



Visual Guide and Effect Timeline

# *Snake in the Grass*



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## What is a Visual Guide and Effect Timeline?

This document's **Visual Guide** has information and pictures to help you prepare for your visit to Dundee Rep, and the performance of *Snake in the Grass*.

At our theatre we've adopted the 'Inform, Don't Adapt' approach for relaxed performances. This means the show is not changed or otherwise sensory adapted.

The **Effect Timeline** at the end of this document is a list of all the moments in the show that we think people may like to know about before the show begins, and when in the show they happen. Having these details will help you, or those you care for to, make a decision about how to best enjoy the show in a way that suits your needs.

## What is a relaxed performance?

**Relaxed performances** are especially suitable for people who may feel anxious about coming to the theatre. This could include, but is not limited to, people on the autistic spectrum, people with dementia, or parents with babes in arms.

At a relaxed performance, you are free to move in and out of your seat as much as you need to, and our Café Bar area is available as a breakout space during the performance.

If you'd like to come to a relaxed performance, you can find the upcoming dates listed on our website. Our theatre staff are always happy to help you if you need assistance.

## How can I ask a question before I visit, or book my tickets?

If you have any questions about your visit, you (or someone who cares for you) can email our friendly team at [boxoffice@dundeerep.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@dundeerep.co.uk), or call us on 01382 223 530 (Wed-Sat, 11am-5pm or the beginning of the evening performance).

You can also get in touch with us this way if you have feedback about this document. We would be glad to hear your comments.

You can also visit us in person at the theatre. Our address is:



Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre  
Tay Square  
Dundee  
DD1 1PB

## Sensory considerations for your visit

In this guide we've used the icons below to let you know what to expect during your visit to the theatre.



**Ear Defenders.** This icon means it might be quite noisy in parts – you may want to have ear defenders here.

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**Sunglasses.** This icon means it can be bright – you may want to have sunglasses or tinted glasses here.

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**Fidget Toy.** This icon means it may be busy in these areas – if you're feeling anxious, perhaps have a fidget toy here.

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**Accessible Toilet.** This icon means there are accessible toilet facilities here.

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**Staff Member.** This icon means a member of staff will be nearby to help you during your visit.

## Access considerations for your visit

Our auditorium and front of house spaces are fully accessible by wheelchair. Accessible seats are limited, so please do speak with our Box Office team if you have concerns about seating when you book tickets.

We have wheelchairs available for use during your visit. It is not necessary to book a wheelchair in advance.

We have accessible toilet facilities on the ground floor, and first floor of the theatre.

We have audio enhancing equipment which can be collected from our Box Office when you arrive at the theatre. We have equipment to suit both those who use a hearing aid, and those who do not. It is not necessary to book this equipment in advance of your visit.

If you require a companion to accompany you during your visit to the theatre, we are often able to provide a free companion ticket. Please contact our Box Office to book this.

## Visual Guide



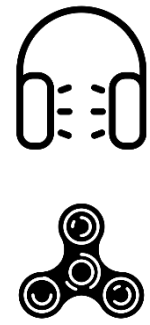
This is where you will come to see the show. The theatre is called Dundee Rep.

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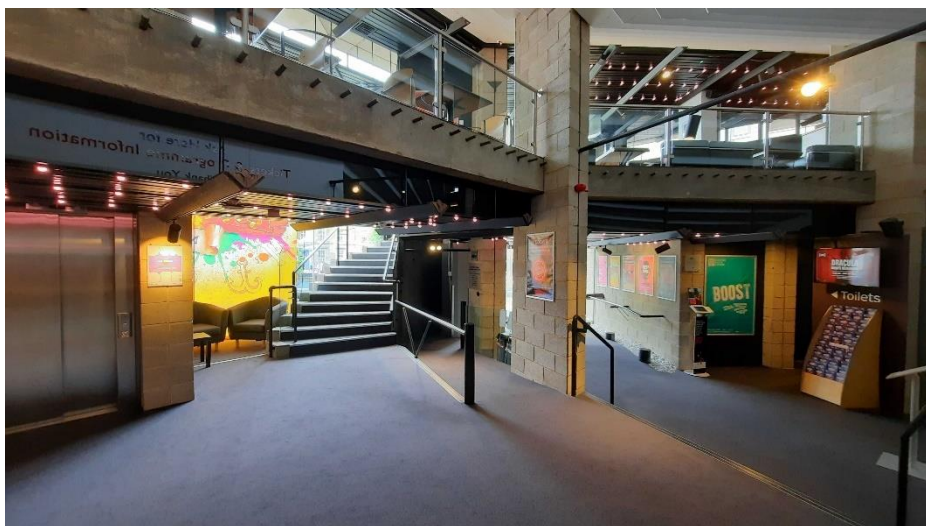
If you have a blue badge, there are two marked disabled parking bays on the main street outside the theatre, South Tay street (pictured above facing north. The bays are outlined in yellow in the picture). All parking on this street is free after 6pm for anyone to use.



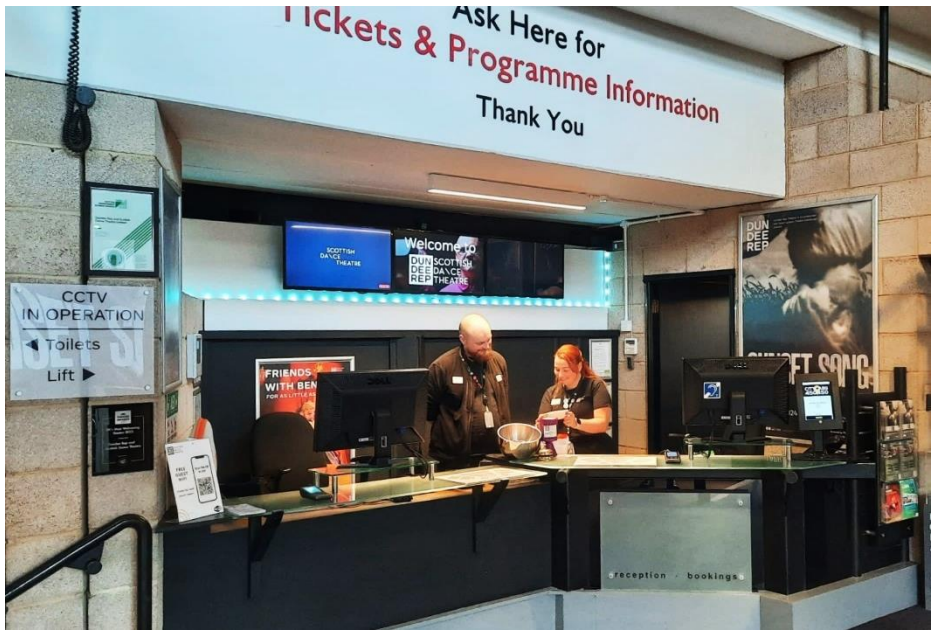


There are two ways to get into Dundee Rep at the front entrance. You can use the revolving door, or push the button with a wheelchair icon on it which will open a sliding door to get in.

When you arrive at the foyer, it may be busy and noisy. You can cover your ears or wear ear defenders if you have some. If you have forgotten to bring any, the theatre has some that you can borrow.

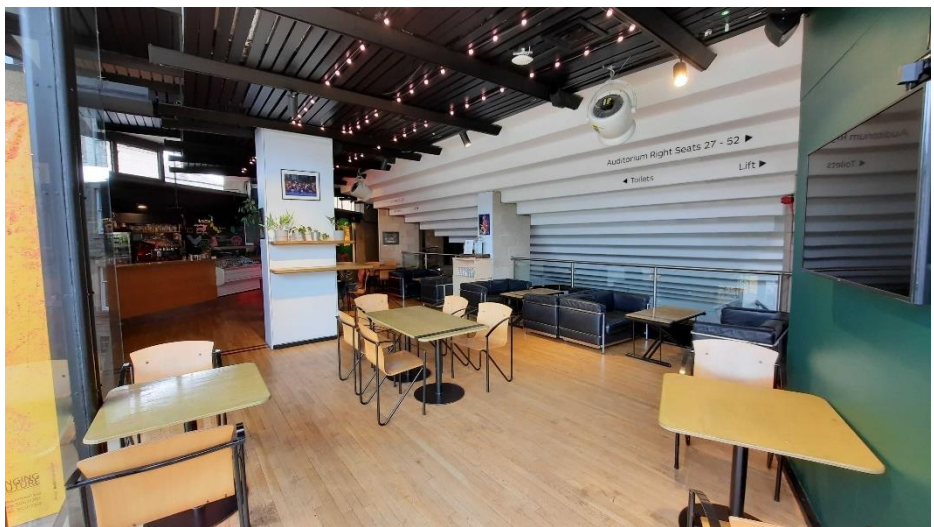


If using stairs is difficult or not possible, there is a ramp and lift to help you up to the auditorium on the first floor. There is an accessible toilet on the ground floor when you come into the venue, and there is also one upstairs in the Café Bar area.



If you have tickets to collect, you will be able to get them from the Box Office. Some people call it the Ticket Office. If you have an e-ticket on your phone you do not have to come to the Box Office, you can go directly to your seats.

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This is the Café Bar area on the first floor. It is next to where your seats are. You can wait out here until you are told your seats are ready. Later, this is area will be used as the break out space. During the show you can come here if you need to come out of your seat and take a break. The television screen will show the stage so you can still watch the show.





When it's time to find your seat, everyone will go into a room called the Auditorium. The letter of your seat is on the end of the row, and the number of your seat is on the front of the chair. Everyone has their own seat. Please be aware that there are not handrails to every seat in the Auditorium. It may start to get busy as everyone starts to find their seats for the show. It may be noisy at this time as everyone is chatting.

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If you need help when you are at Dundee Rep, you can look for staff to help you. Staff wear black uniforms that have a logo like on the front of this guide, and a name badge. They can help show you to your seat and answer your questions.





Photography by Tommy Ga-Ken Wan.



If you are sitting close to the stage, it is important to make sure your hands and belongings are safely away from the stage area. When it is time for the show to start the lights will get darker, but it won't be so dark that you cannot see at all.

You can read the **Effect Timeline** to see what happens in the show that might be surprising, bright, loud or unusual. This will help you to know what to expect.

In the middle of the show there will be a break, and the lights will get brighter again. This is called the interval, and it's a chance to buy an ice cream, get a drink, and/or visit the toilet before the lights dim and the show begins again. There is only one interval during the show and it lasts for approximately 20 minutes.

At the end of the show, people will clap to let everyone on the stage know how much they enjoyed the show. When the lights go back on it will be time to leave. If you want to leave before the end of the show you can.

## The cast

These are the actors who will be performing in *Snake in the Grass*.



Dierdre Davis  
plays **Annabel**



Emily Winter  
plays **Miriam**



Ann Louise Ross  
plays **Alice**

# Snake In The Grass trigger warnings (contains spoilers)

Visiting a theatre performance can be a profound and moving experience, but it can also evoke unexpected emotions or memories that some may find triggering. Alan Ayckbourn's play Snake in the Grass contains some elements that may be triggering or distressing to some audience members. These include:

## **Abuse (Physical and Emotional):**

The play deals with themes of physical and emotional abuse, particularly within a family context. There are references to domestic abuse, including a father who was abusive towards his daughters.

## **Murder and Violence:**

There are explicit discussions and depictions of murder and violence, including a character plotting to kill another and a past murder that significantly impacts the narrative. The play also features a character who is pushed into a well, with the implication of an attempted murder.

## **Mental Health Issues:**

The play explores mental health issues, including manipulation, gaslighting, and the psychological effects of long-term abuse. Characters exhibit signs of severe mental distress.

## **Supernatural Elements and Psychological Horror:**

Snake in the Grass includes supernatural and psychological horror elements, such as ghostly apparitions and unsettling atmospheres. These scenes are designed to create tension and fear, and there are some "jump scare" moments in the production.

## **Death and Grief:**

The play involves themes of death and grief, with characters mourning and dealing with the loss of loved ones. There is a particular focus on unresolved trauma and the lingering effects of death on the living.

## **Sexual Assault (Implied):**

There are moments in the play where sexual assault is implied, particularly in the context of the abusive father figure. These implications are not explicit but may be inferred from the characters' discussions.

## **Addiction:**

The play touches on issues of addiction, including the use of medication to cope with psychological distress.

## **Confinement and Claustrophobia:**

There are scenes involving confinement, such as a character trapped in a well.

If you or someone you know finds themselves in need of support during or after a performance, know that you are not alone. If you feel you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please contact the police on 999.



## Effect Timeline

The Effect Timeline below lists the moments in the show that it might be helpful for you to know about in advance. These moments could be surprising, loud, bright, or unusual, but you'll always be safe during your visit.

We've done our best to make sure the times are correct, but it's good to remember that they are approximate timings.

### Before the show begins

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The set is visible as soon as you enter the auditorium. The play takes place in the garden of the home where Annabel and Miriam grew up. There is an old summer house, a large tree, and the entrance to a tennis court surrounded by a high chain-link fence. On the ground at the centre of a circular patio is what looks like a drain cover.

Throughout the performance, an effect called 'haze' is used. This is a very light smoke effect which make stage lighting easier to see. It isn't real smoke, and it is safe to breath.

As the play begins, the lights in the auditorium will get darker.



Photography by Alastair More.

### Act One (approx. 55 minutes)

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**Begins** The play begins with gentle, piano music. The lights on stage get brighter as Annabel comes onto the stage. She is alone in the garden for a moment, then Alice enters through a gap in the fence.

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6 mins	Alice tells Annabel that Miriam adjusted their father's medication and pushed him down the stairs of their home, killing him.
11 mins	Alice leaves through the gap in the fence. Just as Annabel sighs the words, "oh, Miriam," the chain-link fence rattles as though something has hit it. Miriam appears behind the fence and comes through the tennis court gate. Miriam is very upset and stressed.
19 mins	Annabel and Miriam leave the stage. Gentle piano music plays. The lighting on stage gets darker as day turns to night, and then brighter again as the sun rises. It is the next day. Annabel and Miriam return to the stage, in different clothes.
23 mins	Miriam leaves the stage for a moment to fetch wine and glasses from the house. She returns in a short moment. While Miriam is gone Annabel clutches at her heart, and takes some medication.
28 mins	Miriam leaves the stage. As Annabel inspects the bottle of wine, the chain-link fence rattles as though something has hit it again. It is not clear what could have hit it this time. Miriam returns to the stage.
30 mins	Annabel recalls their father's behaviour when she was a child. She discusses how he struck her repeatedly with tennis balls – an experience which she found painful and distressing.
33 mins	Miriam brings up Annabel's ex-husband, Brad. Although Annabel doesn't want to talk about it, Miriam mentions that Brad used to hit Annabel when they were together. Miriam says that Brad punched Annabel in the face.
37 mins	Alice comes through the gap in the fence quite suddenly, with a greeting of "afternoon!"
41 mins	After a tense discussion, Alice suddenly shouts loudly at Annabel, "no, you look here!" Alice then calls Miriam a "bitch," and Miriam drops her wine glass on the grass. Then the discussion returns to a normal volume.
44 mins	Alice starts to leave, but something is wrong. Her speech is slurred, and she stumbles and staggers, unable to keep her balance. She sits on the steps of the summer house and lays down on her back, her voice trailing off as she falls unconscious. Miriam reveals that she has spiked Alice's wine with their father's sedative medication.

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45 mins While Annabel protests Miriam begins to move Alice, lifting her body off the steps and onto the ground. She convinces Annabel to help, and the two women move Alice onto the patio.

The effort of moving Alice causes Annabel to show signs of feeling unwell again. She clutches at her heart as before, and struggles for breath. She has to stop moving Alice so she can take her medication.

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47 mins Miriam moves the garden furniture and opens the cover of the well. It opens with a loud, rusty creak. Annabel shouts loudly, “what are you doing?” repeatedly as it becomes clear that Miriam intends to drop Alice down the well.

Miriam slides Alice across the patio, balancing her on the edge of the hole. Annabel shouts to Miriam, begging her to think carefully about what she is about to do.

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48 mins Alice begins to regain consciousness. As she does, Miriam shouts “hi-yah!” and pushes Alice down the well.

Annabel begins to cry. Miriam closes the well cover, which creaks again.

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50 mins The lighting on stage gets a little darker as afternoon turns to evening.

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52 mins Annabel tries to open the well cover but can't. She shouts out to Alice.

The chain-link fence rattles once.

The chain-link fence rattles a second time, much louder.

There is a sinister, metallic musical moment as the lights fade out completely for a few seconds, before they come back on. The first act has ended, and it is now the interval.

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## **Act Two (approx. 35 minutes)**

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Begins The second act of the play begins with gentle piano music, as before.

The lighting on stage is darker than act one, as it is nighttime.

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2 mins Miriam opens the well cover. It creaks. She drops Alice's handbag down the well, then closes the cover again with another creak.

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5 mins Miriam opens the well cover again. It creaks. She closes it with a creak.

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9 mins As Miriam recalls a story from her youth, she mentions an older boy groping her breast while she is on a night out.

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10 mins Miriam recalls her father's reaction to her sneaking out. She explains that he punished her by putting her across his knee and lifting her dress. Miriam says she expected to be smacked, but what happened was worse. While not explicitly stated, there is a strong suggestion that Miriam was sexually abused by her father.

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11 mins	Miriam takes Annabel into the tennis court. There is a quiet, sinister moment of music as they stand inside, then a sudden shriek of a bird which frightens Annabel. Both women leave the tennis court.
13 mins	Miriam is on her own. She hangs her oil lamp up by the summer house door. There is a sound like someone breathing, and the wind chime begins to shake and jingle in the tree.  From off-stage Annabel shouts, "shit, bummer it!" as she complains the back door is locked.
15 mins	Annabel cries as she is overwhelmed by everything that has happened so far.
21 mins	Annabel recounts her relationship with her ex-husband, Brad. She explains that her pushed her over during an argument, which was the beginning of his physical abuse.  Annabel mentions that Brad hit her many times during their relationship. She refers to herself as a "pathetic, battered wife."
24 mins	Miriam asks Annabel if she ever enjoyed being hit. Miriam wonders whether being abused was somehow a display of love from their father and Brad.
26 mins	There is a musical ringing sound as the women notice that one of the oil lamps has gone out. Miriam leaves to fetch more oil from the house.  Annabel tries to take the remaining lamp down from the summer house, but can't. There is another musical ring as the second lamp goes out. The lighting becomes darker.
27 mins	Music plays, an eery, spooky tone.  Fog begins to drift over the tennis court.  The chain-link fence rattles.  Annabel hears an unseen man's voice call her name. She believes it is her father's voice.  She enters the tennis court, looking for the source of the voice. The gate slams shut behind her with a loud bang.
28 mins	Suddenly, very bright lights shine behind Annabel in the tennis court. Depending on where you are sitting in the auditorium, this may shine in your direction and dazzle you for a moment.  The unseen voice calls Annabel's name again.  Tennis balls begin to be thrown in Annabel's direction, bouncing off of the fence and hitting her as well.  As Annabel struggles to open the tennis court gate, the well cover begins to open, slowly. The music increases in volume and intensity.

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28mins (cont.)	<p>Alice, in wet and dirty clothes, slowly emerges from the open well. Annabel is terrified to see her as she believed Alice was dead, and the shock causes Annabel to have a heart attack. Clutching at her heart, Annabel slumps down on the wall, unconscious.</p> <p>The music fades away to nothing.</p>
29 mins	<p>Miriam enters holding a cassette player. She and Alice discuss that the supernatural effects have all been a trick to cause Annabel to have a heart attack so that, with Annabel dead, the two of them can inherit the property.</p>
30 mins	<p>Alice closes the well cover, which creaks.</p>
31 mins	<p>Alice leaves the stage to go to the house. Miriam sends her to the basement to turn on the lights, but warns her to watch out as the floor is wet.</p>
32 mins	<p>The sound of electricity is heard.</p> <p>The lights inside and around the summer house, and behind the tennis court flash and flicker.</p> <p>There is a pyrotechnic effect – one of the summer house lights sparks as all the lights go out. This makes a quiet bang, and is bright for a second.</p> <p>Alice has died as a result of the electrocution, but this is not shown on-stage</p>
33 mins	<p>There is sinister, eery music again.</p> <p>The lights flicker, and the wind chime jingles in the tree.</p> <p>The unseen, haunting voice calls out Miriam’s name.</p> <p>Next to the summer house, the rocking chair begins to rock on its own.</p> <p>The unseen voice continues to call out Miriam’s name. She shouts in fear and despair.</p> <p>The lights flash brightly for a few seconds. This may be dazzling for a moment.</p> <p>In a sudden movement, Annabel reaches up towards her sister. It seems she hasn’t died as Miriam and Alice thought.</p> <p>Then the lights go out to complete darkness for a moment.</p>
35 mins	<p>The lights will get brighter again. The play has now ended, and the performers will take their bows. The audience will applaud.</p>

Thank you for coming to see *Snake in the Grass*. We hope you enjoyed the show.





## **Support links**

For support and resources on the topics covered in this performance, please scan the QR code.