



## TEACHERS' RESOURCE KIT

*What do you want to be today?*

## Overview of the production

I Think I Can is an interactive installation that places miniature model railway layouts in public spaces, railway stations and arts centres, inviting the public to engage and play by becoming temporary residents via a tiny puppet. Through puppetry, live video, and active audience interaction, this innovative public artwork asks “What would you like to be today?” engaging participants in an optimistic task of collective storytelling that deals with dynamic notions of residency and responsibility.

Participants first take a playful “career test” on a custom-built iPad application. The test calculates their personality and provides them a choice of puppets in professions to which they are suited. This encourages children to imagine themselves into another reality, as if they were grown up. They receive an intricately detailed 1:87 scale human figure and are invited to imagine their resident’s story. As a puppeteer animates the character into the miniature railway world, the participant tells their puppet’s story. This story is documented and appears on the website created for the project, which is in the form of an online newspaper. As the puppet is animated, its movements are filmed and the footage is streamed live onto screens above or adjacent to the installation. At the end of their direct engagement, participants are given a “passport,” which enables them to return to the miniature town at anytime over the period of the engagement and move their figure again in relation to what has happened around them. As more characters arrive, the virtual community continues to expand, and each participant can track the journey of their figure through the online newspaper: [www.ithinkicanonline.com](http://www.ithinkicanonline.com).



## Creative Team

Director: Sam Routledge  
Media Artist & Dramaturg: Martyn Coutts  
Software & Interaction Design: Matt Gingold & Oliver Marriott  
Design: Jonathon Oxlade  
Website and Graphic Design: Futago  
Consultant: Ian Pidd  
Teachers Kit Activities written by Sarah Duffus  
Originally produced by Intimate Spectacle and created in association with The Australian Model Railway Association Glen Iris, Australia

## About Terrapin



Established for over 32 years, Terrapin is Australia's premier contemporary puppet theatre creating world-class performances for young people and their families.

Telling sophisticated stories of humour and pathos, the company embraces new technologies whilst remaining true to the wonder and illusion resident in the age-old craft of puppetry. In its productions, the company aims to inspire families by encouraging them to express the power of their collective imagination through inventive play with the objects and devices that surround them.

Terrapin injects skills and programs into the Tasmanian community, supporting and developing artists and touring nationally and internationally.

In 2012, Terrapin's production Boats won the Helpmann Award for Best Presentation for Children

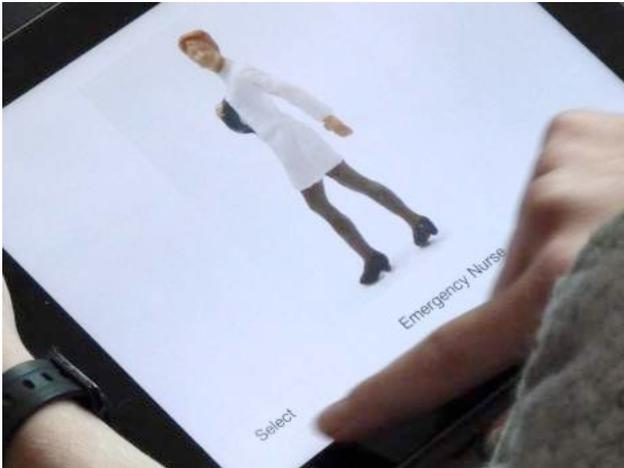
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Terrapin Puppet Theatre is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and through Arts Tasmania by the Minister for the Arts. Terrapin acknowledges the support of Salamanca Arts Centre.



# Activities

## Who was that?



- \* Write a description of your resident from I Think I Can. Pay particular attention to what makes them unique. Consider their profession, appearance, relationships to other residents etc.
- \* Imagine you meet your resident again after 10 years time. How have they changed? What are they doing now? How do they look? What do you talk about?

- \* Play the game What Are You Doing. Everyone stands in a circle. One person stands in the middle and mimes an action (eg rowing a boat). Another person enters and asks "What are you doing?" The first person answers, but says something they are obviously not doing (eg. flying a kite). The new person then has to mime that action. The original person leaves and someone else enters and asks "What are you doing?" The pattern repeats.

## Be Professional

- \* Research three very different occupations, identifying three unique or special aspects of each occupation. Is there any area where all three overlap? Present this information using posters or charts.
- \* Invite members of the community or parents to speak to the class about their professions. What are their job roles, responsibilities and joys? Can they tell you something you would never have guessed about their profession?
- \* Think of a profession. Stand in the middle of a circle. Demonstrate one physical aspect of this profession. People will then ask you questions that have a yes or no answer. They have to guess what your profession is.

## Scale

- \* I Think I Can uses a scale of 1:87. Using a scale of 1:20 draw the following: 1. Yourself. 2. Something in your classroom. 3. A car. 4. A tree. This may require you figuring out a clever way to measure each item!
- \* Find a significant building from your town/suburb. In groups make a model of the building using simple materials. The emphasis here is on getting the scale right and being accurate not on a perfect representation.
- \* Choose a character from a cartoon in your local newspaper. Draw a grid over it. Enlarge the image so you can clearly see what is happening in each grid. Try to reproduce the cartoon one square at a time.

## Rules and Regulations



- \* There were certain rules or laws that governed behaviour at work in *I Think I Can*. What rules do you live by when you are at: a) school; b) home; c) shopping; d) playing your favourite sport; e) on a planet that you design.
- \* Over time rules and laws change. Using the internet see if you can find two laws that were once enforced that might seem ludicrous today.

- \* People living in different countries live by different rules. In groups of three or four, imagine you have been hired to draft the basis of a new country's laws. Come up with 12 laws you think will be guiding principles. You might like to think about things like freedoms and responsibilities...what is permitted, what is guaranteed and what is outlawed.

## All The World's A Stage

- \* *I Think I Can* is set in a community with real people and where trains play a very important part in what happens. Describe what you remember of this world in as much detail as you can.
- \* Try to think of a different world that might be a wonderful location to explore in a similar way... one with real people and events, eg. visitors to a library, workers and passengers at an airport ,or an audience and players at a sporting arena.... Describe the world where the action takes place. What is special about this world? What makes it interesting? You could draw a picture of this world.



- \* Try to think of a different world that might be a wonderful location to explore in a similar way, but one with fantasy characters and events, eg. dragons who like to knit, flying robots, talking turtles or diplomatic dinosaurs; who all meet on a lava planet, at a unicorn convention, or in a drop of water that is falling to earth as a raindrop. Describe the world where the action takes place. What is special about this world? What makes it interesting? Are there any special rules that apply here? You could draw a picture of this world.

## Newsworthy



- \* Choose one of your favourite characters from fiction. Write up a short newspaper story where that character is one of the following: a) the hero that stops a bank robbery; b) finds something incredible buried on the beach; c) discovers a cure for cancer; d) cooks dinner for some famous people. What would the story be if the event did not go as planned?
- \* You are a special reporter for Everyday Hero Times. Interview one of your adult friends or family and ask them about one time they felt like a hero. What happened? How long ago was it? Did they help an old man across the street or save a life? What did they learn about themselves? And their community? You could collect all these stories and make a newspaper for the class to keep.
- \* The railway seen in *I Think I Can* is going to close!! Write a news story using as much sensational language as you can about why you think this is a terrible or brilliant idea.