

SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS

By Bess Wohl

Directed by Bridget Boyle and Nathan Sibthorpe

Detailed Content Advisory

This document contains warnings and spoilers and may be updated as the production evolves. The following information includes detailed content notes and spoilers to assist audiences in making informed decisions about attending the performance.

About the Show

Six strangers arrive at a remote wellness retreat in search of peace, clarity and a way forward. Leaving behind the noise of everyday life, they surrender their routines and, most importantly, their voices.

Over five days of enforced silence, their carefully constructed worlds begin to unravel. Through awkward encounters, unexpected connections and moments of profound vulnerability, the retreat participants confront their relationships, personal traumas and the challenges that have brought them together.

This production features an intimate, binaural sound experience, with audiences listening through headphones.

Content Advisory

This production contains mature themes, including personal trauma, grief, bereavement, serious illness, relationship breakdown, emotional distress and references to suicide and suicidal ideation.

It includes mild infrequent coarse language, low-level physical violence, implied sexual activity accompanied by simulated sex sounds, depictions of marijuana use and full-frontal male nudity.

The production also features an immersive binaural sound experience, with audiences listening through headphones. Recommended for ages 15+.

Detailed Content Notes:

Adult Themes, Personal Trauma and Emotional Distress

- Personal trauma, emotional suffering and the search for healing are central themes throughout the production.
- Characters experience loneliness, anxiety, frustration and feelings of isolation.
- Several characters struggle with relationship breakdowns, rejection, infidelity and difficulties communicating with loved ones.
- A character becomes visibly distressed following the breakdown of a romantic relationship and repeatedly attempts to contact a former partner.
- Characters cry, become overwhelmed and experience moments of significant emotional vulnerability.
- Human suffering, death, acceptance and the inability to avoid pain is discussed.
- The production explores spirituality, meditation and the challenges of confronting difficult emotions in silence.

Grief, Death and Suicide

- A Grief, loss and the fear of death are recurring themes.
- A character discusses the deaths of both parents and the emotional impact of multiple personal tragedies.
- A character directly describes having experienced persistent suicidal thoughts following significant personal losses.
- A character describes the death by suicide of a person who had supported their recovery, including the circumstances of the death.
- A character reveals the loss of a young child following a prolonged illness. The loss is communicated through a photograph and a quiet emotional exchange.
- A character discusses a parent who is dying and expresses regret about things left unsaid.

- The production includes references to terminal illness and the emotional impact of a serious medical diagnosis.
- No suicide or self-harm is physically depicted on stage.

Support information is included below for anyone who may be affected by this content.

Serious Illness, Medical Conditions and Physical Injury

- Serious illness and its effects on individuals and relationships are explored.
- A character is living with a cancer diagnosis.
- A character describes surviving a serious rock-climbing accident that resulted in multiple skull fractures and an extended hospitalisation and memory loss.
- A character refers to the death of a child following a prolonged medical condition.
- Prescription medication is taken by characters during the production.
- References are made to physical injury, illness, suffering and the effects of trauma.

Relationships, Infidelity and Family Breakdown

- The production explores romantic relationships, infidelity, rejection and emotional dependence.
- A character describes the breakdown of a marriage following infidelity involving a family member.
- A character discovers that another participant is married after becoming sexually involved with them. The discovery prompts an angry confrontation and a brief moment of physical aggression.
- The production includes depictions of jealousy, rejection, betrayal and relationship conflict.

Violence and Threatening Content

- Physical violence is limited and brief.
- A character angrily throws water into another character's face.
- A character intervenes and physically restrains the individual before the confrontation escalates.
- Characters experience occasional angry outbursts, frustration and emotional confrontations.
- A character describes previously being the victim of an armed robbery.
- A character recounts a serious climbing accident and the injuries sustained.
- A character describes the death of a person who deliberately walked into traffic.
- There are no sustained physical fights or graphic depictions of injury.

Sexual Content and Nudity

- The production contains full-frontal male nudity in a non-sexual context.
- During a scene at a lake, a male character undresses before entering the water.
- Two other participants undress to their underwear before entering the water.
- A character is also shown partially undressing in a shared cabin.
- Sexual activity is implied but not explicitly depicted.
- Two characters engage in intimate physical contact, including kissing.
- Simulated sex sounds, including breathing, rustling and grunting, are heard from an offstage location.
- The sexual encounter is suggested through sound rather than an explicit physical depiction.

Language

- The production contains mild infrequent coarse language.
- Language includes occasional use of words such as "fuck", "fucking" and "shit".
- The production contains extended periods with little or no spoken dialogue.

Drugs and Alcohol

- Marijuana use is depicted.
- A character smokes medicinal marijuana while alone in their accommodation.
- The marijuana is subsequently offered to another character, who also smokes it.
- Characters are shown taking prescription medication.
- A character discusses previous alcohol misuse following a series of personal tragedies.
- Alcohol is mentioned in conversation, including references to wine.
- Drug and alcohol use are not central to the action of the production.

Sound, Lighting and Sensory Effects

This production uses an immersive binaural sound design, with all audience members required to wear headphones throughout the performance.

The production's soundscape includes:

- Amplified voices and dialogue delivered through headphones.
- Close, intimate sounds including breathing, mouth noises, swallowing, coughing, sneezing and whispering.
- A sudden, very loud sneeze amplified through a microphone.
- Loud rainfall and environmental sounds.
- Nature and wildlife sounds, including insects, birds and a bear growling.
- Simulated sex sounds, including breathing, rustling and grunting.
- Sudden vocal outbursts, shouting and moments of emotional distress.
- Moments of complete or near-complete silence.

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The binaural sound design creates a heightened sense of proximity and intimacy, with certain sounds experienced as though they are occurring very close to the listener.

These elements may affect audiences sensitive to amplified sound, unexpected noises, close-microphone sounds or immersive sensory experiences.

The production also includes moments of complete blackout lasting 30 – 60 seconds.

Audience members who have questions or accessibility requirements relating to the use of headphones or blackouts are encouraged to contact the ticketing team before attending or speak with Front of House staff on arrival.

Age Suitability

Recommended for audiences aged 15+.

This recommendation is provided as a guide based on the maturity required to engage with the production's themes, mild infrequent coarse language, simulated sex sounds and full-frontal male nudity.

Younger audience members may attend at parent or carer discretion.

Support Services

If the themes in this production raise concerns for you, support is available:

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Griefline: 1300 845 745

Cancer Council: 13 11 20

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (Queensland): 1800 177 833

13YARN (support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people): 13 92 76