

Content warning: References the experience of mental illness in the form of schizophrenia.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Little Brother, Big Sister by Michel Paul Tuomy uses multiple modes including storytelling, retelling of remembered experience and re-telling as if re-experiencing past situations. There are some scenes with dialogue that are more naturalistic, for example, someone visiting a relative in hospital. The two characters are a brother and a sister whose affection, care for each other and struggle with the impact of mental illness (schizophrenia) grounds the story in reality as well as warmth. The tone is generally thoughtful, contemplative and aiming for wider understanding. In order to convey the full experience of someone with schizophrenia during the course of the illness – some scenes early on convey the agitated state of someone grappling with delusion. The other aspect of this play's style which is worth mentioning, are descriptions of what it is like when a character with schizophrenia has to go to hospital. This is described both from a detached insider perspective and also from the perspective of someone who has experienced this for the first time. Interactions with police are also described in a re-telling mode. Overall this piece aims to calm and reconcile rather than disturb or upset. Some mentions of mental and physical disturbance and upset are needed on the way to achieve the playwright's purpose, which is to give fuller understanding of what it is like to be a person with the mental illness schizophrenia, and someone close to that person, in the position of carer.

Possibly Confronting Material - Little Brother, Big Sister – La Mama

A portrait of a woman with two sets of eyes on the one face that is on the easel on the right (Sc 2)
References to people living in a religious cult who a lead character crosses paths with. (Sc 3)
A description of a disturbing experience in which the character believes the guru of cult members is trying to control his mind – which the character resists. (Sc 3)
A character who subsequently believes nurses working for the Care and Treatment Team are also members of the same religious cult. (Sc 4)
Low drone sound - potentially disturbing that activates when a character steps into a footprint (Sc 4)
Retelling of the experience of forced injection by hospital nurses when in a psychotic delusion. (Sc 4)
A letter stating the belief (Sc 5) and subsequent actions (Sc 7) demonstrating delusions that a character can meet famous dead people.
A painting of multiple open eyes looking, conveying severe paranoia. (Sc 6-7) *Also projected.*
Detailed first person informative description of life in a psychiatric hospital ward. (Sc 7)
Circumstance of being on a Community Treatment Order and having depot injections. (Sc 7)
Accounts of passing of both parents, due to natural causes. (Sc 9, Sc 11)
Short scene at a rave party – music, *non-toxic haze effect used and sound visuals projected* (Sc 10)
Mention of a friend with schizophrenia and their death by suicide (Sc 10)
A picture depicting a father's sanity, depression and schizophrenia. (Sc 11) *Also projected*
Description of some of the voices heard by a person with schizophrenia. (Sc 13)
A psychiatrist's perspective on the illness of schizophrenia and value of medication. (Sc 13)
Description of the remembered experience of police & CAT Team coming to someone's home, including a character being capsicum sprayed in the eyes, forcibly constrained in hand cuffs and put in a police vehicle. (Sc 13)

If you need any more information or specific details, please ask La Mama box office / front of house team, or playwright (Michel Paul Tuomy) or director (Cathy Hunt) who will be in the foyer.