



VICTIMS:  
Thomas  
Conroy and  
Sarah Ogden  
in *Moth*.

## The darkness of being

**T**EENS on the edge of society will be put under the microscope in the latest production to come to the Brisbane Powerhouse.

*Moth* deals with two teenagers who are the "lowest on the social ladder" and the way their lives spiral out of control, says actor Sarah Ogden.

"They are the kids who are so annoying and rubbish to be around that even the teachers pick on them," Ogden says.

"More out of necessity than anything they have formed a bond."

They are Sebastian, who is obsessed with anime and death, and Claryssa, an "emo Wiccan".

Both are victims of bullying and both stand on the edge of something very dark.

"Their relationship is very tense and snarky and nasty," Ogden says. "They treat each other how they are treated by everyone else."

But when a nasty incident of bullying occurs, their friendship is put under strain and they no longer have each other to lean

Teens pushed to the edge need each other to survive, writes **Nathanael Cooper**

on. That leads to disastrous consequences.

"Once they don't have each other to fall back on, everything goes awry," Ogden says.

"Sebastian has a psychotic episode and he doesn't have Claryssa's balancing influence and he ends up in quite a lot of trouble."

While *Moth* sounds, and is, quite dark, Ogden says there is plenty of humour and light to give the play added depth and wider appeal.

"It is very dark but also very funny," she says. "These annoying characters are quite hilarious at the beginning."

Ogden is joined on stage by Thomas Conroy as Sebastian and between them they play a variety of different roles but not exactly as you would expect.

"We play the only two characters on stage but they play all the characters in the story," she says.

"You get to see them doing

impressions of the teachers, their parents, the kids that bully them. They even do impressions of each other."

That gives Ogden and Conroy the opportunity to demonstrate their acting skills, but it is playing their main roles – two 15-year-olds – that offers the biggest challenge.

"It is tricky to do it in a way that isn't condescending or stereotypical," Ogden says.

"It's easy when playing a character who isn't your age to jump in with a big characterisation who isn't a person. The challenge is to make it seem real and for it to come from a real place."

Ogden admits she draws on her own youthful experiences to help flesh out the role.

In high school, like many teenagers, she found herself on the fringes of popularity and had to learn how to survive.

"There weren't emos when I was 15 but there were goths and

quite a few of my friends would identify themselves as goths," she says.

"I used to dress up in the pale make-up and the long dark hair and the corsets and velvet skirts for parties."

"There were also drama freaks, and that was the group I was in."

The VCA graduate has a string of impressive acting credits to her name and she makes her second turn in *Moth* after having enjoyed a hugely successful Melbourne season.

"One of the reasons we had to remount it was Malthouse Theatre subscribers sold it out before it opened," Ogden says.

That bodes well for Brisbane audiences, who have a chance to see the show for the first time when it opens at the Powerhouse tomorrow.

For tickets and information, see [brisbanepowerhouse.org](http://brisbanepowerhouse.org) or phone 3358 8600.