## Audio Description Pre-Show Notes for JULIA prepared by Vantagepoint Audio Description.

# Event Details:

Written by Joanna Murray-Smith

Directed by Sarah Goodes

Presented by: A Sydney Theatre Company and Canberra Theatre Company.

Audio described performance: 22/8/25 7.30pm and 23/8/25 2pm.

Audio Described by: Sophie Fu for Vantagepoint Audio Description.

These notes, current at time of distribution, are subject to change and are intended as a guide to prepare you for the live Audio Description.

# Running Time.

1 hour and 30 minutes, with no interval

# Show Warnings.

Recommended for ages 14+, Coarse language, Strobe lighting.

**Special Notes.**

Throughout the entire play there are only 2 women actors on stage.

The lead actor, Justine Clarke, plays multiple characters and only her voice is altered to reflect the change. The predominant voice is the actor’s ‘natural voice’ to reflect the character’s inner monologue and narration of events.

The actor’s voice is changed to portray Julia as a child, as Julia’s mother, and other characters in the play, and as ‘public Julia’ when dialogue draws from real speeches or interviews. To distinguish between the versions of Julia being portrayed on stage, the name “Julia” will be used when the actor appears on set, and “Gillard” will be used when a projected image or video of Julia Gillard is projected onto the glass screens.

The supporting role is played by Lotte Beckett. She speaks minimally and moves props during the play to help create different locations.

# Context/Overview.

In 2012, Julia Gillard gave a speech which sent shockwaves around the world as our first female Prime Minister thundered across the Despatch Box: “I will not”.

Over a decade later, one of Australia’s most esteemed playwrights, Joanna Murray-Smith, tells the human story behind the extraordinary speech in a stirring and inspiring re-examination of that moment and a revelatory portrait of the woman who made it happen.

This play is a fictional imagining by the playwright, of true events in the life of Julia Gillard. It combines references to true events, extracts from published works, interviews, fictitious commentary and opinions which the Playwright and the Producers believe to be honestly held. Ms Gillard has not endorsed, nor had any artistic input into the production of this play.

# The Stage.

The Playhouse has a proscenium arch stage, 14 metres wide, 10 metres deep and 2 stories high. This theatre has a fly tower that allows set and scenery to be lowered onto the stage or lifted out (this feature is not used in this production). The auditorium seats 800 people.

# The Set.

The overall style of the set is open, contemporary and minimalist leaving most of the stage empty.

The predominant features of the set are:

* Glass walls: two glass panels form the left and right walls, each 3m high and 4m wide. Each wall is positioned at a 45-degree angle facing the audience. The walls serve multiple purposes, and can be backlit to appear opaque, used as projection surface for video content, and as a transparent window, or a reflective surface to mirror the actors on stage.
* Diamond Carpet: a 3 metre by 3 metre large diamond-shaped grey-coloured short-pile carpet on the floor, position centre stage. The front point of the diamond sits centrally and closest to the audience. The carpet border can be illuminated. A black floor creates the outer boundary.
* Video Projection: Videos of locations, people, landscapes, and abstract lighting are used frequently. These will be described live.

Using a clock face to orientate around the set:

* At 12 o’clock is a 1-metre-wide space between the two glass walls, this is an entry/exit point for the performers. This entry/exit will be called the “Back” during the live description.
* Between 1 o’clock to 4 o’clock position, we will call this the “Right Wall”.
* At 3 o’clock position, a 4-legged simple grey coloured reception chair.

This position also serves as performer’s entry/exit. This will be called “Right”.

* At 9 o’clock position, a 4-legged reception chair. This position also serves as a performer’s entry/exit. This will be called “Left”.
* Between 8 o’clock extending to 11 o’clock position, we will call this the “Left Wall” in the live audio description.

Hanging above the diamond carpet is a 1-meter wide cylindrical-shaped light. The cylinder is black, and its lower rim emits light at various times in the show.

Projected images, lighting and other effects will be described live.

# Opening Setting.

Pre-show image on stage has the set lit in a low-level cool-white light, the two reception chairs are situated on stage at the 3 o’clock and 9 o’clock position, they are lit with a narrow downlight.

The glass walls appear bronze in colour and form a mirrored surface reflecting the audience members in the auditorium.

# Characters and Costumes.

This show has two performers. However, the play is predominantly a solo piece.

Julia Gillard's character is the main focus, while the Young Lady speaks minimally and is primarily a silent observer or witness.

**Young Lady** is performed by Lotte Beckett.

In her 30’s. Fair skinned woman, average height and build, with brown shoulder length hair. She wears a pink thin-striped t-shirt and pink coloured jeans.

**Julia Gillard,** the former 27th Prime Minister of Australia (2010 until 2013), is performed by Justine Clarke.

In her early 50’s. Fair skinned woman, average height with a pear-shaped figure.

She wears a loose unbuttoned tartan shirt over a white t-shirt, red tailored trousers and white dress sneakers.

Any pertinent costume changes will be described live.

END OF PRE-SHOW NOTES.

# Upcoming Audio Described Events.

Brisbane Festival Events coming up:

COMMUNITY CHOIR: THE MUSICAL.

Musical Theatre, featuring professional and community cast.

Saturday 6 September, 1pm.

GEMS

A groundbreaking contemporary ballet trilogy, with a live orchestral score.

Sunday 7 September, 1pm.

MILESTONE

Visual and performance artist William Yang reflects on his remarkable life, through storytelling with music and photography.

Tuesday 9 September, 7:30pm

Tickets to these events can be purchased through [Brisbane Festival.](https://www.brisbanefestival.com.au/)

For more event information visit [Vantagepoint Audio Description](https://www.vantagepointad.com/audio-description) and [Vision Australia’s events listing.](https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/staying-connected/events?sort_by=field_event_start_value&sort_order=ASC&field_event_start_value_1=All&field_event_state_value%5b5%5d=5)

END OF DOCUMENT.