

Dark web: Daniel Sloss mines black humour for his comedy

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Daniel Sloss isn't afraid of being controversial, offensive or crude.

When we meet for our interview, it was he who began with a question.

The line of questioning is probably not fit for print, (although you can read about it on twitter if you are intrigued) but it does really prepare one for the kind of comedian and the kind of person he is.

The 27-year-old Scot is back for his third appearance at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival to follow up from his acclaimed appearance last year where his show *So?* alternated between revelling in the relationships that had broken up in the wake of his performance and riffing on the death of his sister.

It wasn't an easy watch, but it was hilarious and earned him rave reviews.

This year in *Now* he will riff on some fairly dark material again.

"I guarantee I will get some complaints this year, I am genuinely shocked I haven't received complaints already," he says.

"The end of my show, the story, will not pleasantly resonate with some people."



'You don't get to tell me how I grieve': Sloss says people shouldn't take offence at his act, but he expects some will.

If you are planning on seeing Sloss in his upcoming run in Melbourne or Sydney, there are some spoilers ahead so avert your eyes now.

Sloss' new show is about whether or not he is a sociopath and in the exploration of that accusation he unpacks the things that have or haven't happened to him that may have made him a sociopath.

Where he lands is the fact he was groomed online by a paedophile when he was 13 years old.

"I didn't realise I had been groomed until this police officer is at my door and she has a thick stack of papers with there's every conversation I had ever had with this guy," he explains.

“And she is reading out some of the conversations and I was like ‘Jesus, I was absolutely being f---ing groomed’.”

To most people online grooming would not be the first place to draw jokes from.

For Sloss, the opposite is true.

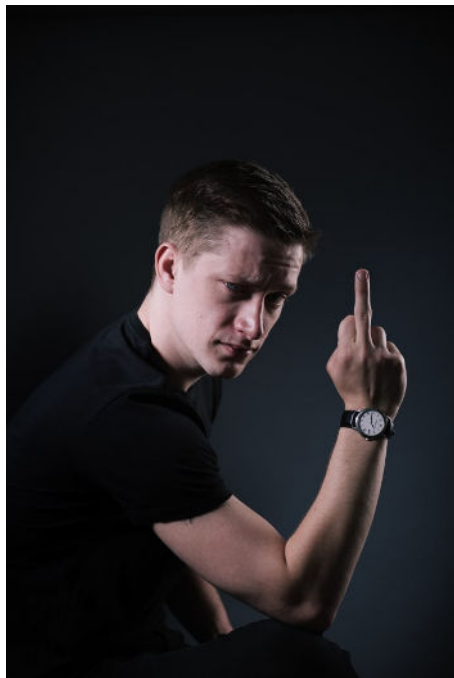
“The best way to make an uncomfortable situation more comfortable is to make jokes about it,” he says. “It’s not belittling the thing it’s just releasing the tension. Allowing the air out a bit.”

In Sloss' mind, it is his story, his experience and his way of dealing with it and he defies anyone to be offended.

It was the same approach he took when he used the death of his sister, who had cerebral palsy, as the subject of comedy.

“You don’t get to tell me how I grieve and you don’t get to tell me how I talk about the people I love,” he says.

“I will say horrific things about myself and the people I love, but if you get offended by that you are putting yourself in a story you were not invited to be in, I allowed you to listen to it.”



Daniel Sloss is happy to intentionally offend

Sloss' justification of his dark comedy sounds arrogant, and he freely describes himself as the most arrogant man on the planet, so it is surprising that he is at pains to ensure he doesn't accidentally offend someone.

“The worst thing that could happen is if I offended someone by accident,” he says.

“If I offend someone on purpose that is fantastic. If you come to my show and you are Catholic and you come away offended, that is great, tweet me about it, I love to hear that.

“With the grooming stuff, the thing I never want to do is accidentally offend someone. To accidentally upset someone, which is based on the language you use, I don't enjoy that.

“I would hate myself. I wouldn't need the outrage brigade, I would do it to myself.

But so far, he has managed to get through about 150 performances without being told he has offended anyone. He says he has only received positive feedback from victims.

After a couple of warm-up performances *Now* officially premieres on Saturday night at ACMI in Melbourne before he heads north for a performance at the Enmore Theatre in Sydney.

For tickets and information visit danielsloss.com