

HISTORY OF AUTISM

A new Australian play
by Company @ (Autistic Theatre)

Directed by
JULIAN JAENSCH



Director's Notes

When I was a child I can remember distinctively feeling different. It is a lot of things, the lack of knowing what the right thing to do was in certain situations (where other kids wouldn't even worry about it), anxiety about feeling different due to this, being called out for behaviour no-one else did but also seemed unnoticeable, and the whispers and snippets of information I would gather getting the feeling that every adult in my life had at one point had a conversation about me.

As I got older, my feelings of difference and isolation didn't get much better and the question "who was I?" remained unanswered. That was until I heard of Asperger's Syndrome and was diagnosed when I was 24. But what then? I thought I would finally start to feel understood. Instead I found that either the people who knew nothing about Autism had a very limited understanding of it, or the ones who did know something had a strict textbook definition, offering me no understanding and left with the feeling that no-one knew what I had already been through.

As the modern understanding of Autism gains more public notoriety, the definition gets broader and broader, creating more confusion about what Autism is and leaving it vulnerable to misunderstandings and manipulation. All the while people on the Autism Spectrum struggle for a voice and a sense of identity.

History of Autism is about two things, firstly it is about the evolution of Autism as a clinical diagnosis in the Twentieth Century, as well as giving an overview of a "Nut Shell" explanation of how Autism can be viewed. Secondly, it's the untold story of what generations of forgotten people went through. The pain, anguish and ridicule suffered by people when a diagnosis was not an option, as well as the constant striving for an identity of all people on the Autism Spectrum both now and then. It's about our journey.

Julian Jaensch

Artistic Director, Company @

About Company @ (Autistic Theatre)

Company@ began as AAA Theatre group run by Autism SA in the 1990's and it is believed to be the only wholly Autistic run and led Theatre Company in the world.

Company @ inspires and connects people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder through the process of creating and presenting powerful theatre pieces. The company contributes to the creative and cultural life of the Autistic and broader communities through collaboration, innovation and education.

A pioneer in Australian theatre for adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, Company @ provides a valuable voice within the disability arts sector, presenting quality events, workshops and performances.



Like Us?? "Like Us" on Facebook: Company AT

PROGRAM

Monologue:
Dr Leo Kanner: Our Father

Scene 1:
A Myth

Scene 2:
What's in a Name?

Scene 3:
Dr Leo Kanner: First Eleven

Digital Story 1: Alex

Scene 4:
Geology in Brooklyn

Scene 5:
Stim This!

Scene 6:
Hello Dr Hans Asperger

Scene 7:
How does a brain work

*Digital Story 2: Jason (Matinee)
Leeanne (Evening)*

Scene 8:
Bettelheim hated his mother

Parody: A hunka hunka burning fridge

Scene 9:
1950's Discontent

Digital Story 3: Taryn

Scene 10:
Nobody Lovaas

Scene 11:
I've got the pre Wing blues

Scene 12:
On a Wing and a prayer

Scene 13:
Too Little, Too Late

Scene 14:
Soapbox Brigade

Scene 15:
*Anything Neuro Can Do;
I Can Do Better*

Digital Story: Peter

Scene 16:
The Future

Closing:
Dr's Kanner & Asperger

Production

Writer / Director	Julian Jaensch
Sound Design & Composition	Michael Ross
Set & Lighting Designer	Julia Vanhakartano
Stage Manager	Brenton John Shaw
LX Operator	Peter Zaika
Costumes	The Vintage Beat

Cast

Dorian Tisato	Dr Leo Kanner
Peter Satsy	Mr Schiltz, Dr Hans Asperger Digital Story 4
Alexander Sotiriou	Time & Place Announcer; Joe; Elvis; AS Digital Story 1
Jason Govett	Frederick; Dr Ivar Lovaas; Roger Digital Story 2 Matinee
Leeanne Marshall	Ludwig; Christine; Amy; Dr Lorna Wing Digital Story 2 Evening
Taryn Green	Digital Story 2
Kathryn Warner	Inge, Young Lady, Emily, "A"
Miké Oz Need	Case Doctor; Ben; HFA1
Kathryn Michaelsen	Mrs Johnson; Janine, Mrs Cransell; Amanda
Andrew Norman	Andy; Harrison; John; Dr John Wing
Dr Emma Goodall (Taryn Green)	Mrs Silliak; Joan
Greg Croke	Mr Davis; Bettelheim; David
Mikhael Crossfield	Jerry, Ron, HFA2
Julian Jaensch	Mary Tyler-Moore; NT

BIOS

Julian Jaensch - Julian has been involved in the performing arts since he was 14 years old. He was a member of Newmet Youth Dance Theatre where he learned to dance and act and performed in many musicals and dance works. He studied acting at the Centre for Performing Arts (now AC Arts) and graduated in 1999. As a professional Julian has worked extensively. He was in Newmet's professional dancer in schools company (Newmet Interactive) for a year and has also worked as an actor for many theatre companies in Adelaide such as Lightning Strike, Chopped Logic, Bakehouse Theatre Company, Budgie Lung, Empty Space Theatre Company and Beating Heart Theatre Company (*The History of the Devil*, 2014 Fringe). He also choreographed *Censelink the Musical* for the 2008 Adelaide and 2009 Melbourne Fringe Festivals. Julian began working with AAA a social group with a performance focus at Autism SA in 2006 and turned it into a theatre company, launching Company @ in 2009 as Artistic Director. Julian has written and directed all of Company @'s productions and is dedicated to building the company and using it as a vehicle for perceptual and social change for people on the Autism Spectrum.



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Julian Jarnach



Matt Friedman www.dudeinmanage.com

Michael Ross = Michael is an Adelaide-based singer, pianist, composer and studio producer. He spent years touring Australia as a signed artist with Keytone Records (as Mikki Ross). Michael has performed at many music festivals including the Woodford Folk Festival (2011) and has supported Amanda Palmer (2010) and Kate Miller-Heidke (2008, 2011). Michael was also sound engineer, music arranger and recording studio producer for *The Covenant of Mt. Kuch*, featured at the Brooklyn Film Festival (USA), nominated for best short film at the Slamdance Film Festival and won best animation at the Inside Film (IF) Awards (2008). Michael's original song *Equal Love* was named official anthem for the Marriage Equality movement in South Australia and has been used by Gay Marriage USA (New York) and Australian Marriage Equality (Melbourne).

Juha Vanhakartano = Juha has had an international career as a director, choreographer and performer in Australia and Europe. In recent years Juha has furthered his career into lighting, set design and video production with clients including State Opera of South Australia, Finnish National Opera, Adelaide Festival of Arts and Gymnastics Australia. He is the director of Valo Productions, a video production and lighting design company. He also works as a performing arts coordinator for Tutti Arts.

Brenton John Shaw - Brenton is a singer/songwriter who has performed in opera, musical theatre, and cabaret. A performer from the age of eight, he has performed in musicals including : *Les Miserables*, *Show! The Legend of the Wild One*, *Oliver*, *Curtains*, operas - *My Life, My Love*, *The Shouting Fence*, and *The Magic Flame*, and personal highlights Don't Ask Me, I'm New To This - a self devised one man show, *Everybody Does Love Songs* - 2012 Adelaide Fringe Festival, and *Musical Me*. He has completed a Bachelor of Media Arts - Per- Director for the Australian Premiere of *Peter Pan: A Musical Adventure*. He recently participated in a Musical Theatre exchange to Minnesota State University, forming Arta Major at UniSA, and recently participated in a Musical Theatre production of *Les Miserables*, and also studied pri-Mankato in the USA, where he performed as Courfeyrac in MNSU's production of *Les Misérables*, and also studied private voice with Dr Stephanie Thorpe. He has been involved with the Tutti Ensemble since 2001, and in early 2013 took on a support worker role at Company @. He is currently participating in an Honours degree in Musical Composition at UniSA, and is continuing private voice with Cheryl Pickering. He is thrilled to be Stage Manager for the 2014 Adelaide Fringe Festival season of History of Autism, and waits in anticipation for what Company @ will come up with next!

The Vintage Beat at 5 Ridley Street, Hindmarsh, is the new home of a number of Adelaide's best known and loved vintage and retro businesses. With a range covering fashion, accessories, furniture, antiques, homewares and collectibles, these businesses combine their personalities and flair to create a shopping experience unlike any other. The shop is bliss, these businesses combine their personalities and flair to create a shopping experience unlike any other. The shop is bliss, these businesses combine their personalities and flair to create a shopping experience unlike any other.

a veritable treasure trove of all things vintage and rare. . . . and see what we mean.

Pop by, share a coffee, and see what we mean.

Cast BIOS

Dorian Tisato is 25 years old and is studying a double degree in Journalism and Writing & Creative Communication. Dorian is an actor, writer, radio broadcaster and news & current affairs reporter on Fresh 92.7 in Adelaide. Dorian was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome at the age of 19 and considers it a gift. He joined Company @ in 2008 (then known as 'AAA'), where he starred in *Aspie Live!* for the Awakenings Festival in Horsham, Victoria. Moving to Sydney in 2009, Dorian signed up to Sydney Talent Co, where he starred in two student films, *Stolen*, and *Forever in an Illusion*. Dorian returned to Adelaide in 2011 and took a break from acting to study and work as a Personal Trainer. In Oct 2013, Dorian got a phone call from his old friend Julian Jaensch which saw a return to stage in *History of Autism*. Dorian's plans for the future include a prestigious career in radio, writing and acting.

Peter Satsy is 49 years old. He dropped out of his Bachelor of Economics degree to work at the ABC in Adelaide and Melbourne and at Australia Post for over 20 years. He now considers himself retired and spends a great deal of his time keeping up to date with technology and his various computers and gadgets. His other interests include reading fiction and poetry, going to the movies and Theatre. He has been in Company @ from its inception and was a member of AAA from 2007. Peter has performed in *Aspie Live* at the Horsham Awakenings Festival and *Framed Out* at APAC in Sydney 2009. He has created a digital story for *History of Autism* and performed in the APAC launch of that production. Peter was chosen for a mentorship in The Friendly Street Poet's PROMISING POETS PROGRAM, 2009. He has also competed in several Poetry Slams. His tastes and opinions are eclectic, extreme, confronting and controversial.

Alexander Sotiriou is 25 years old and has a certificate 3 in media. He was diagnosed with autism when he was 8 years old, and his interests involve artwork, acting and TV shows. Alex joined Company @ in 2008, which back then was called AAA. During that time he has been in some performances such as *Aspie Live* at the Horsham Awakenings Festival, *Framed Out* at APAC in Sydney 2009 and *History of Autism* at the APAC launch in Adelaide, 2013. He has created a digital story and also performed in the 2013 Fringe parade.

Jason Govett is 33 years old and has a Certificate 2 and 3 in Community Services through TAFE SA. He is also halfway through an Advanced Diploma in Christian Ministry at Influencers Leadership College, Influencers Church. Jason has a heart to see people with Autism Spectrum Disorder succeed in the mainstream world despite the issues that they face while coping with the disability. Jason gained an interest in performing on stage after performing live on channel 9s Hey Hey its Saturday's Red Faces. Jason joined 'AAA' way back in 1999. He then performed in both *The Elbow Room* (1999) and *The Elbow Room Rides Again* (2003). He left the group and then returned to join Company @ in 2009 when they did *Framed Out* (2010). Then in 2011 he created a digital story and was in the 2013 Fringe Parade and APAC launch of *History of Autism*.

Leeanne Marshall is 23 years old, has a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Sociology and History and is currently studying a Master of Teaching (Special Ed) Secondary Stream. Her current interests are Autism Spectrum Disorder and YuGiOh!. Considering herself an Autistic Activist, she guest talks at TAFE about autism from an Autistic's perspective and is a member of ASAN Au & NZ. Leeanne has been involved in the performing arts from age 7, including singing lessons and several years of drama classes. Leeanne joined Company @ in 2011 and has created a digital story for *'History of Autism'*, acted content for the social skills (Modelling App), and performed in the 2013 Fringe parade and APAC launch of *'History of Autism'*. Leeanne enjoys performing, and while with Company @ wants to be an advocate for Autistic people, and educate "Neurotypicals" through theatre.

Kathryn Warner is 26 years old and was diagnosed with autism as an adult in 2009. Growing up with undiagnosed autism was difficult for Kathryn and her family and this has given Kathryn a passion for working with people with autism and with their families. She is currently studying a Certificate III in Children's Services. Kathryn joined Company @ in 2009 and performed with them in 2010 in *Framed Out* and again in 2012 in Scenes from the *History of Autism*. She also performed in the 2013 APAC launch of *History of Autism*.

Miké Oz Need is 26 years old and has completed Cert III and IV in Multimedia. His interests are drawing cartoons, creating animations and logos, graphic designing, video editing, voice-over, drumming and acting. He has been involved in designing Halloween posters for PAKA (Parents Assisting Kids of Autism) for their Halloween party. He has designed and sold a few posters titled 'What it's like to have Autism'. He sold some of his art works at the previous South Australia Autism conferences. Miké joined Company @ in 2012 and has taken part in the 2013 Fringe parade and APAC launch of *History of Autism*. He enjoys acting with Company @ and hopes he can educate people to have a better understanding of what it's like to have Autism by using his artistic talent. You can contact him on mikeneed@gmail.com or SketchMarketProductions@gmail.com if you want him to illustrate or design.

Kathryn Michaelson is 49 years old, and has a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in English, Women's Studies, and Screen Studies. She also has a Bachelor of Social Work, and is currently doing absolutely nothing. She was involved in creating 'Voices of experience' within Autism SA, and was one of the initial 'Autism Ambassadors' some years ago, but has not been active in any community for at least the last five years. A recent invitee to Company @, Kathryn has no history in performing arts apart from appearing in *The Cracked Pot* with the Nosotras (2006/2007 Feast Festivals) and the 2013 APAC launch of *History of Autism*. Her major interest/obsession/addiction is Golf, and she practices often, sometimes using practice as a relaxant/refuge. A poor conversationalist, Kathryn has not held a job for almost 20 years and has long given up the idea that she ever will (or can) again, as such she has no ambition of any kind for the future, short of peaceful survival.

Andrew Norman is 25 years old and works at Bedford. He joined Company @ in 2008 when it was still known as Triple A and performed in *Aspie Live* at the Awakenings Festival in Horsham that same year. He also performed in 'Framed Out' at the APAC conference in Sydney in 2009 and at the state disability conference in Adelaide in 2011. Andy has created a digital story, performed scenes from *History of Autism* in 2012 and performed in the 2013 Fringe Parade and APAC launch of *History of Autism*. He has said since Company @ joined Tutti in October 2012, that it could bring us greater recognition as a theatre company and make us realise our potential.

Dr Emma Goodall is 42 with a PhD in Education. She was very involved with the theatre in Iran at the very young age of 4 - 7, when she would act as unofficial prompter. Emma joined Company @ this year after moving from New Zealand to Adelaide to expand her Autism Consultancy. Prior to this, Emma gave up acting at school after being told that "red-heads were not wanted in the theatre", and taking this literally. Emma is also a published author (*"Understanding & Facilitating the achievement of Autistic Potential"*) and public speaker.

Taryn Green is 33 years old and working at Elders Rural Services full time (where she's worked for the last 12 years). Taryn was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome at age 25, and in 2006 joined Company @. She has been involved with performances with Company @ at the Fringe Festival with 'E More' in 2008. In 2009 she performed with the Company @ Ensemble at Sydney APAC with *Framed Out*. She's also created a digital story and performed in the 2013 Fringe parade and APAC launch of *History of Autism*. Her main interests include acting, reading and writing. She hopes to be a published author one day. She is also very keen on being an advocate in spreading the word on autism spectrum disorders and dispelling the myths surrounding this condition. Taryn hopes someday, with Company @, to spread the message of autism spectrum disorders, through the art of acting, outside of Australia. (*Taryn is working during this Fringe Season*).

Greg Croke is 52 and married to Lisa. He grew up in Sydney and moved to Adelaide in 1998 and was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome later that year. He holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Graduate Diploma in Christian Studies (Tabor College), and is about to begin a Master's in Library and Information Management. He is a published poet, short story writer and essayist. He is a former Vice-President of the SA division of the Australian Democrats, current State Policy Coordinator, and past parliamentary candidate. Greg began acting in 1994 with the Mosman Theatre Company before moving on to the Lane Cove Dramatic Society where he had success doing everything from Agatha Christie to pantomimes of *Cinderella* and *Sinbad*. He joined AAA in Adelaide, where he performed in *The Elbow Room & All Stops Out* (1999), *The Elbow Room Rides Again* (2000) and *The Bald Prima Donna* (2002 Fringe). He joined the Edge Church drama team where among other roles, he starred in Monty Python's *Dead Parrot Sketch* (2006) and an excerpt from Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* (2007). Greg re-joined Company @ (AAA) in 2014 for the Fringe performances of *History of Autism*.

Mikhael (Mik) Crossfield is 31 and has a Cert 2 in IT and Certificates 2, 3 and 4 in Japanese language studies. He is currently studying Cert 2 in Sampling and Measurement continuing onto Cert 1 Laboratory Skills. He has also been training in Aikido since he was 17 years old and is currently a black belt. Mik has travelled overseas and his main interests are learning about other cultures (Historical and Warrior), Martial Arts, and collecting and watching anime. Mik received his diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome at age 31 and recently joined Company @ for *History of Autism*.

Company @ Thanks

Lachlan McLean is 23 years old and has a cert IV in Photo Imaging. He is interested in various aspects of popular culture and writing. Lachie joined Company @ in 2010 and performed in their 2010 season of *Framed Out* and created a digital story which was shown on the AFA Fellows night at Flinders University in 2012. He also performed at the quiz night fundraiser for *History of Autism*, and in the APAC launch of the same show in 2013. Lachlan enjoyed the friendship and learning that that he received while attending Company @, and it was his hope to increase his acting ability further than it is currently. Lachy and his family moved to a rural location earlier this year. We thank him for his time, energy and efforts with Company @, and wish him well for his future.

Katharine Annear, who has had a celebrated history with Company @ as a founding member, supporter and actor. She has had many acting roles with the group, the most recent being in the 2013 Asia Pacific Autism Conference launch of *History of Autism*.

Mel Mitton, who joined Company @ for the APAC launch of *History of Autism*.

Christian Madigan, a member of Company @ for the APAC launch of *History of Autism*.

DUDE, I'M AN ASPIE.



NO EVOLUTION WITHOUT AUTISM

Humanity has always depended on the different, to look ahead.

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www.dudeimanaspie.com



HISTORY OF AUTISM

“No one said it was easy having
Neurotypical Disorder!”

SINCERE THANKS TO:

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VALO PRODUCTIONS

