

VIETGONE

This information may contain spoilers and is subject to change without notice. Additional in-depth content advisories will become available prior to the season commencement.

Content Advisory

This play contains medium level, frequent coarse language; adult themes including sexual references, depictions of violence, discrimination, grief and the aftermath of the war in Vietnam 1955-1975. The use of theatrical smoke, herbal cigarettes, haze, dynamic sound, strobe lighting and lighting blackout.

Content Advisory

Saigon has fallen. Helicopter pilot Quang and strong-willed Tong have both narrowly escaped the end of the Vietnam War and find themselves in a new and deeply strange country.

Thrown together in the arrival camp in Arkansas, they must navigate a mystifying dust land of rednecks, bikers, hippies and cowboys. Tong wants to make a fresh start in the land of opportunity, while Quang just wants to get home. But what if the spark growing between them was to ignite?

With its in-your-face ninja action and pulse-pounding hip-hop music, Qui Nguyen's Vietgone is an inventive and genre-bending live-action theatrical cartoon — an irreverent, pulp fiction-style take on the love story that may (or may not) have led to his own birth.

Age Suitability

Recommended for audiences 15+.

In-Depth Content Analysis

Violence toward - Children, Women, Soldiers, Vietnamese Peoples.

Physical or emotional ill treatment by someone in a position of responsibility, trust or power that harms or could harm health, survival, development or dignity. Including psychological, financial, sexual abuse, exposure to violence, exploitation, and/or removal of bodily control.

The play discusses the brutality of the American/Vietnam War, and the fall out of those caught within the conflict.

There are mentions of:

- The loss of children during the events of the war.
- The physical, emotional and psychological violence during the events of the war.
- The discussion of the loss of life during the events of the war.
- The discussion of sexual violence enacted against South Vietnamese peoples displaced by the events of the war.

These mentions are used to share the historic violence that occurred during the war.

There are depictions of:

In Act 1 NHAN tells QUANG he can punch him, which QUANG does.

In Act 1 there is a physical altercation between REDNECK BIKER, NHAN and QUANG.

In Act 2 REDNECK BIKER, NHAN and QUANG fight once again. This evolves into a longer-form fight sequence including NINJA.

These depictions have been heavily choreographed with a Fight and Intimacy Consultant

Blood / Bodily Fluids / Biowaste

Biofluids and excrement.

At the end of Act 1, TONG experiences a PTSD response to her experience, via flashback, during which GIAI and KHUE appear with wounds and blood.

Discrimination / Racism and/or Bigotry

Unjust or prejudicial treatment of a person/peoples on the basis of protected attributes such as age, disability, race, sexuality, gender, intersex status, orientation, in certain areas of public life including education and employment.

There is both collectively and specifically anti-Asian, anti-Chinese and anti-Vietnamese sentiment within the narrative.

During their interactions with REDNECK BIKER, QUANG and NHAN experience aggression and violence. They expand upon the racist drives behind the attack, including the history of race relationships in America.

QUANG and NHAN also express anti-Chinese sentiments.

Grief

Emotional response to loss. May include great sadness, anger, guilt and/or despair.

QUANG performs a rap entitled “Mary Jane” and sings about dulling the pain of leaving Vietnam and the brutality of the American/Vietnam War. He expresses grief at the loss of his children, wife and country.

Offensive Language – Swearing

Words that are deemed profane, vulgar, obscene or socially offensive.

5 instances or variations of ‘Asshole’

8 instances or variations of ‘Bitch’

9 instances or variations of ‘Mother Fucker’

30 instances or variations of ‘Fuck’

35 instances or variations of ‘Shit’

Offensive Language / Actions – Slurs/Derogatory

Language used to insult, disparage, or offend people/peoples on the basis of protected attributes such as racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, ableism, xenophobia, faith or hate-speech.

There are re-appropriated depictions of stereotypes to create critical discourse. Vietnamese characters speak in English, whereas American characters speak with a syntax comprised of American pop-culture references and neologisms.

Stereotypical depictions include ASIAN GIRL/ASIAN GUY, AMERICAN GIRL/GUY, CAPTAIN CHAMBERS and FLOWER GIRL/HIPPIE DUDE.

There are additionally multiple instances of the use of the slur ‘yellow,’ at times used for self-description/empowerment, and at times offensively.

REDNECK BIKER uses the slur ‘Gook,’ which is additionally depicted at FORT CHAFFEE.

Persecution

The act and fear of serious harm to a person/peoples, to their life or liberty, and denial of access to measures that ensure their ability to survive. This may include systemic, profiling and arbitrary behaviours that disproportionately effect a certain group.

In Act 1, QUANG performs a rap entitled ‘Blow ‘Em Up’ about the persecution enacted by the Viet Cong, and his desire to kill them in retribution.

TONG also performs the rap entitled ‘Gonna Start Again’ referencing the context of the Viet Cong, Saigon’s fall, Fort Chaffee, the persecution of refugees and the fallout from the events of the American/Vietnam war.

Physical Intimacy

Physical actions or reactions between characters that may or may not be of a sexual nature.

There are depictions of:

Act 1 -

- GIAI kisses TONG, who doesn't immediately reciprocate. TONG then straddles GIAI and initiates intercourse, which is not shown.
- QUANG and THU kiss.
- QUANG and TONG meet, kiss and engage in intimate acts, which is not shown.

Act 2 -

- NHAN and FLOWER GIRL kiss.
- QUANG and TONG kiss.
- QUANG and TONG engage in a montage of intimate moments, both comedic and iconic, and briefly simulate intimate acts.
- TONG and BOBY kiss.

These depictions have been heavily choreographed with a Fight and Intimacy Consultant.

Substance Use – Marijuana

The use of a restricted, illegal or controlled substance.

In Act 1, HIPPIE DUDE produces a cannabis cigarette, and shares it with QUANG and NHAN. QUANG performs a rap entitled "Mary Jane" and sings about dulling the pain of leaving Vietnam and the brutality of the American/Vietnam War.

In Act 2, NHAN produces a cannabis cigarette and shares it with QUANG. They reflect upon their circumstances, romances and positioning in America.

Suicide / Tendency or Behaviour

The act of deliberately killing oneself. Ideation, planning or behaviour that indicates this.

In Act 1, TONG jokes about ending her own life rather than marrying GIAI. This is done for dark, humorous effect.

Trauma / Traumatic Events

The emotional, psychological and physiological residue left over from heightened stress that accompanies experiences of threat, violence and life-challenging events.

In Act 1, TONG, HUONG and KHUE reflect on the circumstances of leaving KHUE behind as Saigon falls to Viet Cong occupation.

QUANG and TONG perform a rap entitled 'I'll Make it Home,' in which TONG expresses the agony of evacuating Saigon.

At the end of Act 1 TONG experiences a PTSD flashback response in which GIAI and KHUE appear in a nightmare with gunshot wounds, blood and fall dead. This is accompanied by projection of historic photographs of dead Vietnamese people and impactful video design. TONG screams and is eventually awakened by QUANG.

War / Acts of Terror

Armed conflict between parties. Acts or threats of acts that intend to coerce or influence the public or any government by intimidation to advance a political, religious or ideological cause. These may cause death, serious harm or danger, damage to property, risk to health and safety or serious interference or disruption to critical infrastructure.

VIETGONE speaks to the events and aftermath of the American/Vietnam War. The characters of QUANG, TONG, HUONG and NHAN are Vietnamese. They have a deep connection to these events.

During the fall of Saigon, there is the sound of a bomb exploding and gun fire.

Resources for Further Support

Lifeline (13 11 14)

Lifeline has trained crisis supporters available 24/7. They also offer an online Crisis Support Chat 7 days a week between 7pm-4am AEDT (www.lifeline.org.au/crisischat)

Translation services available via 131 450 / Dịch vụ Biên dịch và Thông dịch 131 450

QLD Mental Health Crisis Number (1300 642 255)

Confidential mental health telephone triage service that provides the first point of contact to public mental health services to Queenslanders, 24/7.

Phoenix Australia – National Centre of Excellence in Posttraumatic Mental Health (03 9035 5599 or phoenixaustralia.org)

Resources and referrals for trauma support and recovery.

QPASTT – The Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (07 3391 6677 or connect@qpastt.org.au)

Access and referrals for refugees, their families and those with a refugee-like background or history of traumatic events. Services are free, confidential and voluntary.

Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling (1800 011 046)

A 24hr telephone counselling service specifically for veterans and families.

Vietnamese Family Support Program (VIETFAM – 07 3372 2655 or office@iys.org.au)

Referral service for young people aged 12-25, specialising in assistance for local at-risk Vietnamese young people and their families.