

My individual performance is a condensed adaptation of Dario Fo's 'Can't Pay, Won't Pay' that was reimagined by Sydney Theatre Company in their recent production of 'No Pay? No Way!'. I aimed to workshop the play into a short monologue while trying to maintain the integrity of the play.

Fo always included political undertones in his plays, so in order to stay true to his form I included a moment that incorporated objects that symbolise the current socio-political climate of COVID-19; toilet paper and hand sanitizer. He aimed to explore the lives of characters in near poverty, willing to steal just so they won't starve, somehow making audiences feel deeply compassionate towards the characters through comedy.

When transforming the first scene into a monologue, I found it really challenging to make it flow as it comes from a dialogue and I had to integrate the other character's prompts and reactions in a way that made the scene make sense. I also toyed a lot with what time to set the piece in. I tried completely contemporising it and making my character a stereotypical Australian, as well as keeping completely to the original time and setting it in Italy. I ended up keeping the more traditional Italian-style costume but added contemporary references.

I completed exercises like hotseat and the Stanislavski method to really understand my character and her decision making. To display her journey more, I focused on her mentality as well as her physicality. I wanted these two factors to be main contributors in my portrayal of Antonia as they allow insight into the characters motives. I think the use of props like the breadstick and the can of dog food really adds to the comedy of her storytelling and involves the audience more. The props add to the pure farce moments in the piece, allowing the more natural/subtle comedy to show through when there are no props.