questions you may have about the performance.





# BEFORE THE OPERA

There are three theatres inside Arts Centre Melbourne. Today you are going to the **Playhouse**.

You might need to walk down some stairs or use the elevator to get to the **Playhouse**. The friendly ushers will help you find your way.

The place might be quite busy when you arrive, so you may wish to allow yourself extra time or wear headphones if it's noisy. Before going inside the **Playhouse**, you may like to use the bathroom. Accessible toilets are available on all levels, so please feel free to ask for directions.



# SEATING

You can go into the theatre and find your seat early, if you like. The doors will be open about **30 minutes** before the show starts.

Before you go into the theatre, you will need to show your ticket to the usher. Your

ticket will let you know that seating is General Admission. This means that you can choose which seat you would like to watch the show from.

If you prefer, an usher can recommend seats and take you to them.





## DURING THE OPERA

The opera will go for approximately 50 minutes and has no interval.

If you need to take a break during the show you are welcome to leave the theatre and come out into the foyer area.

A **Quiet Area** with some comfortable beanbags and nice lighting will be available for you to relax in if you'd like to.

You can return to the theatre whenever you feel ready.



## AFTER THE OPERA

When the opera is finished, people will clap to say thank you. Some might even cheer! You can join in if you like, or if it's too loud you can cover your ears.





# THE SETTING

The setting is where this story takes place. This story happens in Zachary Briddling's kitchen which has white cupboards and timber floors. As the story is told, we enter into the worlds of Zachary's imagination and the kitchen changes as you will see on the following pages.





**Let's meet the characters of  
the story and the people that are  
playing these characters.**



# ZACHARY BRIDDLING

## THE CHARACTER

Zachary is the main character in this story. He has a large imagination and likes to draw and create new worlds to explore when he is working at his craft table. He wears a T-shirt with blue sleeves and a bright yellow lightning bolt.

Two different people will take turns playing Zachary. They are:

**Daniel Szesiong Todd** and in the relaxed performance, **Joshua Morton-Galea** will play the role of Zachary.



## THE PERFORMERS

**DANIEL SZESIONG TODD (時雄)**



**As a kid, loved to:** Imagine all the amazing things I could do when I become an adult!

**Favourite song to sing:** 'Blow Up The Pokies' by The Whitlams (maybe the best song ever written!)

**As a kid, was inspired by:** The singer Anthony Warlow, and Jeff from the Wiggles

**JOSHUA MORTON-GALEA**



**Goes to:** The University of Melbourne.

**Went to:** Newport Gardens Primary School

**Favourite Colour:** Green

**As a kid, loved to:** Skateboard



# MOTHER

## THE CHARACTER

Zachary's mother loves her child very much. She is impressed with his artwork and puts each one up on the fridge as if it were a famous art gallery.

She wears a spotted dress that has a layered skirt and a cardigan that has grey and olive green tones.

The performer playing the role of Zachary's Mother is:  
**Saskia Mascitti**



## THE PERFORMER

**SASKIA MASCITTI**



**Favourite song to sing:**  
AOK by Tai Verdes

**Favourite Colour:** Purple (specifically Jacaranda flowers) and blue sky reflected on crystal clear ocean water

**As a kid, wanted to be:** A farmer, partly because she (wrongly) thought she wouldn't have to do any math



# FATHER

## THE CHARACTER

Zachary's father is extremely proud of his child. He constantly reminds Zachary that there is nothing middling about him.

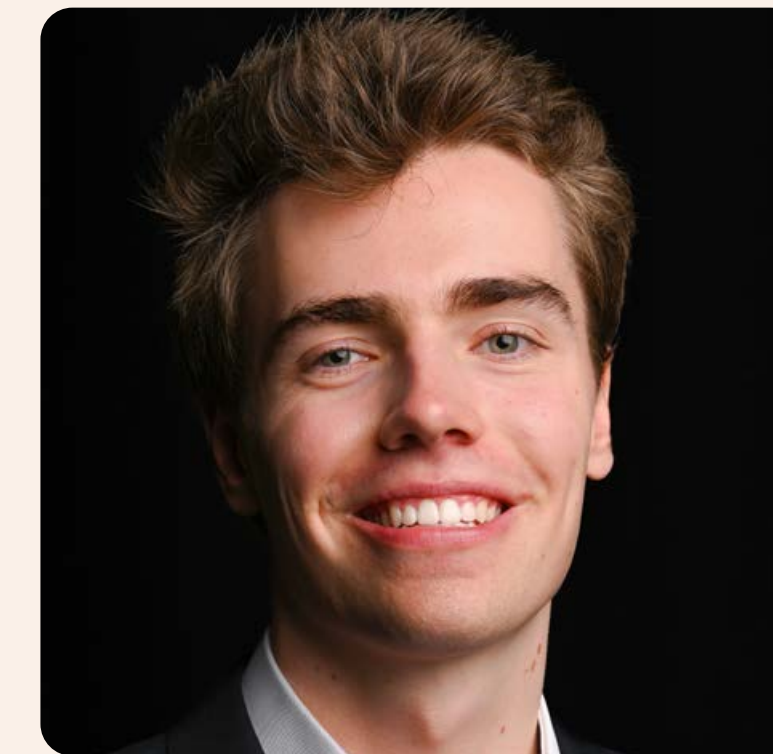
He wears a plaid shirt in green tones with tan pants.

The performer playing the role of Zachary's Father is:  
**Noah Straughan**



## THE PERFORMER

**NOAH STRAUGHAN**



**Favourite song to sing:**  
Total Eclipse of the Heart

**When he was a kid he loved to:**  
Play downball with his mates

**As a kid, inspired by:** The Wiggles



# SCIENTIST 1

## THE CHARACTER

One of 2 scientists that examine Zachary to measure his ordinariness. They decide that he is extra ordinary and terribly middling.

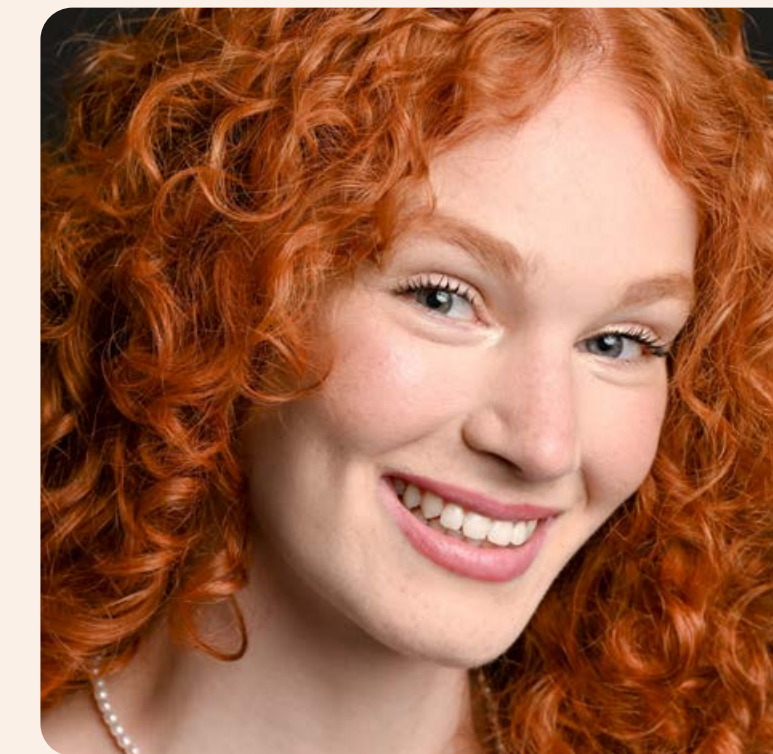
She wears thick black rimmed glasses, a deep red turtleneck shirt, a blue blazer and grey pants.

The performer playing the role of Scientist 1 is:  
**Chloe James**



## THE PERFORMER

**CHLOE JAMES**



**Went to:** Mckinnon Primary School

**Favourite song to sing:** "Groove Is In The Heart" - Deee-Lite

**As a kid, loved to:** Eat lots of chocolate... still do!



# SCIENTIST 2

## THE CHARACTER

One of 2 scientists that examine Zachary to measure his ordinairiness. They decide that he is extra ordinary and terribly middling.

He wears black rimmed glasses, a blue stripped shirt with a bow tie, a dark green and cream checked vest and blue pants.

The performer playing the role of Scientist 2 is:

**Nicholas Beecher**



## THE PERFORMER

**NICHOLAS BEECHER**



**Best subject at school:**  
Maths

**Favourite Colour:** Blue

**As a kid, wanted to be:** A farmer



# GIANT

## THE CHARACTER

The Giant is the first character from Zachary's imagination that we meet. He is very tall and is excited that he and Zachary have the same blue watch with a button on top.

He wears an orange puffer jacket with pants of the same colour and hiking boots. He has blue gloves and wears a blue watch which is the same as Zachary's.

The performer playing the role of the Giant is:  
**James Billson**



## THE PERFORMER

**JAMES BILLSON**



**Favourite colour:** Orange

**Favourite song to sing:**  
'Se Vuol Ballare', from *Le Nozze di Figaro* by Mozart

**As a kid, loved to:** Read fantasy and sci-fi books



# DOT THE GIRL WITH HAIR

## THE CHARACTER

The second character from Zachary's imagination that we meet and her name is Dot. She has LOTS of hair and she discovers that Zachary's mother says the same things as her mother.

She wears a light blue jacket and a pink plaid skirt. She has long pink, purple and blue hair on her head and on her legs.

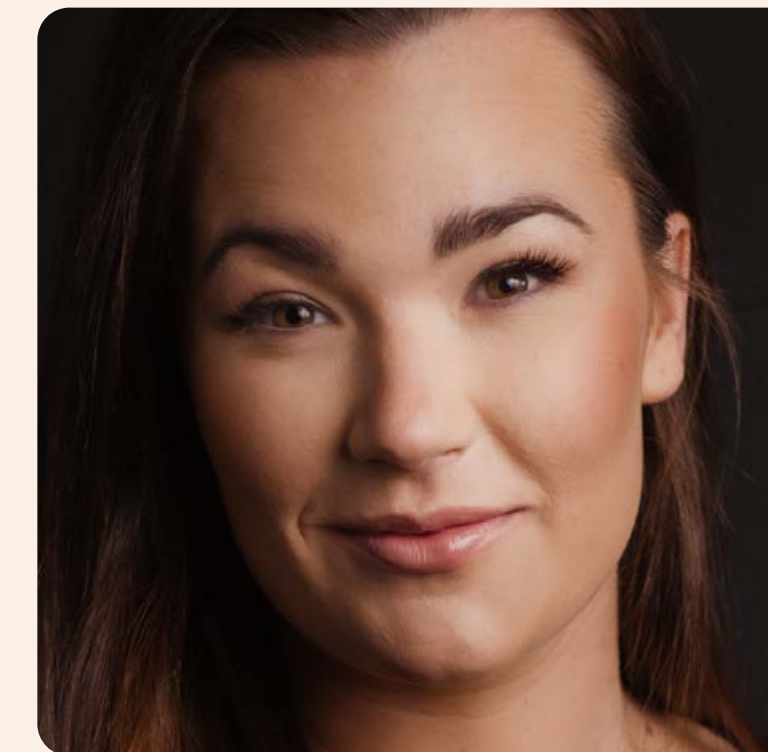
The performer playing the role of the Dot the Girl with Hair is:

**Breanna Stuart**



## THE PERFORMER

**BREANNA STUART**



**As a kid, wanted to be:** an Opera Singer

**Favourite Colour:** Red

**As a kid, loved to:** Dance



# THE TEENY WEENIES

## THE CHARACTERS

Lots of Teeny Weeny Zacharys appear. They look exactly like Zachary, but a lot smaller and their voices squeal.

The Teeny Weenies are played by the performers who are in the Ensemble.

These characters are hand puppets and appear from behind the kitchen bench.





# SLEEPY BIRD

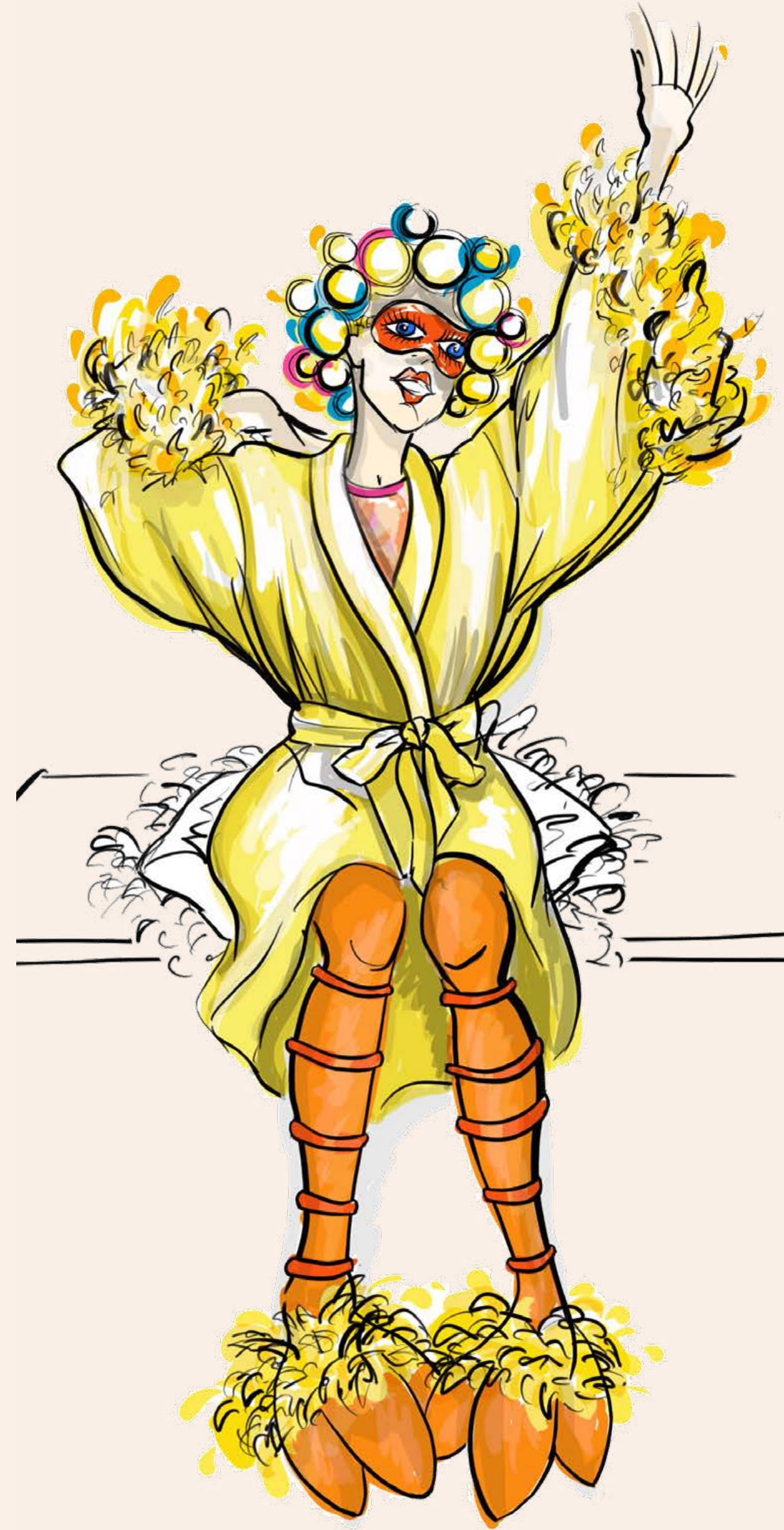
## THE CHARACTER

Sleeping in their bed at the top of a hill we meet The Bird, the fourth character from Zachary's imagination. As they wake, the bird sings of a dream that is the same as Zachary's dream.

The bird wears a bright yellow dressing gown with large orange bird-feet slippers.

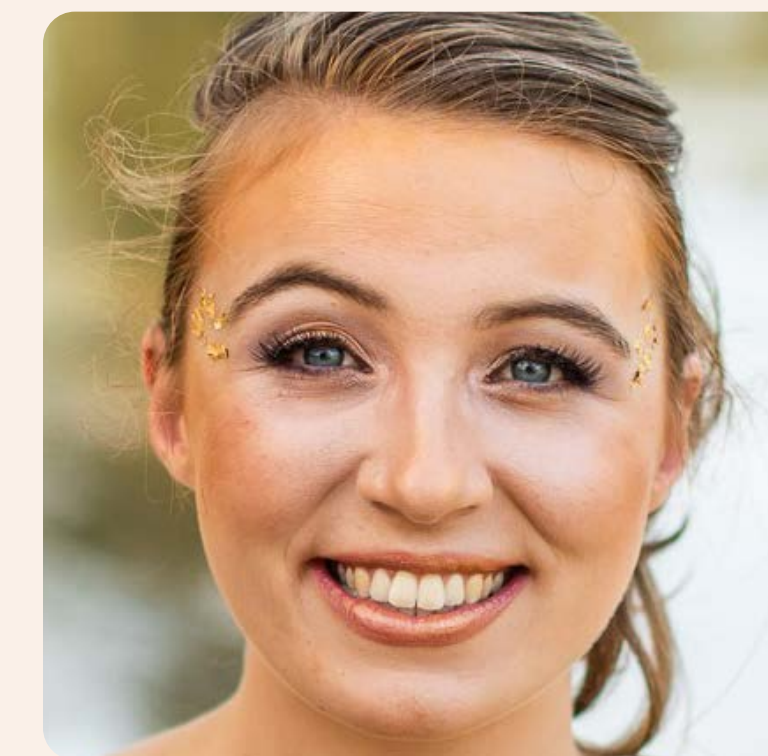
The performer playing the role of the Sleepy Bird is:

**Lisette Bolton**



## THE PERFORMER

**LISETTE BOLTON**



**Went to:** North Wagga Primary School

**As a kid, loved to:** Sing and dance anywhere and everywhere

**Best subject at school:** Visual Arts



# JELLY FACED SQUIRREL MONKEY

## THE CHARACTER

The Jelly Faced Squirrel Monkey is the fifth character that we meet from Zachary's imagination. They are angry and grumpy, just like Zachary.

They wear a purple T-shirt with a star on it, green shorts and blue leggings. They also wear a pink helmet as they have roller skate legs.

The performer playing the role of the Jelly Faced Squirrel Monkey is:  
**Amanada Hargreaves**



## THE PERFORMER

**AMANDA HARGREAVES**



**Went to:** Our Lady of the Assumption Primary School, Cheltenham

**Favourite song to sing:** Mr Snow from *Carousel*

**Best subject at school:** English



# GRUMP 1

## THE CHARACTER

Grump 1 is off to the post office but has forgotten the letter she needs to send. She is very grumpy about this.

Grump 1 wears a red raincoat and hat with the same colour gumboots to keep dry from the rain.

The performer playing the role of the Grump 1 is:  
**Maria Woolford**



## THE PERFORMER

**MARIA WOOLFORD**



**Favourite subject at school:**  
Ancient History.

**As a kid, wanted to be:** A unicorn with a rainbow coloured mane and tail and sparkly hooves

**Favourite colour:** Purple. I love purple flowers and when the sky turns purple at sunset



# GRUMP 2

## THE CHARACTER

Grump 2 is even grumpier than Grump 1 if you can believe it. He is so grumpy that he is almost mad.

Grump 2 wears a cobalt blue raincoat and hat with the same colour gumboots to keep dry from the rain

The performer playing the role of the Grump 2 is:  
**Hartley Trusler**



## THE PERFORMER

**HARTLEY TRUSLER**



### **Favourite song to sing:**

Depends! For Classical singing I like to sing *O del mio amato ben* by Donaudy, but if it's around the house, *Message to My Girl* by Split Enz

**Favourite Colour:** Ocean blue

**As a kid wanted to be:** An opera singer first and foremost, otherwise any work relating to performing arts and live performance



# THE CHORUS

Apart from all of the characters we have just introduced, there are other performers that appear on stage. They are called The Chorus.

The Chorus are a group of singers that help tell the story and help to create the emotions and moods experienced by the main characters.

Let's meet all of these people now.

JESSIE LINKE



**Favourite subject at school:** Music or Drama

**As a kid, wanted to be:** An Opera Singer or Conductor

**Favourite colour:** Pink

SOFIA IMPERATORE



**Went to:** St Michaels Primary School, Berwick

**Favourite Colour:** Green

**As a kid loved to:** Collect acorns

FELICIA ZANGARI



**Went to:** Devinny Elementary School in Denver, Colorado (USA)

**Favourite song to sing:** 'Wie du' from *Elisabeth das Musical* (a German-language musical)

**Best subject at school:** Maths

GENEVIEVE DROPPERT



**Who inspired you as a kid?** My mum!

**Favourite Colour:** Teal Blue

**As a kid loved to:** Sew and Sing



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QUILAN AXTENS



**Went to:** Caulfield Grammar School until grade 4, and finished at Malvern Primary School

**Favourite song to sing:** *Valerie* by Amy Winehouse and *Dreams* by the Cranberries.

**Best subject at school:** Music! And Chinese

MITCHELL SANDERS



**Who inspired you as a kid?** Josh Groban

**Favourite Colour:** Red

**As a kid, wanted to be:** an Opera Singer

CEN WEI



**Favourite song to sing:** 'New Divide' by Linkin Park

**As a kid, wanted to be:** A rockstar

**Favourite colour:** Black

METEHAN PEKTAS



**Best subject at school:** Geography, and Solfege at conservatorium.

**As a kid loved to:** Ride a bike.

**Who inspired you as a kid?** Turkish rockstar Sebnem Ferah



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Let's meet all of these people now.

ISAAC BURGESS



**Best subject at school?** Music

**Favourite song to sing:** 'Money' by Pink Floyd

**As a kid loved to:** Play Basketball

DECLAN FARR



**As a kid, wanted to be:** A performer

**Favourite song to sing:** 'The floral dance' by Katie Moss

**Favourite colour:** Maroon

ZHUOYANG LI



**Favourite colour:** Blue

**As a kid, loved to:** Play guitar

**As a kid wanted to be:** An Operatic Bass Baritone

NICK CHRISTIE



**As a kid, loved to:** Eat way too much cereal

**As a kid, wanted to be:** A rockstar

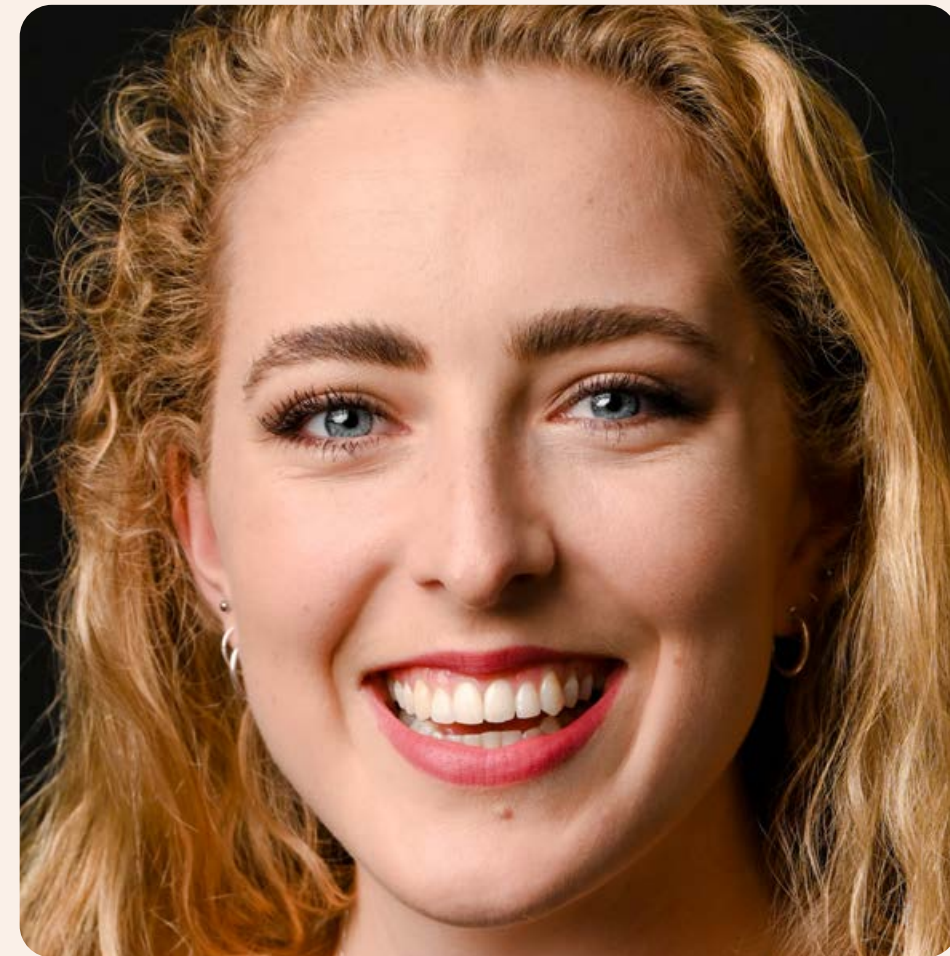
**Favourite colour:** Blue



# COVERS

Covers are very important. If someone is sick and cannot perform we have other performers in the cast that can cover those roles which means the show can go on.

**GENEVIEVE DROPPERT**



If need be, Genevieve can cover the roles of Zachary's Mother and the Scientist 2

**NICHOLAS BEECHER**



Nicholas is the cover for the role of Father

**QUILIAN AXTENS**



Quilian is the cover for the role of Scientist 1

**NOAH STRAUGHAN**



As well as performing the role of Father, Noah is able to cover the role of Giant



# COVERS

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AMANDA HARGREAVES



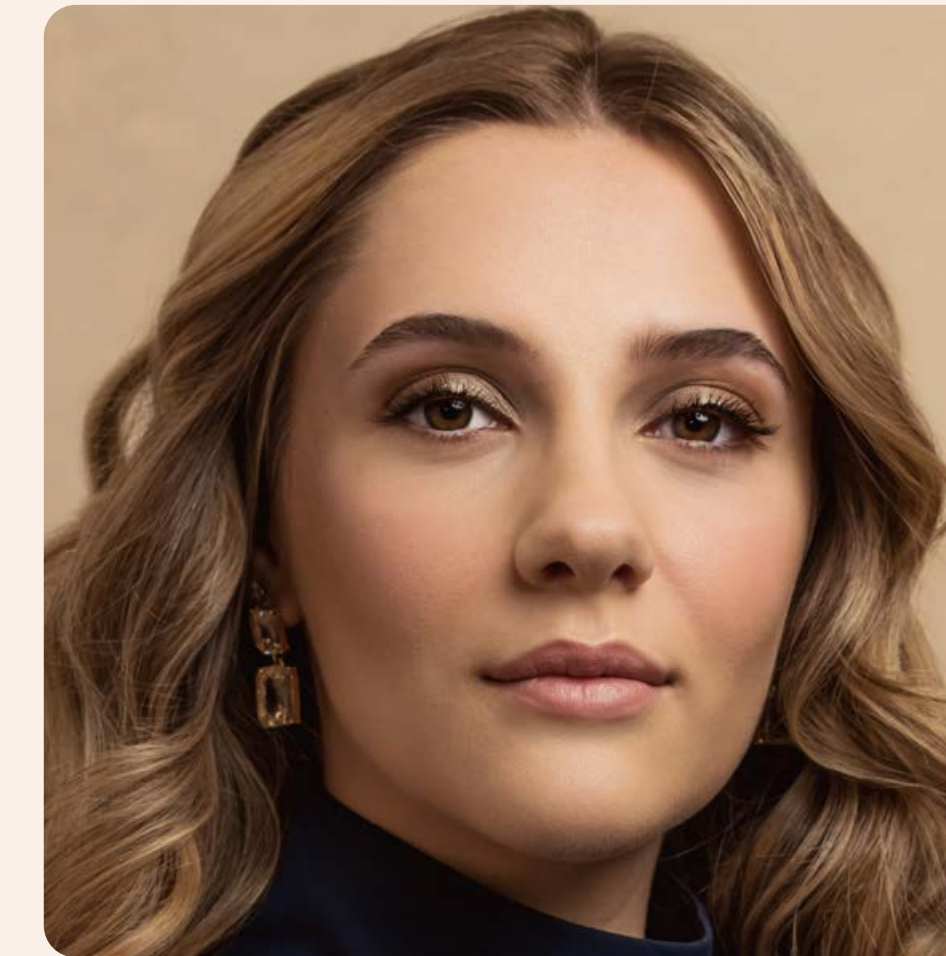
Amanda is the cover for the role of Dot the Girl with Hair

SOPHIA IMPERATORE



Sophia is the cover for the role of Sleepy Bird

JESSE LINKE



Jesse is able to cover the role of both Jelly Faced Squirrel Monkey and Grump 1

CEN WEI



Cen is the cover for the role of Grump 2



# THE STORY

When you take your seat, you might be able to see the musicians in the pit, which is the space in front of the stage before the seats start. You may also hear them playing their instruments as they get ready for the show to start.

Just before the show starts, the musicians will tune their instruments so that they are all playing at the same pitch.

The person who leads the orchestra is the conductor. They will come to the front of the area where the musicians are, and we will clap.

The show is now ready to start. The conductor raises their baton, and the lights will dim. The orchestra will play the music at the start of an opera, which is called an overture.





When the stage lights come on you can see Zachary Briddling, our main character, drawing at his craft table (which is at the front of the stage to the right-hand-side).

Zachary's mum starts to cook dinner and then the family dog (played by a person dressed as a dog) runs in. The dog tries to eat the food, says hello to Zachary and runs around, before Zachary's mum takes the dog outside.

Zachary sings about what he is drawing and then his dad comes home. Zachary tells his parents that he is bored with the real world and wants to create worlds where he is the king, and it is always lunchtime at school.





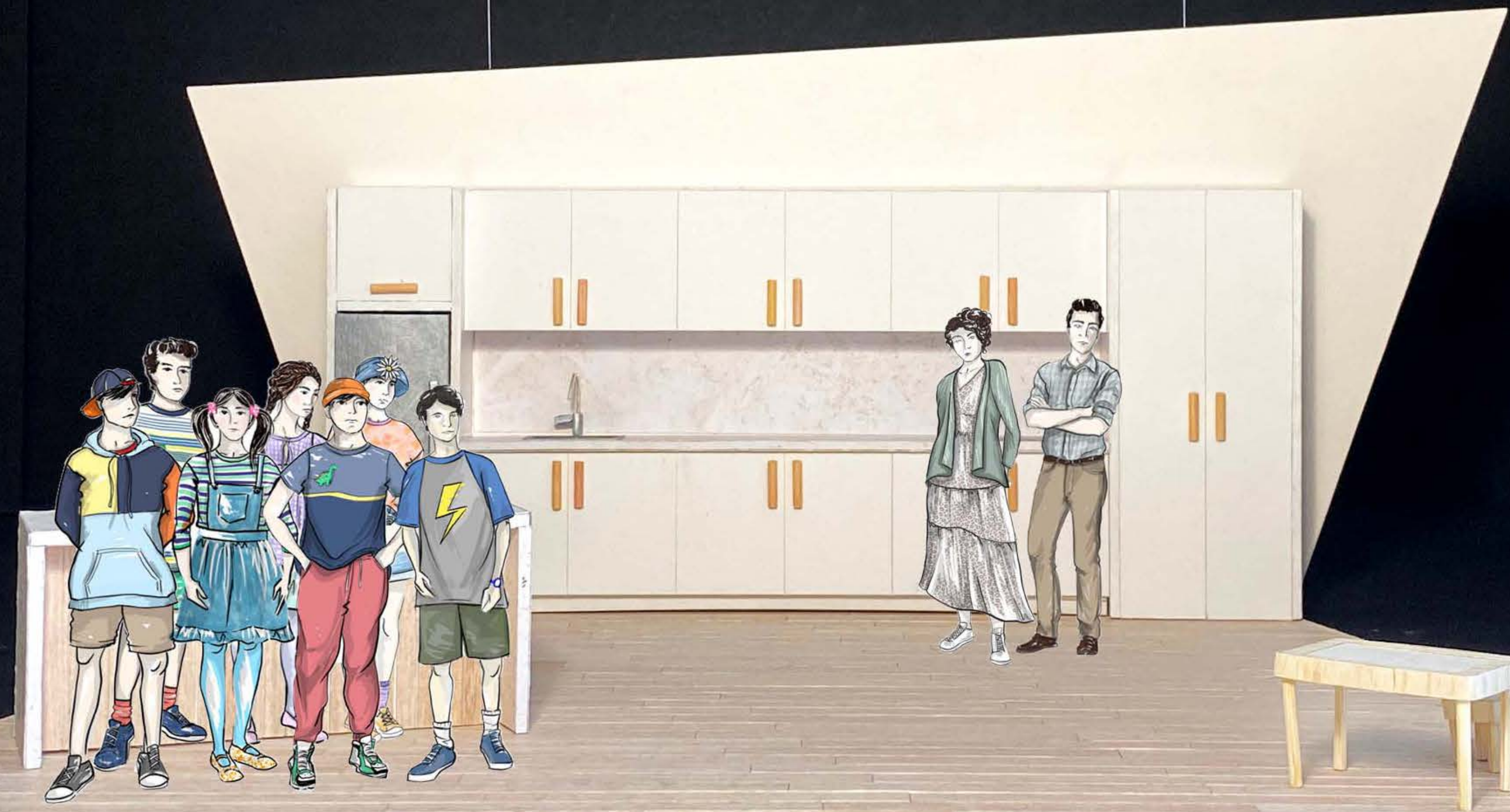
The chorus (a group of people who help tell a story) enter and sing about Zachary being the 'Kingiest King' and the 'Superest King'. This makes Zachary feel very special.

Zachary's mum puts his drawing on the fridge, which disappoints Zachary, because he thinks things on the fridge are boring.





In the next scene we are at Zachary's school, and we see his class getting ready to have their photo taken. Zachary complains about how the teacher says nice things about the other students but says nothing about Zachary. The students in Zachary's class (played by the chorus) take their positions for a class photo.





Two scientists enter and open the pantry cupboard to reveal a scientific diagram of Zachary.

They explain why Zachary's life is so ordinary. This makes Zachary angry and he sings loudly, changing the lights. (Remember, Zachary is acting and only pretending to be angry. The lights change to help reflect his moods and create the atmosphere to suit the music).

Zachary's mum reminds him that there are many different people out in the world and Zachary returns to his drawing to create a new and exciting world where he is extraordinary.





As Zachary draws, the stage changes to become a magical land. This is done through changing the set. The back wall of the kitchen will be replaced with a mountain range and some smaller mountains will be brought in.

This change in the set is achieved through a system of pulleys that fly the scenery in and out of position.





A performer playing the role of a giant will appear above the kitchen cupboards. He is wearing an orange jacket. He has large arms that reach into the kitchen to make him appear gigantic. At first Zachary thinks that they are different, which makes him happy. But then he finds out that they have the same watch with the same alarm as everyone in the village.

Zachary gets upset that the giant has the same watch, as he wants to be different. He gets angry again, singing loudly and stomping around the stage (remember he is just acting, he's not really mad).





Just then a very hairy creature called Dot appears and tells Zachary that everyone in this world has a beard.

Dot likes Zachary and thinks that he is like her brother, because both of their mums say similar things about trying to smile when annoyed.

Zachary gets upset and starts singing loudly again.





Zachary then meets the Teeny Weenies, a group of very small people that have the same name as Zachary and look exactly like him. They are played by the chorus who enter the stage and place puppets over their hands. The puppets look like Zachary.

Zachary sings loudly again as he is annoyed and chases them away before climbing a hill.





As he climbs the hill, Zachary meets two characters who are completely different to him.

First, he comes across a sleepy bird who is waking from a dream. The bird sings about a dream they had, which was the same dream that Zachary had. This makes the bird think that they are the same as Zachary.

Zachary gets very mad and sings loudly again. He is frustrated that wherever he goes he finds people that have things that are similar to him, but he wants to be different to everyone.





Next we are introduced to the fifth character from Zachary's imagination, the Jelly Faced Squirrel Monkey. This character has roller skate legs that allows them to move quickly and smoothly around the stage.

They exclaim that they are very angry just like Zachary. Of course this frustrates Zachary very much, he does not want to be the same as anyone else, which makes him sing loudly again.





Next Zachary comes to a place with lots of people. The set changes again here, bringing in yellow, red and orange buildings.

Zachary is in a place called Grump Town, where everyone is grumpy. Zachary competes with the people to be the grumpiest and they proclaim that he is the grumpiest boy, the 'Superist King' and the 'Kingiest King'.

Zachary is happy that he has found something that he is good at – being the grumpiest. He returns home, goes to his room and continues to draw. Happy that now he has found a thing that makes him unique.

The story about Zachary Briddling, the grumpiest boy in the world has ended.







All of the performers will come out on the stage and bow to say thank you to the audience for watching the opera.

At the end of the performance the audience will clap as a way of saying thank you to the singers and musicians in the opera. You can clap as well if you feel like it.



If the performers did an exceptional job, you could also stand and clap. This is called a standing ovation and tells the musicians and performers that you thought they were excellent.





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