

From the commissioning team behind *Bluey*

Beep MORT



From the globally recognised ABC Children's commissioning team, *Beep and Mort* is a charming mixed media series for children.

Produced by Windmill Pictures, it is based on Windmill Theatre Company's award-winning theatre show, *Beep*, which has toured across Australia, US, Canada and Asia to rave reviews.

This magical live-action, puppet-based series tells the story of two best friends from different worlds. Beep is a robot from the stars and Mort is a cuddly creature from the village of Mollyvale; together they solve their daily dilemmas and unexpected challenges through invention, play and adventure.

Beep and Mort explores the ways the organic and the technological can work together and, at its heart, is a series about community and the enduring value of friendship. Universal themes around empathy and self-discovery make it highly relatable, broadly appealing and suitable for modern families.

Designed by Jonathon Oxlade, who worked with *Beep and Mort*'s director Rosemary Myers on the film *Girl Asleep* and several Windmill live shows including the recent stage adaptation of *Bluey*, *Beep and Mort* is written by an award-winning team.

'From the minute Windmill pitched the series to us, we immediately fell in love with these two new pre-school stars – the unique and incredibly cute *Beep and Mort*.

We are thrilled to be working with producer Kaye Weeks, director Rosemary Myers and the creative team who have created a beautifully warm and wholly original world.

This whimsical series will strongly appeal to our ABC Kids audiences, gently igniting their minds and warming their hearts.'

– Libbie Doherty,
Head of ABC Children's Content



HD 20 x 15' or 10 x 30'
Windmill Pictures

Meet the Characters

Beep

Beep is a curious robot from Planet Beep. After graduating from robot school, she travelled the universe to find somewhere new to live and landed in Mollyvale.

Beep is keen to gather data about her new home and the many strange and wondrous things that happen there. She loves her new friends, especially Mort, and is very interested to learn about the things that robot school couldn't teach her, like emotions, relationships and the significance of a birthday.

Beep's spaceship contains all sorts of gadgets to help solve problems and she never fails to dazzle the others with her technological gizmos.

Mort

Mort is an inventor, a problem solver and above all, a good friend. Mort loves nature and making creations inspired by the elements around him like wood, stone and his favourite food and greatest weakness: mollymelons.

Happy and self-contained, his calm and thoughtful nature often saves the day. Mort loves his little sister Pop unconditionally, even if her impulsiveness sometimes creates new problems for Mort to solve.

Mort loves a cuddle! Huggable, dependable and always a little bit peckish, Mort values friendship and family over everything.



Meet the Characters

Pop

Mort's younger sister, Pop, is an agent of fun! Cheeky, bright and with boundless energy, Pop is impulsive, preferring to act first, think later. Her confidence means she's quite happy to take control of any situation – but she is prone to getting herself (and others) caught up in a bit of mischief.

Pop is a big-picture thinker, and often comes up with grandiose ideas and wonderful plans. But she's an unreliable visionary and often her big plans come unstuck! Deep down, Pop has a heart of gold.

Raf

Raf is an oversized, fluffy and adorable family dog. Raf is a loyal companion and is enthusiastic about life, new adventures, food, fuzzles and naps. Raf can be easily spooked by storms and loud noises and sometimes needs a little comfort. But there's nothing a good pat won't fix.

Raf usually sees trouble coming well before anyone else and will run to find Beep, Mort and Pop for help, wagging his tail and pointing the way when needed.



Meet the Characters

Uncle Joe

Uncle Joe is an older, spicier version of Pop. He's full of beans and looks for adventure wherever he can – which means whenever Pop has a plan, Uncle Joe is the first to join in! Uncle Joe doesn't mean to be naughty; he just wants fun. He and Pop will often hurry off together and forget to tell anyone where they've gone. Uncle Joe, however, will fall asleep at the drop of a hat – in the weirdest of places.

Uncle Joe shares Mae's love for music and dancing. Together, they're like Mollyvale's own Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. After all his adventures, Uncle Joe and Mae will reunite over a dance or a nice cup of tea.

Mae

Mae is an older version of Mort, a hobbyist who is always doing something: from meditation to painting and power walks. She's eminently practical, and is always ready to give advice, lend a gentle ear or jump in to help at a moment's notice.

Uncle Joe and Mae share a passion for dancing and will take any opportunity for a shimmy or a shake. Like Mort, Mae is a nurturer. She is a good listener and life coach. And she knows how to have a good time!



Meet the Characters

Mollyvale & The Villagers

Mollyvale is a wondrous place. A technicolour dreamland full of rolling hills and beautiful warm hues, it's home to a vibrant community of characters who live and play together.

The villagers are a diverse bunch who live in Mollyvale and participate in the fun and adventure. There's Dustin, Pip, Olive, Rueben, the Twins, Gnaomie, Robin, Glenda, and Clem.

Orla and Mama Cloud watch over Mollyvale from above, while Russell is a grassy mound who travels underground, popping up and down as the, at times, unreliable village messenger.

The fuzzles are furry little creatures who live in around Mollyvale, getting caught up in the action and especially enjoying a bit of fun with Raf.

In Mollyvale, it takes a village, and everyone has their place.



Creating the Story World

Featuring a contemporary hybrid form of puppetry, post-animation and textured, three-dimensional designs, *Beep and Mort* creates a unique, tactile and wondrous world that young viewers will feel as though they can inhabit.

‘Throughout the creative development of this series, we have drawn on our theatrical roots but also integrated new technologies.

The result is a contemporary hybrid form of puppetry that blends hand and rod puppets with post animated object puppets.

In a screen landscape dominated by animation, we want to create a textured, built world that children feel they can almost step into and walk around in.’

– Rosemary Myers, Director



Style and Themes

Themes

Beep and Mort explores the themes of friendship and problem-solving through play. The show foregrounds the voices and perspectives of children and young people, using the unlikely friendship between its title characters to explore the process of building relationships, working together, developing empathy, and embracing difference with young audiences.

The series depicts an unconventional, inter-generational family with Mort and Pop living with Uncle Joe and Mae. Themes of communication and social cohesion are depicted through stories that explore relationships between characters of all ages.

An underlying theme is how children can build successful friendships in a rapidly changing world. The organic world, symbolised by Mort, and the technological world, symbolised by Beep, are not mutually exclusive and do not exist in opposition but rather to enhance and help each other. In *Beep and Mort*, organic and technological environments work together to build a new, interesting and flourishing world. This gently encourages audiences to engage more meaningfully with the natural environment, learning how to work with their community and technology to preserve the beauty of nature and create a better world.

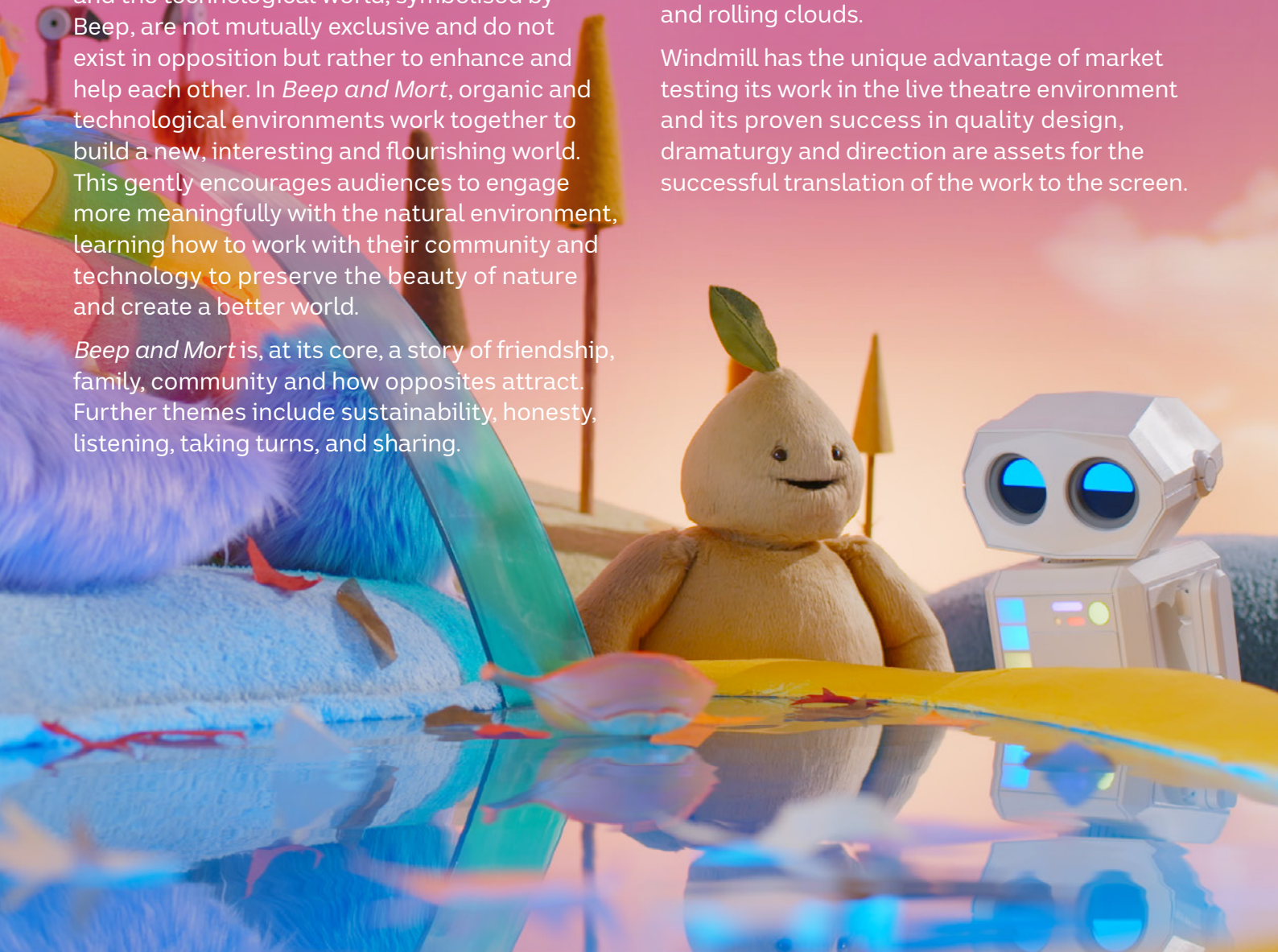
Beep and Mort is, at its core, a story of friendship, family, community and how opposites attract. Further themes include sustainability, honesty, listening, taking turns, and sharing.

Puppetry Approach

Beep and Mort is a live action, puppet-based series created by a team of specialised artists who work across live theatre, film and television. The puppets are filmed on a combination of large-scale and miniature sets, in studio. The large sets can be pulled apart in sections to create depth and allow puppeteers to operate puppets from behind and underneath.

The puppetry is a contemporary hybrid form of hand puppets, stick puppets and toy-style puppets, brought to life through post-animated eyes and mouths. The characters are voiced by voice overs, recorded prior to the shoot, using a mix of age-appropriate actors from children to older adults. Hand-crafted props and costumes feature throughout against a backdrop of cycloramas lit with theatrical lighting to create extra layers including sunrise, sunset, day, night and rolling clouds.

Windmill has the unique advantage of market testing its work in the live theatre environment and its proven success in quality design, dramaturgy and direction are assets for the successful translation of the work to the screen.



Style and Themes

Style and Tone

A vivid world full of friendship and fun for young audiences, the tone of *Beep and Mort* is heartfelt and warm with a unique offbeat brand of humour. Narratively, stories possess an almost picture book-style quality, capable of exploring profoundly human moments with a lightness of touch.

Each episode presents a problem for the characters to solve, often by thinking in lateral ways, and always by working together to apply their own unique gifts and points of view.

The distinctive aesthetic of the series is highly curated, the stories are character-driven and action-oriented, and always delivered in a gentle storytelling style.

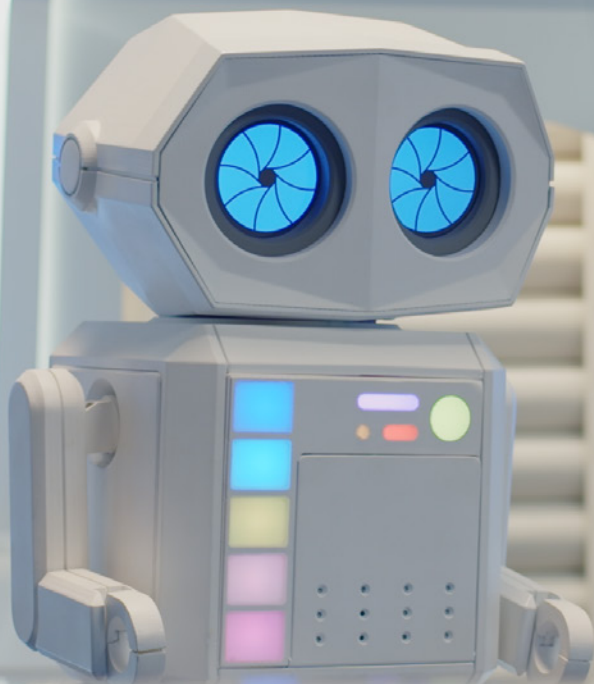
Exquisitely crafted, the series brings the extraordinary visual and musical talents of the Windmill team to the small screen.

The World

Beep and Mort is set in the village of Mollyvale with its colourful trees, rolling hills and wide-open fields. Our main characters primarily focus on home and play areas. Mollymelons grow all over, especially in the large treehouse that Mort and his family call home. Upstairs in the treehouse are rooms for Pop, Mort, Mae, Uncle Joe and, of course, Raf. There's a workshop for Mort just down the way. On a hill is Beep's spaceship, her home base.

The rules of the world mean that sets can open up. Like a puppet version of the Tardis, the treehouse and spaceship can flip open to reveal what's inside. While the world is fantastical there is no outright magic, and problems must be solved in a real-world fashion. Mort's mechanical inventions may be whimsical, but they really work, as do Beep's gadgets. The fuzzles have special abilities, due to their unique creature qualities – but their skills are sometimes betrayed by their penchant for mischief and playfulness.

Our locations are contained in six main sets in Mollyvale; the treehouse, Beep's spaceship, Mort's workshop, the billabong, the hills and the forest. Stories revolve around problems that can play in these main locations. The variety of settings provide opportunities for simultaneous action to occur and enable cutaways. Sets are redressed or ingeniously opened up to create flexible staging areas.



Media Highlights

Beep and Mort TV Series

'An otherworldly treat anchored by gorgeous textures you want to touch and a gentle sense of inquiry and problem-solving'

– **The Sydney Morning Herald**

★★★★

'There's something so nourishing about a kids' show that isn't a cartoon – and doesn't involve a hyperactive adult'

– **The Sunday Age**

Beep Theatre Show

'A tender tale of friendship for the whole family'

– **The Advertiser**

'A colourful setting, comic puppets and plenty of surprises hold young audience' members in thrall

– **InDaily**

'Forget *Star Wars*' BB-8 or Pixar's WALL-E, Beep is the most endearing robot of them all'

– **Adelaide Review**

'A delight from start to finish'

– **Stage Whispers**

'A wonderfully multi-layered story'

– **Broadway World**

'Judging by the smiles, laughter and commentary from the little ones... this is a sure-fire winner for Windmill'

– **Adelaide Theatre Guide**

