

- *Song of First Desire* was written by Andrew Bovell and was first produced by Octubre Productions, Madrid Spain in 2023. This production opened at Belvoir St Theatre on 19 February, 2025.
- The play is set in Spain and unfolds across two time periods: 1968, in the aftermath of the Civil War under Franco, and the present day, in a democratic Spain still grappling with the legacy of Franco's dictatorship.
- The production features four actors—Kerry Fox, Borja Maestre, Jorge Muriel, and Sarah Peirse—each portraying two characters, one from 1968 and one from the present.
- Throughout the production, some scenes transition non-naturalistically, seamlessly blending into the next. The two time periods are indicated by projections on the wall – THEN and NOW.
- This production includes frequent use of coarse language and sexual references.
- The word c*nt is spoken once in the production in the context of Luis saying to his twin sister Julia: “who has a c*nt for a sister.”
- *Song of First Desire* explores themes of war, collective memory, violence, intergenerational trauma, drug use, and sexual abuse. In bringing these themes to life, the production contains characters engaging in intense verbal and physical conflict.
- In the opening scene of the play, Luis reveals to his sister that he has been diagnosed with prostate cancer. In response, his sister antagonistically remarks, “Anything to get someone to stick his finger up your arse.”
- Upon meeting Alejandro, Julia jokingly asks him for cocaine, saying, “You don’t have any, do you? In your suitcase? Just a line or two.”
- In 1968, Carmen recounts the death of her father and other men in the town during the Civil War. She vividly describes the appalling treatment of their bodies, left to “lie in the street, all day in the sun, with the dogs licking up the blood.” She goes on to recall how, after seeing the extent of her father’s injuries, her mother “cupped his balls in her hand and kissed his cock instead.”
- In one scene, twins Julia and Luis both try to seduce Alejandro by dancing with him. After Alejandro insults Julia by saying, “You make love like a whore,” she retorts, “And you are a homosexual with a small dick and a loose arsehole, so you’re useless as either a top or a bottom.”
- In a conversation with Julia, Alejandro admits that when he was at university, he raped a girl who “only wanted to go so far.” He reveals this information with regret and shame.
- In one scene, Luis makes unwanted sexual advances toward Alejandro. This scene includes full-frontal male nudity. Angry at being rejected, Luis “*pushes [him] back against the wall [and] seeks to touch him*” without consent. He then threatens to blackmail Alejandro with false accusations of theft and deportation, exploiting racial stereotypes about Colombian immigrants.
- Luis refers to the death of Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, who was executed by Franco's forces and known for his homosexuality. Luis says, “This country murdered a poet...Not for the beauty or power of his words. But because he was a faggot. And they shot him in his anus to make their point.” Some students may find the imagery and homophobic content upsetting.
- **SPOILER:** At the climax of the play, Carlos, Camelia/Ana’s adopted father, admits to sexually abusing her. In his defence, he says, “She wasn’t my blood. It’s not so unnatural” to which Carmen rebuts, “She called you father.” It is then revealed that Camelia, now an adult, is pregnant with his child. In anger, Carmen and Margarita stab him to death.
- It is implied that Julia suffered sexual abuse as a child and that her mother, Camelia, was aware of the abuse but did nothing to stop it.