



HELPING HANDS

SATIRE, TENDERNESS AND PHILOSOPHY COMBINE IN NEURODIVERGENT-LED PLAY ABOUT AUTISM AND "HELP" - WATCHABLE FROM YOUR LIVING ROOM

Helping Hands, the brand new play by neurodiverse-led theatre company **A_tistic** features autistic characters developed by a majority-neurodivergent creative team, biting satire balanced with tenderness, and a pioneering new way of accessing theatre - a streamable "video ticket".

When the whole world wants you to be a certain way, what does it mean to get "help"?

Helping Hands is the 4th and latest production from A_tistic, a theatre, education and consultancy team dedicated to bringing autistic lives and insights to the stage. Devised and co-scripted by a majority-neurodivergent team of directors and actors, **Helping Hands** deconstructs what it means to be "helped" and to "help" as an autistic person. And you can watch its debut at Melbourne's iconic La Mama Theatre, or watch it online without leaving the house.

Helping Hands is turning the conversation about neurodivergence on its head, examining the norms and systems that shape autistic experience. The 90-minute show critiques the controversial yet popular autism therapy Applied Behavioural Analysis, a form of "treatment" eerily similar to dog training. It explores the world of a character without speech, drawing on the guidance of Hari Srinivasan, an autistic man who communicates by typing and is currently completing a psychology degree at UC Berkeley. It examines the challenges of finding good mental health support for people who are both trans and autistic. It ranges far beyond questions of professional help, digging into relationships, self-help, power and community.

Autistic people are frequently misdiagnosed, misunderstood or let down by the world - but it doesn't have to be this way. With Australia moving towards a long-awaited disability royal commission, re-examining what we mean when we talk about "help" is well overdue. . We believe in the principle of "nothing about us without us", and this production takes the conversation around "help" to the next level by centering the voices and stories of autistic people.

Helping Hands is co-created by directors **Hannah Aroni, Jess Gonzalez and James Matthews**, and devising cast **Tara Daniel, Vanessa Di Natale, Emily Griffith, Dee Matthews, Artemis Munoz, Aislinn Murray and Alexander Woollatt**.

Production Management by **Theodore Murray**

DATE	August 7 - 10, 2019
TIME	Wed-Sat at 7.30pm Thurs August 8 - Relaxed Performance Fri August 9 - Auslan Interpreted
VENUE	La Mama Courthouse 349 Drummond Street, Carlton
TICKETS	\$30 Adult \$20 Concession
BOOKINGS	03 9347 6948 or www.lamama.com.au

Streamable video ticket

Available August 27 - September 6, 2019
 Professionally filmed and fully captioned
 Tickets available via the **Helping Hands** Pozible Fundraiser (www.pozible.com/project/helping-hands) until 8 July, and then via a-tistic.com.au

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