



Image Description: A girl dressed as a robot stands and smiles widely.

Robot Song

By Arena Theatre Company
Relaxed Guide - May, 2024

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I am going to a play!



Image Description: The east entrance of Harbourfront Centre. The building is dark grey, has three floors and many windows.

I am going to see a play at the JUNIOR Festival at Harbourfront Centre.



Image Description: Juniper and Dad are on stage. There are papers and robot parts scattered around them. A robot is behind them. Both Juniper and Dad look excited and happy.

The play I am going to see is called Robot Song.
It is from Australia.



Image Description: A cartoonish drawing of a red car at the top and the TTC logo underneath it.

I can get to Harbourfront Centre by car, streetcar or by using other forms of transportation.



Image Description: A photo of the entrance to the Harbourfront parking lot off of Queens Quay.

If my family drives, we can park at the underground parking lot by Harbourfront Centre.

It costs \$30 to park here.

There are lots of other parking lots around the area.

We can choose where we park.



Image Description: This is an image of the 510 Spadina streetcar stopping outside of Harbourfront Centre going east to Union Station.

If we take the streetcar we will get off at the Harbourfront Centre stop.

This stop is right in front of Harbourfront Centre.



Image Description: The outside of the Queen's Quay Terminal building (southwest corner).

The play will be in the Fleck Dance Theatre.
The Fleck Dance Theatre is inside the Queen's Quay Terminal.



Image Description: The doors to the Queen's Quay Terminal building (north east entrance).

There are many entrances to the Queen's Quay Terminal.

We can use any entrance, but the easiest would be the one that faces the main Harbourfront building. It has a ramp and stairs.



Image Description: Inside Queen's Quay Terminal, a cafeteria type set-up with tables and chairs.

Depending which entrance I use to enter Queen's Quay Terminal I will either come up to an info desk, a cafeteria or I will pass some restaurants.

No matter which I come to or pass, I will continue to move forward, following the hallway until it opens into a large area.

When I get to the large area there will be small fountains, access to washrooms, and the escalator and elevators.



Image Description: The elevators inside Queen's Quay Terminal

The Fleck Dance Theatre is on the third floor of the building.
I can take the escalators or the elevators to the theatre.



Image Description: The accessible washroom at the Queen's Quay Terminal

The accessible washroom is on the main floor of Queen's Quay Terminal.
If I need to use the accessible washroom I can use it before going upstairs to the theatre.



Image Description: Inside of elevators, facing the button panel

If I take the elevator there is a button just for the theatre!
I can press the button and the elevator will take me to the theatre.



Image Description: The Fleck Dance Theatre lobby. The doors to the lobby are blue.

When I reach the third floor I will be at the Fleck Dance Theatre.
Once we have arrived at the theatre we can go inside and wait in the lobby if we like.
We can also go inside to use the washrooms.



Image description: An usher at the Fleck Dance theatre.

I can ask any of the ushers or volunteers to tell me where the washrooms, water fountains, zen den and my seats are.

All ushers and volunteers at the performance are there to help me and everyone else who has come to the Junior Festival.



Image description: A poster with a beige background. On it is a cartoon image of a young person sitting in the centre. They are crossed legged and smiling with their eyes closed. Below the person it reads: Zen Den

If it is loud or overwhelming in the play or the lobby I can use Zen Den space.

There is one Zen Den in the Fleck Dance Theatre.

It is on the main floor opposite the washrooms.

If I need to use the Zen Den I can ask an usher to show me where it is.



Image Description: Inside the Fleck Dance Theatre looking at the stage from the back of the orchestra level seating.

When we enter the theatre I can sit in my seat. The seating is fixed, this means the chairs do not move.

I will not go on the stage area. The lighting changes and action can make it dangerous for me if I do.



Image Description: A boy in a mobility device laughs. A man sits beside him and is also laughing.

During the show I can clap, laugh, smile, and feel any way that the show helps me to feel.



Image Description: Three children are dancing in front of a light grey wall.

I can do what I need to enjoy it more - I can doodle, fidget, stim, dance, move, vocalize, sit, lay, talk, and more! I can be me!



Image Description: In the first photo a young girl covers her ears with her hands. In the second photo a young person has on red sound dampening headphones. Both are smiling.

If the show is too loud I can cover my ears with my hands, or wear sound dampening headphones - whichever feels best for me.

If I don't have my own sound dampening headphones I can borrow some from Harbourfront Centre. I can ask an usher for help getting them.

I can also choose to take a break in the Zen Den.



Image Description: In the first photo a boy wearing sunglasses and a white t-shirt stands in front of a blue background. In the second photo a young girl wearing a white top covers her eyes and peeks through her fingers. She is smiling.

If it is too bright during the play I can wear sunglasses or I can cover my eyes - whichever feels best for me.

If I don't have my own sunglasses I can borrow some from Harbourfront Centre. I can ask an usher for help getting them.

I can also choose to take a break in the Zen Den.



Image Description: A small child claps their hands and looks happy.

At the end of the play, I can show the actors how much I liked it by clapping, saying “Bravo” and by using any other way that feels good for me.



Image Description: The entrance to the Marilyn Brewer Community Space. There are stairs on the right that go down into the space. Many plays, events and performances are happening all over Harbourfront Centre during the Junior Festival. I can find out info on all the other Junior events here:

<https://harbourfrontcentre.com/series/junior/>

If it is loud or overwhelming at the other Junior events I can use the Zen Den.

The Zen Den space for the rest of the festival is in the Marilyn Brewer Community Space in the main Harbourfront building.

Map of Harbourfront Centre



Image Description: A map of the Harbourfront Centre campus that includes the Queen's Quay Terminal.

Introduction



Image Description: Juniper is excited! She has her eyes squeezed shut and is smiling. Dad stands behind her. He is also excited and smiling.

Today you will be watching a play. It is not a movie. It is performed by actors right in front of you!

It has actors and props and a set.

What is a set? A set is the background behind the actors. It is also the furniture that the actors sit or stand on throughout the play. Sets help us to know where and when the play takes place. In this play the same set is used for every scene.

What are props? Props are anything that the actors hold that helps let us know where they are, about their personalities and location. Props help the actors to tell us the story of the play.

How to RELAX Your Viewing Experience

Below are some things you can do to enjoy the play more:

- wear comfy clothes
- grab your favourite pillow, blanket or stuffy, and bring them with you!
- sit on a chair, wiggle in your seat, walk around, dance to the music - do whatever feels right while watching
- vocalize - feel free to make sounds during the play - clap, laugh, sigh - whatever you need to do to share how you feel
- take breaks if needed - there is a Zen Den on the first level across from the washrooms
- doodle, fidget, stim, sing - just be you!

Quick Tips for Planners

Read below for info that those who plan the trip might need to know

Robot Song Access Friendly & Inclusive Performance at Fleck Dance Theatre in the Queen's Quay Terminal

Address: 207 Queens Quay West

Date: Sunday May 19, 2024

Start Time: 3:30pm

End Time: 4:30pm

Touch Tour: The theatre will open 15 minutes early for a Touch Tour for Blind and Partially Sighted Audience members. To attend, please call the box office to let them know you'd like to access this feature.

Seating: This is a traditional theatre space. The seating is fixed. Mobility device seating is at the front of the room. The theatre is two levels. There are stairs in the theatre and the lobbies.

Zen Den: There is a low-sensory break space (the Zen Den) on the first floor of the Fleck Theatre opposite the washrooms.

Ramps: There are three ramps for access to Queen's Quay Terminal. Two ramps are on the west side of the building, closer to the Harbourfront Centre Theatre. One is on at northeast entrance.

Elevators: There are elevators inside the building, but not inside the theatre.

Accessible Washroom: The accessible washroom is on the first floor of Queen's Quay Terminal.

Streetcar stop: Harbourfront Centre

Parking: There is parking onsite in an underground garage. Parking here is \$6/half hour or \$30 for the day. There are many other lots within walking distance. All cost about \$25.

Food & beverage: Food and drink are allowed in the theatre.

For more detailed access info please go to: <https://harbourfrontcentre.com/accessibility/>

Quick things to know about the play:

This performance contains moments of flashing lights and loud sounds.

If your child relies on sound dampening headphones please bring them with you for this performance.

If your child is light-sensitive please consider bringing sunglasses for this performance.

Smoke/Haze/Fog effects are used during the performance.

The Fleck Dance Theatre is in Queen's Quay Terminal. This is a space that has stores, restaurants and cafes. There are many things to see, hear and smell before you get to the theatre.

Queen's Quay Terminal is open to the public - some may be going to Robot Song, others may not be.

Robot Song Fun Facts

The play you are going to watch is called Robot Song. It is presented by Arena Theatre Company.

Arena Theatre Company are from Australia.

The play lasts approximately 60 minutes (that's 1 hour).

When it is time for you to watch the play you can sit in your seat, cuddle with a pillow or blanket or toy, stand up, make sounds - whatever makes the play most enjoyable for you.

There are two actors in the play. They both play more than one character.

There is a musician in the play, they are on the left side of the stage.

Mum's voice can be heard from offstage. She will not come out onto the stage.

The only people that will come onto the stage are the two actors.

If you need a break from the play at any time you can go out to the lobby or to the Zen Den.

You can come and go from the play as much as you need to.

An usher will help you find your seat again - especially if it is dark in the theatre.

The play will not stop if you leave to use the washroom, get a drink or go to the Zen Den.

Meet the Actors and the Characters

Robot Song has 2 actors.

Below are photos of the actors with the names of the characters they play.



Image Description: A photo showing the head and shoulders of a brunette woman. She wears a blue floral top and smiles at the camera.

This is Ashlea Pyke.

She plays the Juniper and Principal Scryber.



Image Description: A photo showing the head and shoulders of a man with brown hair. He wears a dark top and looks at the camera.

This is Phil McInnes.

He plays Juniper's Dad and Miss Cummings.



Image Description: Two people sit on stage, a large colourfully painted dumpster is behind them.

What is the play about?

When eleven-year-old Juniper May receives a petition signed by her entire class stating that she is 'the most hated person in the school' her life is thrown into turmoil. She stops eating, refuses to return to school and her parents become increasingly desperate. Finally, her parents' resort to the only thing they have left, a giant singing robot.

Things in the play that may seem intense or different.

There are some things in the play that may seem and feel intense or different. We have listed those below.

These things may be different than other plays you've seen:

- Juniper and Dad sometimes talk directly to the people in the audience & ask them to do things.
- She also tells the audience that she is making a theatre show.
- It is never mentioned in the show, but Juniper is on the Autism spectrum.
- The letter in Robot Song is true. It was really sent to a child who is on the Autism spectrum. But the rest of the story is made up.

These things may seem or feel intense:

- There is a moment in the play with darkness, flashing lights and loud noises.
- Bullying.
- Hurting someone else.
- Poo.
- A play battle/fighting.
- Haze/Fog.

Darkness, flashing lights and loud noises



Image Description: a hard to see object with bright lights.



Image Description: Juniper is dressed as a robot. She stands in front of a microphone.

At the very beginning of Robot Song, the stage is dark and someone wearing lights starts to slowly walk through a haze as music starts getting louder and more intense. This is Juniper May wearing a robot costume.

She becomes overwhelmed by the noise and shouts "shut up!"

The noise stops immediately and the lights will come on.

Bullying



Image Description: Juniper looks at Dad while he holds a letter.

Juniper and Dad read a letter that was written and signed by her whole class. The letter is mean and unexpected, it hurts Juniper's feelings.

The letter in Robot Song is true. It was really sent to a child who is on the Autism spectrum.

But the rest of the story is made up.

Hurting Someone Else

When the children at school bully Juniper and break the VHS tapes she brought to school that have her and her Dad's favourite show on it, she becomes so angry that she pushes Susan Pritchard off her chair and Susan's arm breaks.

We don't see this in the show, but Juniper explains that two days after she pushes Susan, she is seen wearing a bright pink cast, so we can assume that her arm is broken as a result of being pushed.

Talking to the audience/asking us to do something

Juniper and Dad both will talk to the everyone in the audience.

Juniper will ask people to sing along and stand up and stretch with her.

She will also ask for one volunteer to yell "poo".

If you don't want to be that person, that is ok.

Poo



Image Descriptions: Three photos of Dad. He looks at the carpet and then something in his hand. He sees, and then holds, poo.

In one scene Dad talks about finding something under a container on the carpet.

It is a poo.

The poo is made from paper - it is not a real poo.

Juniper and her Dad perform a funny song called "poo song" to tell the story of the poo on the carpet.

Play Battle/Fighting



Image Description: Dad and Juniper play fight. She is a pterodactyl and he is a toy robot.

In one scene Dad and Juniper have a play battle with Dad dressed as a robot and Juniper flying a pterodactyl.

Haze/Fog



Image Description: A microphone is on stage. A light shines towards the audience. There is smoke on the stage.

There are some scenes where haze is used. Theatre haze is a vapour, not a smoke. It is safe and does not irritate eyes or throats.

It is an atmospheric effect.

You will see haze at the very start of the show and during the songs "People say I'm like a robot" and "If I sing".

Sound, Lights and Reactions

Sound

The actors in Robot Song use microphones so we can hear them better.

There are six songs in the show which are played live.

There is a musician who plays with the performers.

The most intense moment of sound is at the very start of the show, the music gets louder and more intense

Lights

Overall the lighting for this play is simple, it lights up the stage so the audience can see everything on the stage.

At the very beginning of the show the lights are out, then there are a few flashing lights. This lasts for about 8 seconds, then the lights come up.

Sometimes the lights are aimed at the audience. If it is too light you may want to cover your eyes a bit or wear sunglasses.

Although there are moments in the play that are quite dark you will be safe. Nothing will come out of the dark and touch you or hurt you in any way. You will be safe.

Reactions

People in the audience may laugh and sometimes sing along with Juniper.

Juniper asks the audience to stand up and stretch with her.

Sometimes people in the audience may cry because they feel sad that Juniper is struggling or upset that people she said mean things about her.

Often people in the audience laugh at the funny things Juniper and Dad say or do.

It is ok to feel more than one way during the play. You may feel happy one moment and sad the next - this is alright. Please express these feelings in whatever way feels best for you.

If you need a break from the play at any time you can go out to the lobby or to the Zen Den space.

Robot Song Fact Sheet

Read here to find out more about the play



Image Description: Inside the Fleck Dance Theatre looking at the stage from the back of the orchestra level seating

Before the show starts someone will come onto the stage and talk. It might be a little bit different, but these are the things they often talk about:

- The Indigenous land we are on
- Thank you to sponsors and donors and volunteers
- Ways to enjoy the JUNIOR Festival

This is a short speech that will be about 1-3 minutes long.



Image Description: Dad speaks into a microphone on a dark stage.

1. It is dark.

Dad is setting up the microphone for a show and talking to Mum. He talks to the audience and lets them know that they are allowed to move and regulate themselves as they need to so they can make themselves comfortable.

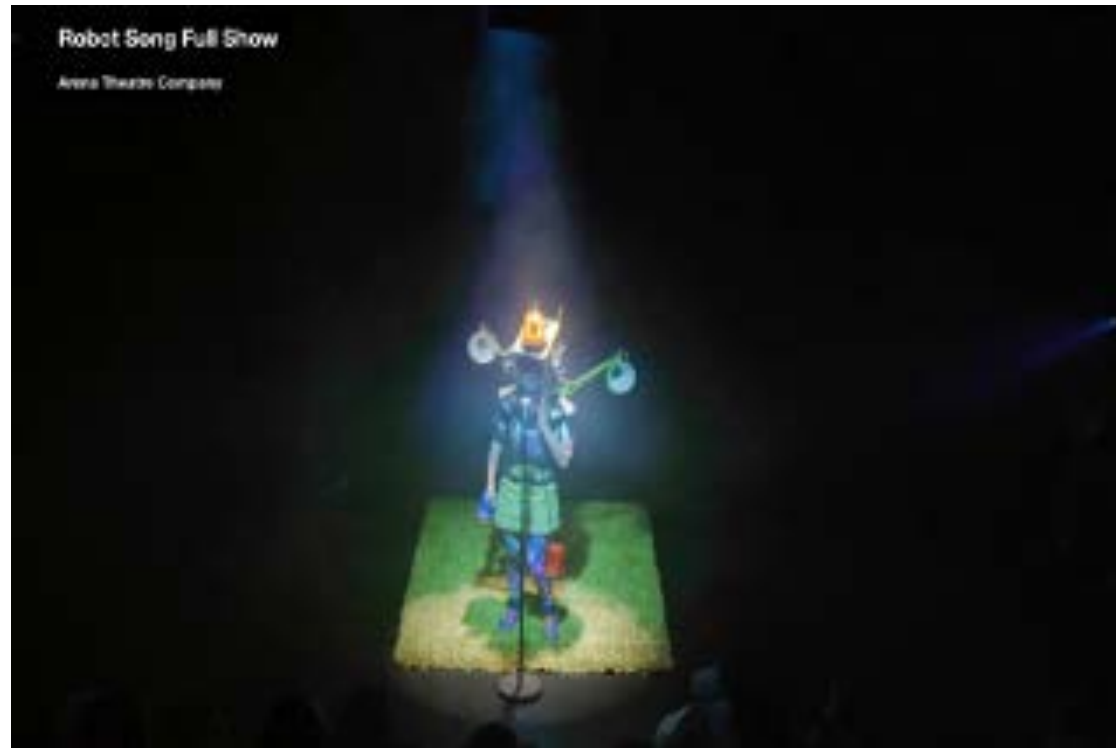


Image Description: Juniper appears dressed as a robot.

2. Juniper appears dressed as a robot with loud music, bright lights, water-based haze and singing. She yells "Shut Up" and the sounds stop and lights turn on. Juniper decides she doesn't want to perform the show anymore so Mum tells the audience know the show will be unable to continue. Once Juniper hears she doesn't have to perform the show, she feels better and decides to do the show.



Image Description: Juniper sings into a microphone.

3. Juniper sings a song about making a theatre show. The lights turn on in the audience and she talks to the audience.



4. Dad performs some possible introductions to the show and Juniper gives him feedback. Juniper introduces herself and talks about the mean letter she received from the kids at school. Dad and Juniper read the letter together.



Image Description: Someone writes on a whiteboard.

5. Juniper shows on her whiteboard what will happen in her show.



Image Description: Dad is kneeling and his hands are up to the right.

6. Juniper asks the audience to stand up and stretch and breathe with her. Juniper and Dad sing the Poo Song about Dad picking up real poo. Juniper asks for a volunteer from the audience to say "Poo" when she points to them.



Image Description: Juniper jumps into the large, colourfully painted dumpster.

7. Juniper and Dad sing a song about a magic bin named "Gomi" that lives in their backyard. Gomi is Juniper's best friend and she finds interesting things inside the rubbish bin (dumpster) to play with.



Image Description: a dark photo of Juniper dressed up, there is an image on the screen behind her.

8. Juniper acts out some Youtube videos she's made and Dad pretends to be Juniper's Art Teacher, Miss Cummings. Juniper introduces Battletac in art class, a Japanese Robot from a TV series in the 1980's. Juniper brought VHS cassettes of her and Dad's favourite show. The video cassettes are pulled apart and Juniper is upset that the kids at school didn't think Battletac was real. Dad gets upset that the video cassettes are broken. Juniper is upset.



Image Description: Juniper and Dad are dressed up. Juniper has a large Pterodactyl in her hands.
Dad wears a mask.

9. Juniper finds a pterodactyl inside Gomi. Dad pretends to be a robot and fights the pterodactyl.
There are lights, smoke and music that make the playing fight feel dramatic.



Image Description: Juniper is dressed up in an oversized suit jacket.

10. Juniper pretends to be the principal Mr. Scryber on the day she receives the letter. The principal explains that Juniper pushed a child off her chair and her arm was broken. Juniper was upset that the kids in her class wrecked the VHS video cassettes that she brought to school. Juniper has stopped going to school because she was so hurt by the letter. Juniper sings a song about her school.



Image Description: A dark blue stage. Juniper stands and looks off to one side.

11. Juniper sings a song about people thinking she is like a robot. The kids at school gave her a letter saying that she is like a robot and they wish she was never born. Juniper is upset. Letters fall from the ceiling onto Juniper. Juniper thinks she hears voices calling her a robot. She feels alone, like she is underwater.



Image Description: Juniper holds a robot's arm. Her mouth is open in amazement.

12. Juniper finds the arm of a robot inside Gomi. The arm lights up and makes noises. Juniper meets Battletac on her whiteboard. Battletac can see and talk to the audience. Juniper lets Battletac read the letter. He talks through the letter with Juniper and shows her that the letter can be looked at in a different way. She gets to decide what the letter means. Juniper signs a song about the letter, realising it could be read in a more positive way. Juniper holds the letter while she moves around the stage, then she puts the letter into the whiteboard and it appears as an animation.

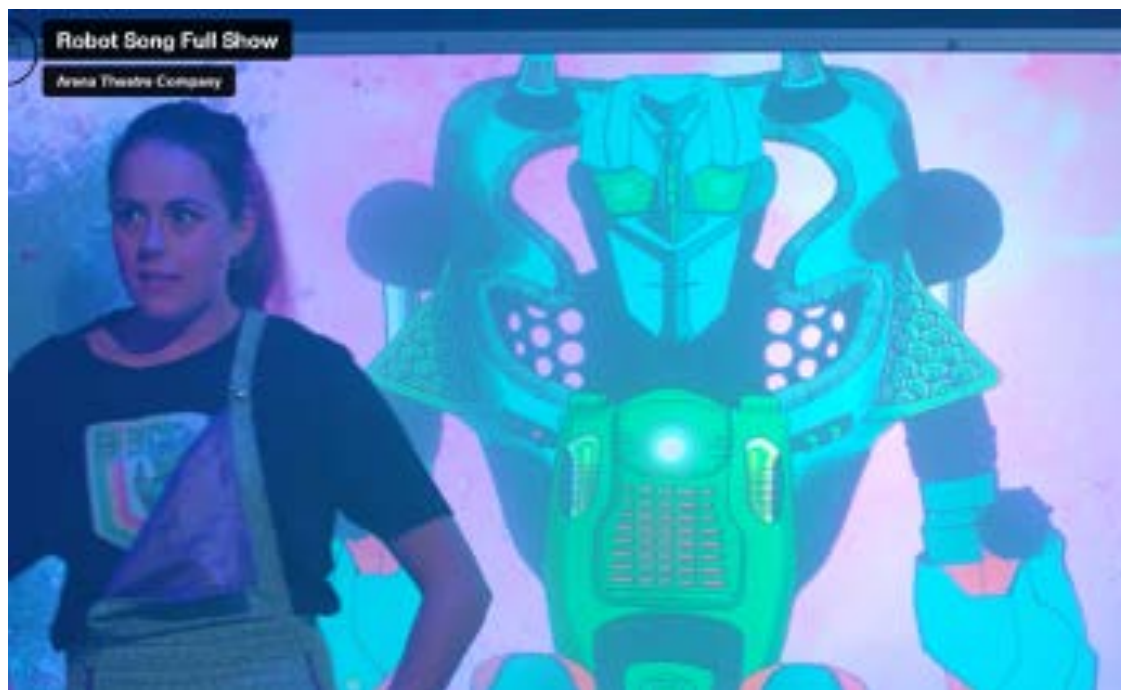


Image Description: There is a brightly coloured robot on the screen behind Juniper.

13. Juniper and Battletac sing "Falling, Flying" together. The audience is invited to sing along.



Image Description: Juniper points with her arm. There are bright lights where she is pointing.

14. Juniper invites Battletec to come live with her and her family inside Gomi in the backyard. Gomi opens up and reveals the large robot inside. Battletec talks to the audience.



Image Description: a photo looking down onto the stage. Dad is on the left and Juniper is on the right.

15. Juniper asks Mum to tell the audience this is the last song. She brings all her friends out for a final bow while she sings with Dad. Juniper asks the audience to stand up and breathe. The show is over and the audience claps while Juniper and Dad finish with a song called "That's what love can do". She points to the same child in the audience who helped with the "Poo Song" and they finish the song by yelling "POO!".

Access Points

Robot Song is an Access Friendly & Inclusive Performance

Touch Tour - The theatre will open 15 minutes early for a Touch Tour for Blind and Partially Sighted Audience members. To attend please book when purchasing tickets

Zen Den - the Zen Den for the main building and outdoor campus will be located in the Marilyn Brewer Community Space. The Fleck Dance Theatre has its own Zen Den. It is on the first level of the theatre opposite the washrooms.

Expanded seating areas for Mobility Device users and their families/group. The accessible washroom is on the main floor of the building.

A limited supply of sound dampening headphones and sunglasses will be available to borrow for the performance.

Relaxed Guide - has been created to help with the process of attending the show. The guide provides a story to help with attending the theatre, information on the show, photos of the actors, quick tips for planners, a map of Harbourfront Centre and more!

During the show - this play was created with disabled audiences in mind! It is an Access Friendly and Inclusive Performance; audience members can move within the space and can leave and re-enter at any time, being authentically yourselves is encouraged so please feel free to fidget, stim, laugh, cry, whatever feels best for you and your group!



Image Description: A large robot is on a dark stage. There are lights shining behind and around it.

Thank you for watching Robot Song.
We hope you enjoyed the show!

Credits

Creative Team:

Writer/Director/Designer:	Jolyon James
Assistant Director:	Sarah Branton
Composer/Musical Director:	Nathan Gilkes
Costume Design:	Beth Sayer
Lighting Design:	Paul Lim
Production Management:	Ben Van Dillen

Cast:

Juniper/Principal Scryber:	Ashlea Pyke
Dad/Miss Cummings:	Phillip McInnes
Mum/Musician:	Bridget a'Beckett

Accessibility:

Relaxed Guide & Consultation:	Rachel Marks
Vancouver International Children's Festival Guide:	Anika Vervecken

Photo Credits:

Harbourfront Centre facility images:	Brian Medina
Production shots:	Bill Conroy