

# TORCH THE PLACE

by Benjamin Law

## Detailed Content Advisory

This document contains warnings and spoilers and may be updated as the production evolves.

The following information is provided to assist audiences, teachers and carers in making informed decisions about attending the performance.

### About the Show

Set in suburban coastal Queensland in the mid-2010s, *Torch the Place* follows three adult siblings who return home to help their mother confront her extreme hoarding. What begins as a well-intentioned attempt to clean the family home quickly unravels into a chaotic and darkly comic confrontation with family history, grief and cultural expectations.

As the siblings attempt to clear the house, buried memories emerge: the breakdown of their parents' marriage, migration struggles, the loss of a child, and the emotional attachments tied to the objects their mother refuses to discard. Through surreal sequences, biting humour and moments of emotional reckoning, the family confronts the pain they have long avoided discussing.

### Content Advisory

This production contains moderate coarse language, references to racism, sexual references, drug use, mental health themes including hoarding disorder and suicide, and references to death and mortality including cancer and infant loss. It also includes dynamic sound effects, theatrical smoke and haze, controlled live flame, flashing lights and moments of complete blackout. Recommended for ages 15+.

### Detailed Content Notes

*(The following section contains spoilers about key events in the play.)*

#### Themes of Hoarding and Domestic Disorder

- The play centres on a family attempting to clean a severely cluttered and hoarded home.
- The stage environment depicts large accumulations of objects including junk mail, broken household items and unsanitary materials.
- Characters retrieve items from an industrial skip bin and handle rubbish during the clean-up process.

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- The environment reflects the emotional and psychological impact of hoarding behaviour. The characters in the play openly discuss the disorder and its emotional and psychological impact on them.

## Illness and Cancer

- A central character is recovering from cancer and references chemotherapy and hair loss.
- Dialogue includes discussion of illness, medical treatment and the emotional impact of serious health conditions.

## Death, Infant Loss and Grief

- The play explores the lasting impact of the stillbirth of a child within the family.
- A surreal stylised memory sequence depicts childbirth, stillbirth and the loss of a newborn.
- Characters discuss grief, trauma and the long-term emotional effects of infant loss.
- Infertility is explored in the work. One character is struggling to conceive and the family openly discusses this.

These scenes may be confronting for audiences affected by infertility, miscarriage, or infant death.

## Racism and Historical Racist Objects

- Dialogue references historical racism and stereotypes in Australian culture.
- Characters discuss racist objects and memorabilia from earlier decades as part of confronting past attitudes.
- These references are contextualised critically within the narrative.

## Strong Language and Family Conflict

- Moderate coarse language is used throughout the production.
- Characters engage in emotionally intense arguments and confrontations within a family setting.

## Sexual References

- Dialogue includes sexual references and adult humour.
- Characters discover pornographic material and explicit audio is briefly heard.

## Drug and Alcohol Use

- Characters drink alcohol on stage.

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- Recreational drug use is depicted, including smoking marijuana and references to LSD.

## Mental Health Themes

- The play portrays the emotional complexity of hoarding disorder.
- Characters discuss trauma, grief and family dysfunction.
- Suicide and euthanasia are referenced in dialogue.

## Physical Injury

- A character cuts their foot while searching through rubbish.
- A character accidentally punches in response to be startled.
- A character is struck during an argument and loses a tooth. Fake blood is used.

## Fire and Emergency Situations

- A small fire occurs on stage when candles ignite wallpaper. Controlled live flame is utilised.
- Characters attempt to extinguish the fire using a fire extinguisher.

## Sound, Lighting and Sensory Effects

This production includes:

- Sudden blackout at the beginning of the performance
- Moments of complete darkness
- Loud sound effects and amplified music
- Flashing lighting effects
- Theatrical smoke and haze
- Controlled live flame on stage

These elements may affect audiences sensitive to sudden sensory stimuli.

## 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, language and depictions.

Younger audience members may attend at parent or carer discretion.