

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

STORIES LIKE THESE AND GRIFFIN INDEPENDENT
PRESENT THE WORLD PREMIERE OF

MINUS ONE SISTER

BY ANNA BARNES



*"Which one are you?
Oh that's right, you're not the pretty one,
the dead one.
Not the smart one.
You're the crazy one."*

stories
like
these

GRIFFIN
INDEPENDENT

MINUS ONE SISTER

BY ANNA BARNES

MinusOneSister is a new Australian play from writer Anna Barnes and winner of the 2013 Patrick White Playwright's Award. It is produced by Stories Like These and directed by Luke Rogers as part of Griffin Theatre Company's 2015 Griffin Independent season.

A father sacrifices the life of his eldest daughter for the common good. It's the kind of thing that can really mess up a family. Mother turns against father. Son turns against mother. Sister turns against sister. You've heard the myth, but not like this.

MinusOneSister is a reimagining of Sophocles' *Electra* furiously wrenched into the present and told from the point of view of the teenagers. Here the focus is fixed on the sisters left behind and investigates how two young girls could respond so differently to the tragedies within their family.

The play explores the competitiveness, jealousy and tensions that exist between teenage siblings. Within its epic narrative of revenge and bloodshed, it is also an intimately personal piece about growing up, looking at how perceptions of past events can shape our own family histories, and our attempts to come to terms with the actual truth when we are old enough for it to be revealed to us.

This is a powerful play that puts the role of women within the family unit and its patriarchal lines under the microscope, asking us to question the politics of gender and power in our society and our families.

Using the function of a voyeuristic chorus looking in on this family, this work allows us to question the roles we all play as witnesses to such tragedies, and in some cases accomplices, as a community at large examines their own responsibilities towards a series of violent domestic acts that have global consequences.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Suitable for Years 11 & 12

SEASON DATES

9 September - 3 October

HSC DRAMA: STAGE 6

- Tragedy
- Contemporary Australian Theatre Practice
- Group Performance

DRAMATIC TECHNIQUES AND THEATRICAL CONVENTIONS

- Episodic scenes
- Direct address
- Chorus work
- Monologues
- Transformational acting
- Set design
- Sound design
- Lighting design

THEMES AND IDEAS

- Greek Tragedy
- Girl Culture
- Justice and Revenge
- Gender Politics
- Sibling Rivalry
- Family
- Adolescence
- Betrayal
- Social Pressures
- Popular Culture



TRAGEDY

MinusOneSister provides students with the ideal opportunity to explore both ancient Greek and modern tragedies in the one performance. This production takes one of Sophocles' most famous dramas and boldly reimagines it into a new Australian work that is innovative and challenging in its form and utterly contemporary in its message.

Students can investigate the essential elements of ancient Greek tragedy through their own political, social and cultural experiences of adolescence, moral responsibilities, gender politics, social media and popular culture. *MinusOneSister* explores a range of performance styles, theatrical techniques and conventions that will encourage students to consider inventive new ways of staging ancient tragedies for a contemporary Australian audience.



PLAYBUILDING AND GROUP PERFORMANCE

MinusOneSister consists of 28 episodic scenes where characters shift between monologue, dialogue, and group storytelling conventions. Barnes has reinvented the Greek chorus figure in a contemporary voice, writing the majority of the play in unassigned, truncated dialogue, leaving the interpretation and distribution of the text to the actors and director.

The ensemble is made up of four actors who shift between playing the roles of Electra, Chrysothemis, Orestes and Iphigenia and the Chorus of a wider community looking in on the events of the family. This production will allow students to explore different versions of group performance, playbuilding and the interpretation of existing texts.



CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN THEATRE PRACTICE

Our production of *MinusOneSister* is the world premiere of a new Australian play, performed at Australia's leading new writing theatre, so the perfect opportunity for students to experience contemporary Australian theatre practice. This production will demonstrate ways in which dramatic traditions can be reimagined into a new contemporary theatrical forms.

MinusOneSister is very contemporary and Australian in its language, setting and concerns, demonstrating how local artists are currently experimenting with different theatrical forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions. Our cast and creative team will use these techniques to convey to our audience the themes and ideas our work is exploring, such as girl culture, family relationships, sibling rivalries, gender politics and social pressures. This production presents teenage characters that are familiar to young audiences in both a realistic and symbolic way, allowing students to reflect upon their own experiences and the social, political and cultural context of this exciting new work.



SHOW INFORMATION

Name	<i>MinusOneSister</i>
Venue	SBW Stables Theatre 10 Nimrod Street Kings Cross NSW 2011
Dates	6 September - 3 October 2015
Times	Monday – Saturday 7pm Saturday 3 October 2pm & 7pm
Duration	Approximately 75 minutes No interval. Exact time to be confirmed closer to opening.
Prices	\$23 per student for school bookings. One teacher can come free for every ten students booked
Warnings	This show contains some strong language mature themes. Please contact us if you have any concerns about the show content.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Playwright **Anna Barnes**
Director **Luke Rogers**
Set and Costume Designer **Georgia Hopkins**
Lighting Designer **Sian James-Holland**
Sound Designer & Composer **Nate Edmondson**
Stage Manager **Angharad Lindley**
Producer **Peter Gahan**

Cast
Kate Cheel
Lucy Heffernan
Liam Nunan
Contessa Treffone

Stories Like These is dedicated to creating imaginative, challenging and compelling theatre with a commitment to the development of Australian artists and voices. We collaborate with both emerging and established professional artists to create works that engage, provoke and inspire our audiences, with an emphasis on new Australian works and the best international playwriting.

GETTING TO GRIFFIN

- Train:** Kings Cross Station is approximately a 3 minute walk from the theatre. Kings Cross is on the Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra train line.
- Bus:** Bus numbers 324, 325, 311 depart from Circular Quay (311 also from Central Station) and stop in Bayswater Road – a 3 minute walk from the theatre. Call 131 500 for further bus and train information.
- Parking:** Street parking around the SBW Stables Theatre is limited, so please give your group plenty of time to park. Parking is available at Wilson Parking on Ward Avenue in Elizabeth Bay from \$21 for 3-4 hours. It is approximately 800 metres from the theatre.

ACCESSIBILITY

The SBW Stables Theatre is only accessible by stairs, and we regret that the venue is not wheelchair accessible. Please contact us if you or your students have specific accessibility requirements.

BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES

If you have any questions, or if you want to have a chat about the show, please do not hesitate to contact us. For bookings and enquiries, contact Griffin Theatre Company's Administration & Program Coordinator, Caroline Hannemann on (02) 9332 1052 or caroline@griffintheatre.com.au

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