



Photo: Ishka Michoka

DANCE / ARGENTINA

Un Poyo Rojo

Directed by Hermes Gaido

Choreographed by Nicolás Poggi and Luciano Rosso

Education Resources

1 hour no interval

Suitable for Year 8 students upwards

Compiled by Kimberley Martin, December 2018

Copyright protects this Education Resource. Except for purposes permitted by the Copyright Act, reproduction by whatever means is prohibited. However, limited photocopying for classroom use only is permitted by educational institutions. The content remains the property of the Adelaide Festival Inc. 2018.

Arts Curriculum subjects and relevant IB subjects

Suggested curriculum links presented in following colours:

ACARA

Drama

Dance

SACE

Drama

English

Dance

IB

Arts

Individuals and Societies

Language and Literature

CAPABILITIES

Literacy and numeracy come in many forms – non-verbal, visual and embodied, the Arts provide opportunities for students to deepen their literate and numerate experiences.

Viewing and experiencing performance requires Critical and Creative Thinking, and challenges Personal & Social viewpoints and Ethical Understandings.

Content Warnings

Un Poyo Rojo contains some nudity, sexual references and smoking on stage. There is sexual tension/innuendo between the two characters, but no explicit references. At one point, there is a naked bottom. No full-frontal nudity.

Contents

Pg. 4	About
Pg. 5	Synopsis
Pg. 6	Themes
Pg. 7	Style and conventions
Pg. 8	Production
Pg. 9	Curriculum: provocations and activities to explore pre-show and post show
Pg. 12	Meet the company & additional resources

About

SACE Stage 1 English KU1: [Learn more](#)

People respond to dance in a variety of ways – but rarely with belly laughs. As skilled as it is hilarious, this wordless double act *Un Poyo Rojo* from Argentina started life as a sketch comedy piece but has developed into an uncategorisable physical theatre show that has had audiences across the world in stitches.

Loosely translated as “A Red Rooster”, the work is its own very unique kind of cockfight. Set in a sweat and pheromone-infused locker room two macho blokes in tiny shorts compete in a game of one-upmanship that makes Hansel and Zoolander’s “Walk Off” (see [resources for link](#)) look inept.

On one level a joyful and cheeky dance parody of machismo, Alfonso Barón and Luciano Rosso skills span contemporary dance, martial arts, classical ballet, commercial street moves and more - these guys are spectacularly across it all, with punctuating steely glances and percussive sniffing to boot.



Photo: Ishka Michoka

Synopsis

In an empty locker room, two men play with movement set to the sounds from an analogue radio. The athletic bodies of Luciano Rosso and Alfonso Barón move fluently from wrestling to dance, acrobatics to physical comedy in an irresistible distortion of the expectations of manhood. Gradually, an unrequited courtship ritual emerges; the intimate impulses inherent within the sweaty sparring are hilariously drawn out, performed to a soundtrack of randomly tuned live radio stations. The performers respond and improvise to what-ever is being played.



Photo: Ishka Michoka

Themes

Competition

Since the beginning of time competition has existed in all elements of nature and determines not only strength, success and dominance but enables an exploration of ability, discussion of right and wrong and puts to test skills, intelligence, wit and morals.

Machismo

The exploration of male virility is showcased in *Un Poyo Rojo* by using competition but the definition of machismo is tested by pushing gender identity norms. Encompassing a broader spectrum of gender identity to enhance the odds of this competition showcases these performers' skills, attributes and ability to 'peacock' resulting in entertainment with strong ideas to explore further.

Gender identity

The term 'gender' was first used in the 1950s to differentiate the set of feelings and behaviours that identify a person as 'male' or 'female', from their anatomical 'sex' which is determined by their chromosomes and genitals. 'Gender' is now understood as the roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that is attributed to males and females by society. Gender is one of the most basic elements of human identity. Gender is so fundamental to our identity that, without being aware of it, many aspects of human life is structured by and reveals our gender. Throughout the life course, everyone subconsciously acts out gender and reflects gender in various ways, including their dress, mannerisms, and recreational activities. These actions and reflections form components of our 'gender identity' or our sense of being 'male', 'female' or something other than these traditional categories.

*from <http://librarypdf.catie.ca/PDF/ATI-20000s/26289E.pdf>

Style and Conventions

1. Dance
2. Improvisation
3. Physical theatre
4. Slapstick comedy
5. Lip-sync to live radio broadcast



Photo: Ishka Michoka

Production

Venue

Adelaide College of the Arts Main Theatre is a proscenium arch theatre with the audience raked steeply from the stage level upwards. The steeply raked seating in the auditorium allows audience members an intimate and uninterrupted view of the performers from every viewpoint.

Tech Insider

Every element of the performance is created and planned very precisely to ensure the highest quality performance is given to every audience given the random selection of the music. This lighting plot shows the way the lights are mapped out when bumping in the tech for *Un Poyo Rojo*:

[See lighting plan here](#)

Curriculum

Topics and Questions to Explore with Students

Before The Show

Year 8 - 12

Un Poyo Rojo is set in a locker room. What is the impact of locating action in a set space? Students to nominate a confined space and then explore how it would impact on the action/movement of a performance.

Discuss and explore the concept of competition. What does it look like? Where do you find it? What is the result of it? Why do humans compete? Have groups brainstorm ideas from these questions on paper or whiteboards to build discussion and stimulate further exploration and research.

Cockfighting: What do the students know of the game and where is it still practiced?

Year 10 - 12

Students to break into two groups, one to explore maleness, what does it look like/do/say/behave; and the other group apply the same considerations for females. Can a female have male traits and vice versa? What impact can challenging these stereotypes or breaking the mold/enhance someone's character or performance persona? Discussion points should be recorded and revisited after the show.

Activity Ideas

SACE Stage 1 Dance PC1: [Learn more](#)

Provide the following image (poster sans words) and ask students to come up with captions, speech bubbles or backstories for the image. Explore what this piece could be about and collect ideas to return to after viewing the performance. Ask students to consider the translation for the title, *Un Poyo Rojo* (loosely: a red rooster) and, drawing on the characteristics of a rooster, ask them what they think this show could be about.

After The Show

IB MYP Arts Criterion D: [Learn more](#)

Year 8 - 12

Could this performance have taken place in a different space i.e. not in a locker room? Where could you create a sequel or prequel performance in a different space?

Dancers and actors' important tools are their bodies and their voices. Think about the physical exertion required to perform this piece every night and tour it across the world. What kinds of routines do you think performers of this caliber might need to do in order to present this work with such energy?

Years 10 - 12

Students in pairs to scope out a script for a two hander based on competitive tension on any topic, e.g. *I'm right and you're wrong*, and then perform the piece as a physical enactment of the narrative.

Activities

SACE Stage 1 Drama KU3: [Learn more](#)

ACARA Dance ACADAM023: [Learn more](#)

ACARA Drama ACADRM048: [Learn more](#)

Lip Syncing

Responses to YouTube videos - turning your face into a performance. Provide students with mirrors, or use their selfie cameras to explore the different ways they can make their faces move. Start by copying emoji's. Engage further with some music. To begin with encourage students to explore isolations with just parts of face then gradually join different elements together. From here they could select a song and try their own. See examples of lip syncing videos in the Additional Resources Section.

IB MYP Individuals and Society Criterion C: [Learn more](#)

Tableaux

How can frozen images convey an idea, a relationship, a feeling? Eliminate sound, movement to see how physicality can communicate ideas. Include levels/status, facial expressions, connection, space, consider every part of the body, not just those limbs doing something different. Can you create 3 tableaux and create different ways of moving between each 'picture' e.g. smoothly, jittery, bouncing, like liquid?

IB Diploma Theatre Objective 3: [Learn more](#)

SACE Stage 2 Dance PC3: [Learn more](#)

SACE Stage 2 Drama Ap1: [Learn more](#)

Laban

Laban spans both Dance and Theatre so can be a great practitioner to apply to *Un Poyo Rojo*. Describe a sequence or phrase you remember from *Un Poyo Rojo* using Laban's terminology. Using the same terminology see if you can create your own 30 second performance exploring different combinations of efforts, times and component parts. More information and classroom ideas for Laban exercise can be found in additional resources below.

Revisit the themes

Competition, machismo, gender identity.

Students to discuss if having explored them prior to the production did this add/distract from the intent of the performers and the production.

Student Review

For the student's review, points for them to consider in addition to normal review practice:

- What impact did the absence of spoken dialogue make to the sense of drama
- Did the physicality of the performance increase your understanding of the idea the performers were pursuing
- This was a pursuit of 'macho' expression, presented by two males, how would it work if two females

For review writing format: See Review Writing Guide document

Meet the Company

About *Un Poyo Rojo*

IB Diploma Literature & Performance Objective 1: [Learn more](#)

The project started in 2008 when two performers were creating an act for a variety show in the Centro Cultural Laboratorio in Buenos Aires. Its initial creators, Luciano Rosso and Nicolás Poggi put together a duet with small comic touches in order to find ways within movement to show different relationships between two men, using elements of dance and also theatre. This duet came out of different movement proposals which mixed high impact contemporary partner work with duo sequences. After presenting the piece for the first time, the opportunity came up to perform the piece in many other spaces in the city of Buenos Aires, such as the Ciudad Cultural Konex, Teatro del Perro, Teatro Martinelli and Circo del Aire, amongst others.

In April of that year, they were selected to participate in the “Ciudanza” festival which takes place in urban spaces around the city and with the collaboration of Hermes Gaido, the current director of the company, they recreated the piece. They were also selected to perform at the Rafaela Theatre Festival (2009 and 2010) in Santa Fé and at the El Cruce Festival in the city of Rosario in September 2009. In July 2009, they received funding from PRODANZA in support of the completion of the full-length play.

In April 2010, they debuted a 45 minute long piece in the Espacio Cultural Pata de Ganso in Buenos Aires and received a highly positive reaction from the audience. Then with the full-length version of the play, they were selected by Spain’s Network of Alternative Theatres to tour three cities (Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia) as part of the Network’s 1st Latin American Circuit during the month of November in 2010. In 2011 they resumed performances in Buenos Aires with Alfonso Barón, completing three sell-out seasons and continuing to tour various provinces in Argentina during 2012 and 2013.

Performers

Alfonso Barón, Luciano Rosso

Creative Team

Choreographers: Nicolás Poggi, Luciano Rosso

Director: Hermes Gaido

Additional Resources

Lipsync clip from performance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxgYmCZxh-8>

One of Luciano Rosso's YouTube 'Playback' series where he lipsync's to a popular song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khCwhZyMtGk>

Online article about the history of lip sync's recent renaissance

<https://mw.hdm-stuttgart.de/~trends-in-media/lip-sync/>

Webpage with further information and activities on Laban's movement theory

<https://www.theatrefolk.com/blog/the-eight-efforts-laban-movement/>

Zoolander Best Bits - Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rc1ECyCVMxA>