

# THE WORLD OF OUR OWN



**By The Finger Players**

**Presented by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay**

**25 – 28 Aug 2026, Tue – Fri**

## Co-creators' Message

Hello, and welcome to *The World of Our Own*. We are artists who tell stories through the medium of theatre. Some of the stories we tell touch on subject matters that we wish someone had spoken about when we were young. You may or may not be familiar with this — when a thought or an emotion surfaces, you wonder if it's special only to you. But because it's so personal, you hold it close to yourself, almost like a secret, never speaking about it to another person. That's what loneliness felt like to us as young people sometimes, like something we dare not encounter.

Aside from the show, there are two things we want to draw your attention to.

The first is the title of the show. *The World of Our Own* reminds us that the world, quite literally, belongs to all of us, but also that each of us carries a private world within ourselves. Both things can be true at the same time. You can feel connected to others, and still sometimes feel alone.

Next, we want to draw your attention to the following question: who are you when you are alone? We take on many roles in our daily life, often responding to and reacting to the world around us. But when you are alone, who are you? Are you comfortable with this version of yourself? If not, how can we create the version of yourself that you want to become?

Thank you for spending time with us in the theatre today, and we hope to see you again.

**Myra Loke & Ellison Tan**  
Co-creators, *The World of Our Own*

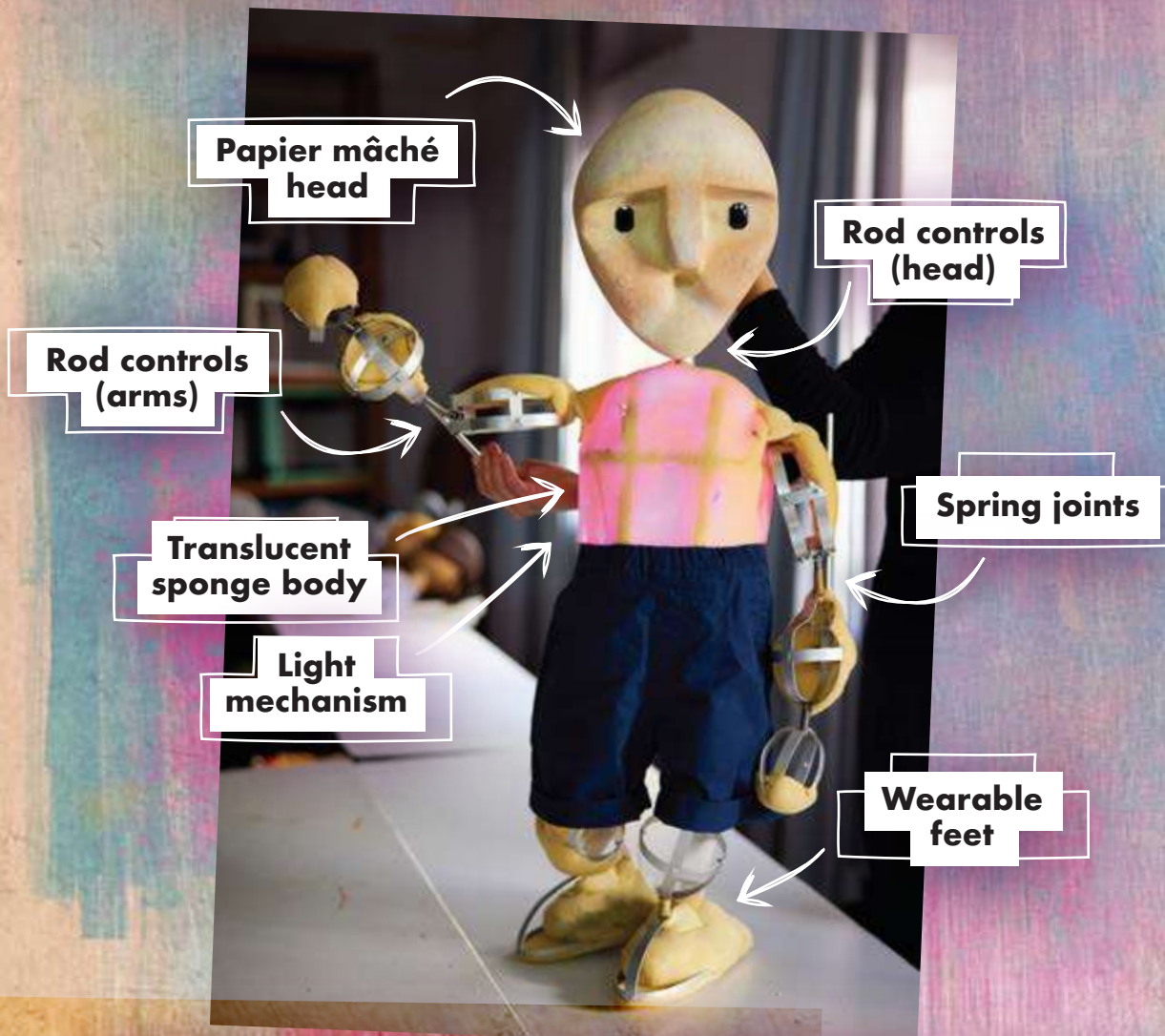


## MEET PENG: NOTES FROM HIS PUPPET DESIGNER AND MAKER

Peng is a rod puppet, brought to life by two puppeteers throughout the course of the show. But before a puppet can reach the stage, two very important people are needed. The **PUPPET DESIGNER** conceives how the puppet looks and moves and the **PUPPET MAKER** builds it based on the design. Sometimes, the puppet designer and maker are the same person, like in Peng's case!

Peng was created by puppet designer and maker Myra Loke. His body is built on an aluminium frame with spring joints, originally designed and built by another designer, Daniel Sim, for an earlier project. When Myra came across Daniel's frame, she felt it was suitable for what she had in mind. She used it as her starting point and then added the translucent sponge skin and other details to create Peng. He has no eyebrows, no mouth, and no fingers. Parts of his aluminium frame are left exposed without any fabric covering it to mimic flesh. This is intentional as Myra wanted Peng's features to stay abstract and neutral enough so that you, the audience, can use your imagination to fill in the details. This way, Peng is a puppet that everyone can relate to.

### Features:



### Giving Life

The most significant moment in making a puppet happens during the carving of the head and face. As the maker works, the face that emerges tends to carry something of the maker themselves. For Peng, Myra carved his head intuitively, with a real person in mind. Puppet makers call this **giving life**: in shaping the puppet, the maker passes a part of themselves into it. That life then travels to the puppeteer, and finally to you, the audience.

# ACTIVITY 1

## Getting to Know Peng and His Feelings

What do you think Peng is trying to do here?

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

A



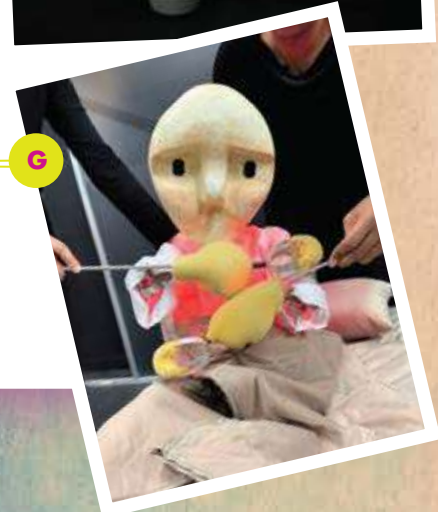
C



E

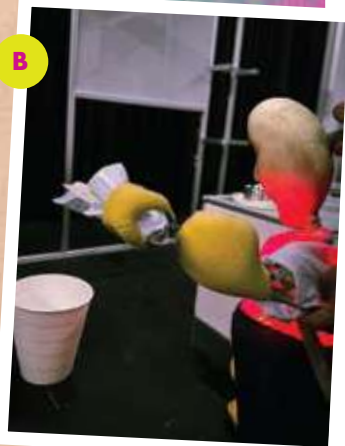


G



Below are seven photographs of Peng at different points in the show. Look carefully at his body in each one: pay attention to things like his posture, his hand position, where his gaze is directed and more. **In the corresponding box, write down what you think is happening in that moment, and how he might be feeling.**

### How do you think Peng is feeling?



**A**

**B**

**C**

**D**

**E**

**F**

**G**

### Extension Question:

Peng's face has no mouth and no eyebrows, which gives him a neutral expression. What did you rely on to figure out how he was feeling at different points in the show?

## Interesting Facts About Peng

### His clothes are real clothes!

His trousers are from Uniqlo Kids and his top is an altered primary school uniform shirt.



### His feet are worn instead of manually manipulated.

To free up the puppeteers' hands for more complex movements such as dancing, Peng's feet are worn directly on a puppeteer's body. This is a special feature which not all rod puppets have!



### Myra took around three months to make Peng.

Puppet-making is slow, careful work. It requires patience, as there is a lot of trial and error involved. It also requires knowledge of physics as the designer and maker must understand concepts like gravity, weight distribution and kinematics.

Learn more about how Peng was made.



## ACTIVITY 2

### The Mood Manager

Peng wears a Mood Manager on his chest. It lights up in different colours depending on what he is feeling. Because Peng is a puppet, his Mood Manager has technical limits. It can only display so many colours. Real emotions, as you probably know, are far more complex than any one colour can capture. Nevertheless, these are the colours that were used in the show to convey Peng's range of emotions.



Red and  
its shades

Anger /  
Annoyance /  
Frustration



Purple

Loneliness



Blue and  
its shades

Sadness /  
Pain



Green and  
its shades

Envy /  
Disgust



Yellow /  
Orange

Warmth /  
Joy



Rainbow

Mixed /  
Fluctuating  
emotions

If you had a Mood Manager inside your body right now, what colour(s) would it show? **Draw or describe your Mood Manager in the space below.** You are not limited to the colours above!



**Extension Question:** Choose a colour or combine multiple colours, to represent an emotion. Why did you pick these colours and what are they trying to express?

## WHAT IS LONELINESS?

Loneliness is one of the oldest human feelings, and perhaps one of the hardest to describe. Here are two ways of thinking about it.



### Situational loneliness

happens when a specific event makes us feel isolated from others. For instance, moving to a new neighbourhood, changing schools, or spending an evening at home alone can trigger this feeling. However, the feeling usually passes with time.

### Chronic loneliness

is a deeper feeling of not truly belonging or being understood. It can be harder to understand and harder to shake off.



Peng might be experiencing a mix of both. He is alone tonight because his parents are not home but his behaviour suggests that this feeling is not new to him.

## Lonely Characters You Might Know

The idea of loneliness turns up frequently in the stories we love. Here are some characters who also know this feeling:

### MATILDA

a character from the novel *Matilda* by Roald Dahl

A brilliant girl whose gifts are invisible to her family. She finds comfort and belonging in books and eventually, a kind teacher.

### ELIO

a character from the Disney Pixar film *Elio*

Elio is a space-obsessed boy who is raised by his aunt. He gets abducted by aliens and forms an unlikely friendship with one of the aliens, Glordon. They both bond over how they often feel misunderstood by the adults in their lives.

### WILLY WONKA

a character from the novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl

A man who builds an entire world within the confines of his chocolate factory, partly because of his outstanding imagination, and partly because of a desire to never feel lonely.

### HARRY POTTER

a character from the *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling

An orphan who grows up feeling like he doesn't belong. Even when he is surrounded by friends, Harry carries the weight of feeling fundamentally different from everyone around him.

### MEI

a character from the Disney Pixar film *Turning Red*

A thirteen-year-old navigating the gap between who her mother wants her to be and who she is. When she starts transforming into a giant red panda whenever her emotions run high, she finds herself caught between hiding this new part of herself and embracing it.

### THE MONKEY KING

from the 16th-century Chinese novel *Journey to the West*

A creature of extraordinary power who is born from stone, belonging to neither the human world nor the heavens. Despite his abilities, he spends much of his life searching for a place he can truly call his own.

## WHAT OTHERS SAY

We spoke to some young people and here is what they have to say about experiencing loneliness.

"Loneliness to me doesn't necessarily [mean] being alone, but not being seen or understood in the moment I need it most."

- L, 14

"Loneliness means feeling like you are on your own or like not included in a group. I guess I feel lonely when my friends don't come to school because they're sick."

- G, 14

"I feel lonely whenever my friends do stuff without me."

- M, 12

"Loneliness isn't just about being alone physically. It's more about how you feel inside. To me, it's when you feel like no one really understands you, or like you don't fully belong anywhere, even if you're surrounded by people. It's that quiet feeling where you wish you could share your thoughts with someone who truly gets you, but you don't know who to go to."

- SA, 13

"Loneliness is when I am with my friends but am left out of chats."

- M, 12

"I usually feel lonely when I'm around others but still feel left out, like I'm just there but not really part of things. Sometimes it also happens when I'm overthinking a lot or dealing with something personal and I don't feel comfortable opening up to anyone. It's not all the time, but when it hits, it's more about feeling emotionally distant rather than physically alone."

- NE, 14

"When someone I care about is physically or emotionally unavailable or like when comparing how much I show up for others and how much they show up for me *kinda* like that."

- J, 14

"Not having anyone to turn to, facing problems alone, being the floater friend, having friends but no best friend."

- PS, 13

"Loneliness to me is a feeling of just being stressed of being alone..."

- Z, 13

### Reflection Questions

- Do any of these experiences resonate with you?
- Do you have a similar or different understanding of loneliness?
- What do you do when you encounter such feelings?

## ACTIVITY 3

### Being Alone and Feeling Lonely

Being alone and feeling lonely are not always the same thing. Some of us can spend hours by ourselves and feel completely at peace. Some of us can be in a crowded room and feel totally cut off.



What do you think the difference is between being alone and feeling lonely?

**Write down words or phrases that come to mind when you think of these two experiences.**

#### Being Alone

#### Feeling Lonely

#### Extension Question:

It is sweet, solitude,  
As long as the way back  
To others  
Remains open.  
After all, you don't shine for yourself.  
– Olav H. Hauge

The poet Olav Hauge says that solitude is “sweet” but only as long as “the way back to others remains open.” **What do you think he means by that?**  
**How does this connect to Peng's journey in the show?**

## ACTIVITY 4

### Reflection

Think about a time when you felt lonely, or when being alone felt tough. In the space below, write or draw a message to yourself. This could be something that would comfort you in such a moment.

This is a private reflection. You do not need to share it with others unless you choose to.

Think about someone in your life who might feel lonely sometimes or does not like being alone. In the space below, **write or draw** a message to them. This could be something you would like to share with them.

For you, my \_\_\_\_\_

## ACTIVITY 5

Peng

### Peng and Cat

Peng and Cat share an interesting relationship in this show. There are parts of himself that Peng recognises in Cat and vice versa, which is what draws them to each other.

What do you think Peng and Cat might be saying to each other in this moment?

**Write your responses in the speech bubbles.**



Cat



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