



“Like the best comedy, it makes you look at the world in a different way. Remarkable.”

– The independent (UK)

“This truly engaging, often joyous hour is a reminder that unpredictability can be a real spur for creativity.”

- The Guardian (UK)

THE COOPERS MALHOUSE  
BECKETT THEATRE  
WED 12 – SAT 16 OCTOBER

Wed-Sun 7pm  
Sat also 2pm

1 hr, no interval  
A Reserve \$49 / \$39  
Students \$25

[www.festival.melbourne](http://www.festival.melbourne)  
The Coopers Malhouse  
03 9685 5111  
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ARTIST TALK  
THU 13 OCT, post show

UK // Theatre

Australian Exclusive

## BACKSTAGE IN BISCUIT LAND Touretteshero

Writers and Devisors

Jess Thom, Jess Mabel, Jones & Matthew Pountney

Groundbreaking performance celebrates neurodiversity and inclusion both on and off stage in the Australian premiere of *Backstage in Biscuit Land*.

British writer, artist and activist **Jess Thom** finds going to the theatre difficult. So would you if your Tourettes had you saying words like 'biscuit' 16,000 times a day. Her solution? Become theatre instead.

*Backstage in Biscuit Land* is a comedic tour-de-force that mines Thom's own neurology - and the tics it produces - to take you deep inside the rabbit hole of a much-misunderstood condition. Along the way you might encounter penguin gangbans and squirrel knickers, but it's hard to be sure when your star is neurologically wired to wander into associative absurdity. As unpredictable as she is enlightening, joyous to watch, Thom is proof that creativity doesn't stick to the script.

A runaway hit at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2014, combining storytelling, comedy and puppetry, *Backstage in Biscuit Land* presents an intimate glimpse into Thom's unique perspective as a performer and woman with Tourettes Syndrome.

Jess Thom loved the theatre as a child, but the intensity of her tics made it increasingly difficult for her to attend. After being asked to sit in isolation during a theatre performance, Thom discovered the only place in the theatre she wouldn't be asked to leave was the stage. Playful, spontaneous and laugh-out-loud funny, *Backstage in Biscuit Land* shows first hand that making theatre inclusive makes it better.

In association with Touretteshero, co-founded by Thom to increase awareness of the syndrome and its challenges without self-pity or mockery, Melbourne Festival will present relaxed performances of *Backstage in Biscuit Land* where all audience members are urged to feel comfortable in the theatre, designed to welcome people who would benefit from less traditional theatre etiquette and the expectations of stillness and silence.

### MEDIA CONTACT

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