



[HOME \(/\)](#) [MY CITY \(/\)](#) [MUSIC \(/MUSIC\)](#) [ENTERTAINMENT \(/\)](#) [FASHION \(/FASHION\)](#) [LIFE \(/\)](#)  
[PHOTOS](#) [SCENESTR TV \(HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/CHANNEL/UCU090FEIHC20FNOCN32LIPQ\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU090FEIHC20FNOCN32LIPQ)  
[SCENESTR MAG \(/\)](#)

## SUNNYTOWN @ LA BOITE REVIEW

Written by Jessica Bozoky ([/blog/Jessica-Bozoky](http://blog/Jessica-Bozoky)) | Friday, 16 October 2015 15:14

Published in [Arts \(/arts\)](#) | Tagged under [Brisbane \(/tag/Brisbane\)](#) [Theatre \(/tag/Theatre\)](#)



(/media/k2/items/cache/560b0c8a8b285496d70a30bdd3928e9e\_XL.jpg)

*Images © Marshall Stay*

**'Sunnytown's audience is theoretically suspended above a suburban story, waiting for the final blow to send them plummeting.**

Created by Heather Fairbairn and Krystal Sweedman, 'Sunnytown' ([/arts/sunnytown-shines-down-on-brisbane](#)) kick-starts La Boite's 2015 Indie Season with a critique of Australian society. Inherently gripping, 'Sunnytown' is a raw and unsettling work that explores the consequences of choosing to cope when change is the only hope. It's a messy, slippery slope into the mind of an emotionally unstable teen who has glimmered over a traumatic experience in her past.

Intimately set in the Hart family's home, it's Danika's 13th birthday party. Dad bought the wrong cake, mum is stressing and fussing over the details and Dani is spending all her time with her BFF, Miranda, and ignoring the rest of her guests. But she's having a blast, why can't her parents see that? Why don't her parents like Miranda? Why can't they see her the way Dani does?

On the surface, the problems the family faces are natural – bickering, blaming, miscommunication... puberty. But when the pressure gets too much, Dani 'glimmers' to another, darker world. From the outside, she's sleep-standing. On the inside, she's fallen down the rabbit hole and is frantically searching for a way out.

Sucked into Dani's subconscious, 'little rays of sunshine' in Sunnytown Municipal Extravaganza Mall welcome her to their world. They haven't had a visitor in a long time, so their hosting skills are rusty. The way out is down the escalator, but it seems to have vanished. Luckily Miranda is on the outside to pull her out of the 'glimmer' and back to reality.

The girls' time together is playful, amusing and silly. They're typical adolescence. Miranda is mischievous, free-spirited and a curious creature, always trying to push Dani out of her comfort zone. While Dani is innocent, thoughtful and worried about her future. She doesn't want to be stuck in one town forever, like her mum, but wants to approach life cautiously.

Dani is apprehensive about her parents' relationship and transports back to Sunnytown after finding them in a menacing situation. It's her third time, and according to the rays (who are losing their glow), her last. Miranda can't help her out this time. No one makes it back unless they can remember what drove them there.

When it all comes crashing down on Dani, she's brave enough to face it. She comes out of her 'glimmer' a stronger person. She has the power of saying 'no' to Miranda, who is forcing her to endanger her life. A life which may have been turned upside down, but her scars will heal with thicker skin than she previously had.

Her second year out of high school, this is Olivia Hall-Smith's first lead role. And won't be her last. The young woman is so deeply imbued in her character, it's hard to see her as anyone but Dani. She's graceful, emotive and commands attention while maintaining innocence.

Vanessa Krummenacher is another young name to keep an eye on. Having performed professionally for only two years, she embodies Miranda like a long-lost soul sister. Her flair is unique and she brings humorous relief to the drama-drenched plot.

The four-person cast (</arts/the-cast-of-sunnytown-shine-down-on-brisbane>) is completed with Ron Kelly and Caroline Dunphy; both of whom bring experience, resonant voice and passion to their roles as mum and dad. Together, the tight-knit group work seamlessly, moving as a unit – especially when there isn't a smidgen of clean floor left by the end of the performance.

Domestic violence, mental health, alcohol abuse, infidelity, peer pressure and emotional turmoil are rolled into one, surreal performance. The poignancy of the characters and the conviction of the actors blend into a sound show. There is nothing childish about this birthday party.

**'Sunnytown' (<http://www.laboite.com.au/cms/page.asp?ID=241>) performs as part of La Boite's Indie Season until 31 October.**

## Write a comment...

0 Comments

Sort by Oldest



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

Tweet 3

Like 107 people like this. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

G+1

« [Lord Of The Dance: Dangerous Games @ QPAC Review \(/arts/lord-of-the-dance-dangerous-games-qpac-review\)](/arts/lord-of-the-dance-dangerous-games-qpac-review)  
[Women In Voice @ Judith Wright Centre Review](/arts/women-in-voice-judith-wright-centre-review) »

## RELATED ITEMS

- [Bree Bullock... Is No Longer Hiding In The Music Room \(/music/bree-bullock-is-no-longer-hiding-in-the-music-room\)](/music/bree-bullock-is-no-longer-hiding-in-the-music-room)
- [4 Men Of Letters And Why They Love Writing \(/arts/4-men-of-letters-and-why-they-love-writing\)](/arts/4-men-of-letters-and-why-they-love-writing)
- [Matt Corby @ The Tivoli Theatre Review \(/music/matt-corby-the-tivoli-theatre-review\)](/music/matt-corby-the-tivoli-theatre-review)
- [The Vital Signs Of Backbone's 2016 2high Festival \(/arts/the-vital-signs-of-backbone-s-2016-2high-festival\)](/arts/the-vital-signs-of-backbone-s-2016-2high-festival)
- [Island Vibe Festival's Tenth Anniversary Review \(/music/island-vibe-festival-s-tenth-anniversary-review\)](/music/island-vibe-festival-s-tenth-anniversary-review)
- [Boombox @ Brisbane Powerhouse Review \(/music/boombox-brisbane-powerhouse-review\)](/music/boombox-brisbane-powerhouse-review)
- [This Is Capital City @ Brisbane Powerhouse Review \(/arts/this-is-capital-city-brisbane-powerhouse-review\)](/arts/this-is-capital-city-brisbane-powerhouse-review)
- [Ladies In Black: Dressed For Success \(/arts/ladies-in-black-dressed-for-success\)](/arts/ladies-in-black-dressed-for-success)
- [The Human Detained @ Judith Wright Centre Review \(/arts/the-human-detained-judith-wright-centre-review\)](/arts/the-human-detained-judith-wright-centre-review)
- [Laura Davis' Ghost Machine @ Stores Studio Review \(/comedy/laura-davis-ghost-machine-brisbane-powerhouse-review\)](/comedy/laura-davis-ghost-machine-brisbane-powerhouse-review)