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MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, September 26 2017 - For immediate release

Autistic theatre company to shine new light on autism spectrum with world premiere

A new South Australian play with an entirely autistic cast will help audiences see the world through the eyes of a child with autism, as Adelaide's groundbreaking **Company AT** presents the world premiere of its new show **Impersonal Space**.

The third production from **Company AT**, one of the world's first performing arts ensembles where all members are on the autism spectrum, **Impersonal Space** will run at the Old Queens Theatre from October 19 to 28, with all shows "relaxed" performances suitable for autistic audiences.

Written by award-winning Adelaide playwright **Emily Steele** in collaboration with the 13-strong Company AT ensemble, the play draws on personal experiences to present a heartfelt and often humorous look at the many shades of the autism spectrum.

"Nameless" is a nine-year-old girl who loves nothing more than her family, star-gazing, and hot chips. But Nameless isn't like the other children at school: hyper intelligent, she excels at maths and reads books at a teenage level. Sometimes she does strange things like shout when people touch her or scream when class gets too loud, and the bullies call her "dopey" and "weird". She feels isolated, sad and confused, until a medical diagnosis reveals the truth – Nameless has autism.

Taking comfort in the stories of her scientific heroes and imaginary friends Albert Einstein and Sir Isaac Newton, geniuses many now believe were on the spectrum themselves, Nameless sets out on a journey of the imagination to find strength and confidence in her differences and happiness in herself.

Drawing on the real life personal experiences of its autistic cast, and using rich visual representations of the autistic thought process, **Impersonal Space** offers a unique, full-hearted and funny look at how autistic people see and experience the world.

Director and Company AT Artistic Director Julian Jaensch says **Impersonal Space** aims to give audiences insight into the lived experience of autism, as well as celebrate its positive aspects.

"We want to give people an idea of how the autistic mind works, that autism is a spectrum and everyone's experience is different," he says.

"This play isn't just about a child's journey through her diagnosis, but the parents' journey too as they come to terms with difference. We hope it will reassure families who are going through this experience themselves. Education is a big part of what Company AT does. We've had people come up to us after shows and say 'I've just learned more about autism in one night than I have my whole life' - that means everything to us."

Originally launched in 2009 as an initiative of Autism SA, Company AT is an independent theatre company working in partnership with Tutti Arts since 2012. The company has presented two critically acclaimed

productions: *Framed Out* (2009) and *History of Autism* which played at the 2014 Adelaide Fringe and 2015 Come Out Festival.

Impersonal Space runs in a limited season of just eight performances at the Old Queen's Theatre, Playhouse Lane, Adelaide, from October 19 to 28. All performances are designated as "relaxed" performances suitable for autistic audiences.

Impersonal Space is supported by the Australia Council, Arts South Australia, Creative Partnerships Australia and Autism SA.

Praise for Company AT's *History of Autism*:

"Julian Jaensch and his company are to be commended," - The Advertiser

"The 14 ensemble members ... not only reveal a hidden history but eloquently share their own stories with dignity and quiet pride. A notable production," - The Australian

"An honest, compelling and witty production ... raw and enlightening," - Kryztoff RAW

Tutti Arts presents

IMPERSONAL SPACE
by Company AT

October 19 to 28, 2017

The Old Queen's Theatre, Playhouse Lane, Adelaide

October 19 to 21 and October 25 to 28 at 7.00pm
Matinee Sunday October 22 at 2.00pm

Tickets: \$28 adult, \$20 conc., \$15 child aged 17 and under, \$73 family, special discounts for groups 6+

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/317721

Directed by: Julian Jaensch

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Publicist Petra Starke on 0407 799 907 or email pstarke@internode.on.net

MORE ABOUT COMPANY AT

WEBSITE: tutti.org.au/performing-arts/company-autistic-theatre

FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/Company-AT-104949252872355](https://www.facebook.com/Company-AT-104949252872355)