

# Happy Place - Pre-show Notes

## Introduction

Welcome to this audio description introduction to Happy Place, to be performed at the Gateway Theatre on the 6th of May at 3pm. Roger Jenkins and Seren Chen will be providing the audio description service. The pre-show Touch Tour, which we strongly recommend, is at 1.45pm.

## What is Happy Place about?

As the deejay on a Singapore morning radio show - 'The Happy Place on One One Oh Point Oh' - interviews an Instagram political poet, the chirpy on-air conversation soon spirals into a heated and emotional debate on their significance and place in society. But as the verbal sparring grows increasingly brutal, there are questions that they refuse to even approach: Where is the deejay's absent partner?

What horrifying cataclysm is happening in the outside world that listeners are frantically calling in about? And what impact can these two supposed 'influencers' possibly have on the end of the world?

## Production Credits

Happy Place features three actors - Rebekah Sangeetha Dorai, Jamil Schulze, and Jo Tan. Jo Tan is also the playwright and producer. The other key members of the production team are as follows:

The director-dramaturg is Chong Tze Chien. The production stage manager, Marilyn Chew, and the assistant stage manager is Phil Pang. The set designer is Eucien Chia, and his associate set designer is Grace Lin. Lighting designer, Faith Liu Yong Huay, and sound designer, Jing Ng.

Do note that the play runs approximately 70 minutes without interval.

## Cast, Characters, and Costumes

Estee is played by Rebekah Sangeetha Dorai. Estee is a 30-something Singaporean with a solid stocky build and a warm thoughtful face. Dressed in a head-to-toe white hazmat suit at the start, she soon unzips it and steps out. She wears a bright orange peasant style loose blouse with a shoulder yoke. It has puffy sleeves that are cinched just above the elbow. Her blouse is

tucked into - and billows over - the waist of her light blue jeans which form a vibrant contrast to her blouse. Soft tan lace-up shoes complete her outfit.

Estee is a popular instagram poet who focuses on socio-political issues. She used to be an advertising executive before an incident changed her life. She is one year older than Val and was part of the same debate club in KJC.

Val is played by Jo Tan. Val is a slight, slender woman a year younger than Estee, who has an energy similar to a firecracker, sparking vocally, gesticulating animatedly. Val is a crowd-favourite deejay on the morning radio show, The Happy Place on One One Oh point Oh. She was Estee's junior in KJC, and won the best speaker award in their school debate club. Val has two very different voices - one on air which is exaggerated, energetic and twanged fake-American, which she peppers with a repertoire of laughs chosen for happy effect. Off mic, Val oscillates between her confident self as an experienced radio presenter and her uncertainty as she reconnects with her (possibly more talented?) junior college buddy. Organised and efficient, she doesn't handle stress well!

Val also wears a hazmat suit right at the start, but quickly discards it, revealing her studio clothes - a tight-fitting, sand-yellow spaghetti-strapped crop tank with a low back, and a pair of wide-legged off-white trousers that sit above her ankles, paired with stylish white sneakers.

Poe is the co-anchor on the morning radio show, The Happy Place on One One Oh point Oh. He is described by Val as a party animal, and as someone who says whatever comes to his head even if it is not politically correct. Underneath his hazmat suit, Poe wears a white denim jacket over a short-sleeved light blue tee-shirt and khaki cargo pants. The jacket is eventually shed. He's missing in action at the start of the play so when he will show up is anyone's guess.

## Set and Setting

The play takes place primarily in a recording studio of a radio station. The central feature of the set is a light brown wooden table standing at bar height. It is shaped like a long scalene triangle, which has three sides of all different lengths, and each point is rounded. Its longest edge is upstage while the opposite point faces us. Two tabletop microphone stands sit along the long far edge, each holding a wireless dynamic mic, while a clamp-style mic stand holding a condenser mic is mounted on the right side of the table, on one of the edges facing us. A tall black stool sits in front of each mic - three mics and three stools, ready for the two radio hosts and a guest. Supplies such as stationery, brightly-coloured plastic mugs, a MacBook, lime green headphones, and a tissue box are strewn across the table. Above it hangs a lit sign reading "on air".

Behind the table, the curved boundary of the room is suggested by low blue walls that extend only up to mid-thigh, punctuated by a brown door frame to the left and a brown slatted window to the right. Behind these low walls is a tall wire-mesh wall stretched over a frame of scaffolding.

Depending on the lighting, the space behind the mesh may be obscured or revealed. Three platforms behind the mesh lift the scene behind up different heights - short mid-calf-height platforms on the left and right, and a taller, mid-thigh-height platform in the centre. Even though we are zoomed into this conversation happening between two old classmates in this recording studio, there is still a wide world beyond, from where people listen to the radio show and sometimes call in. These platformed spaces give us a glimpse into what is happening outside.

## Access Information

Gateway Theatre aims to provide an excellent experience and service for all patrons who may require additional support to access our venue and enjoy our events.

Gateway Theatre is located at 3615 Jalan Bukit Merah, Singapore 159461. The Black Box, where this play will be performed, can be accessed from the 7th floor of the building.

While Gateway Theatre itself has no carpark, there are HDB carparks available surrounding the building.

For public transport options, the nearest bus stops are 10091, Bukit Merah Town Centre; 10099, Opposite Bukit Merah Town Centre; and 10009, Bukit Merah Bus Interchange, serving a variety of buses.

The nearest MRT station is Redhill, on the East-West line, an 11-minute walk away.

If you are using a ridesharing service such as Grab or Gojek, do note that Gateway Theatre's registered drop-off point is on the opposite side of the building from the audience lifts. To be dropped off or picked up in front of the lifts, you may set the location as 163 Bukit Merah Central.

The touch tour will commence at 1.45pm, an hour and fifteen minutes before the 3pm show. An audio device with disposable ear pieces will be provided. While the Black Box Front of House is located at The Gallery on level 7, please take a lift to level 8. We will begin the tour from directly outside the level 8 lifts.

Gateway Theatre is assistance dog-friendly. It is also accessible for wheelchair use, with step-free access to the box office, toilets and performance spaces from the street. There is also lift access and accessible toilets on all floors.

If you have any other queries regarding access information, please contact us at 6424 9408.

We look forward to welcoming you and hope you have a wonderful time with us.