

Visual Story

Instant



La Maison Théâtre

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Questions? Contact Geordie Theatre: info@geordie.ca

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What is a Visual Story?

A visual story is a tool to help audience members familiarize themselves with a venue and/or with a show. It allows audience members to know in advance what to expect from a theatrical experience, so that they can prepare themselves accordingly. Visual stories were created as an aid for autistic people and people with learning disabilities, but they can be used to help anyone prepare for their visit to the theatre.

About the Performance

Performance Time

The performance is approximately 50 minutes in length.

Pre-Performance Talk

Geordie staff will tell you a little bit about the show before it starts. They will also talk about the land on which the theatre is located.

Post-Performance Talkback

There will be a 10 to 15 minute talkback after the show. This is a time where audience members can ask questions to the actors or special guests. Audience members can leave the performance before, after or during the talkback.

Things to Look Out for

- You are welcome to come and go from the performance as you please. Here are some of the different spaces you can spend time in before, during and after the show:
 - The Quiet Room is directly at the bottom of the staircase and to the right. It has objects meant to be calming, like noise-cancelling headphones, weighted plushies, and comfortable chairs and cushions.
 - The Dynamic Space is perfect if you need to move around and get rid of excess energy. It is at the top of the staircase on the side of the theatre with the odd-numbered seats. You can move around in the hallway, and/or use the benches and dynamic seats.
 - The Reading Corner is in the hallway between the odd and even-numbered seats. You can relax and read books there.
- During the show, you can ask the theatre staff for a weighted blanket, weighted plushie, noise-cancelling headphones and/or fidget toy.
- There are music and sound effects in the show. If audience members are sensitive to loud noises, they are encouraged to use noise-cancelling headphones.
- There are lighting and video effects in the show.
- There is a glossary at the end of this document. There you will find the definitions of some of the more complex words in the play.
- Some themes explored in this play are digital literacy, online identity and perception, and peer and parental pressures.

Sensitive Content

MS/Family Illness: Rosie's father is living with Multiple Sclerosis. His ongoing medical needs motivate her to post her music online to crowdfund for the expenses.

Cyberbullying: Meredith creates an anonymous profile to post negative comments on Rosie's social media.

Alcohol Consumption: There is underage drinking at a house party. Rosie drinks to the point of inebriation. The host aggressively hugs her, which leads to accidental urination in front of her peers. This is then posted to social media.

Suicide Attempt: Rosie attempts suicide (not depicted onstage) in response to her experiences. Upon seeing her post about it online, Jay and Meredith rush to Rosie's home to try and save her. Rosie survives and receives professional help at the end of the play.

The Characters



This is Masha. She plays the role of Meredith.

Meredith is 15 years old. She is passionate about music and wants to become a pop star.



This is Sebastian. He plays the role of Jay.

Jay is 15 years old. He wants to become a professional hockey player.



This is Meenu. She plays the role of Rosie.

Kelsey is 15 years old. She is trying to help her dad who has multiple sclerosis (MS). She is shy and wishes she were more popular.

The Locations

Sometimes the characters narrate to the audience, and at other times they play out more realistic scenes. There are scenes in many different locations: school, a hockey game, Rosie's house, etc.

Hailey Verbonac is the set and video designer. He decided what the stage should look like, and created the videos that appear onstage.

Julian Smith is the composer. He created the music and sounds to bring the audience into Meredith, Jay and Rosie's world.

Mayumi Ide-Bergeron is the costume designer. She decided what clothes the actors should wear to look like their characters.

The Story

Instant is written by Erin Shields and directed by Cristina Cugliandro.

This is what happens in the play. Skip to the Glossary on page 6 if you don't want spoilers!

Instant is the story of three teens finding out how far they'll go in their quest to be seen and heard.

Meredith is a singer-songwriter who makes YouTube videos of covers in an attempt to gain Internet fame. But her friend Jay, a rising hockey star, can't understand why she won't post her original songs.

When their classmate Rosie suddenly goes viral after a video is posted of her singing to raise money for her father's medical bills, Meredith's jealousy takes over and she bullies Rosie anonymously online. Other people join in on cyberbullying Rosie after someone posts embarrassing videos of her being drunk at a house party. This drives Rosie to a suicide attempt, which is stopped just in time by Jay and Meredith.

Meredith finally musters up the courage to post an original song. She has been trying hard to make things right. She helps Jay get scouted by a hockey team. She and Rosie make videos of them singing together and raise enough money for Rosie's dad's treatment. For all three characters, life continues on, with all its successes, disappointments, and everything in between.

End of play.

Glossary

Enforcer: In hockey, when a player from the other team starts a fight, an enforcer is a player whose unofficial role is to fight back.

Multiple sclerosis (MS): An illness that affects the brain and nervous system, often causing fatigue, pain and limited mobility. There is currently no cure for MS.

Resources

Information:

MediaSmarts (Digital Media Literacy): <https://mediasmarts.ca>

Articles: (Child Mind Institute)

- [How to Help Kids Deal with Cyberbullying](#) (Child Mind Institute)
- [How Using Social Media Affects Teenagers](#) (Child Mind Institute)
- [12 Things Parents Can Do to Help Prevent Suicide](#) (HealthyChildren.org)

Support:

Bullying Canada: 24/7 support

- Phone or text: 1 (877) 352-4497
- Info and resources: <https://www.bullyingcanada.ca>

Kids Help Phone: 24/7 support available in English and French

- Phone: 1-800-668-6868
- Text: 686868
- Info and resources: <https://kidshelpphone.ca>

Suicide.ca/Suicide Prevention Centre of Montreal (Quebec)

- Phone: 1-866-277-3553
- Text: 535353
- Online chat, info and resources: <https://suicide.ca>, <https://cpsmontreal.ca>

Suicide Prevention Centre of Montreal: 24/7 suicide prevention hotline

- Phone : 1-866-277-3553
- Text : 1-855-957-5353
- Online chat, info and resources: <https://suicideactionmontreal.org>

Talk Suicide Canada: 24/7 suicide prevention hotline (Canada, outside Quebec)

- Phone: 1-833-456-4566
- Text: 45645
- Info and resources: <https://talksuicide.ca>

Tel-Jeunes: Support available in English and French

- Phone (6:00am-2:00pm): 1-800-263-2266
- Text (8:00am-10:30pm): 514-600-1002
- Online chat, info and resources: <https://www.teljeunes.com>

Youthspace.ca: Online crisis and emotional support chat between 6:00 PM and midnight PST (9:00 PM-3:00 AM in Montreal)

- Online chat: <https://www.youthspace.ca>
- Text line: 778-783-0177
- Guide for supporting others: <https://www.youthspace.ca/youthspace-resources/youthspace-guides/>