

# BRENDAN MCLEOD

## BRAIN



### ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Hilarious and heartbreaking, *Brain* is a monologue about consciousness, mental illness, and friendship from award-winning novelist and former Canadian poetry SLAM champion Brendan McLeod. *Brain* maps Brendan's experiences with obsessive compulsive disorder – from a teenager struggling to understand his obsessions to an adult battling psychosis. A nuanced journey through the nature of thought, *Brain* is an upbeat, intense comedy about the miracle of the mind.

As awareness around mental illness rises, nuance inevitably declines. It's discussed in corporate sponsored twitter conversations, linked to mass shootings, and re-enacted, broadly, in Hollywood movies. While sometimes useful in lessening the stigma around it, these discussions often obscure understanding of how mental illnesses work and the effects they have. *Brain* is one person's personal mental illness procedural. An honest, detailed journey through obsessive compulsive disorder that explores the humour, horror, and beauty of being unable to understand one's own mind.

*Brain* premiered in BC in the summer of 2015 winning multiple awards at various theatre festivals and generating further bookings from soft seat theatres. *Brain* is a dynamic one person show that tackles important social and personal issues in a manner that is suitable for all ages 15 and up and will be of interest to innovative presenters interested in a vivid literary performance that can be combined with educational and community outreach.



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# Brendan McLeod

## *Bio*

Brendan McLeod is a Toronto based writer, spoken word artist, theatre artist, and musician. He's the author of one novel, *The Convictions of Leonard McKinley*, a one woman play, *The Big Oops*, three monologues — the most recent of which is his award-winning piece on consciousness *Brain*, and a collaborative spoken word/music show with classical pianist Sarah Hagen, *Exultation*. He is the founder of The Fugitives, a folk group signed to Borealis Records, that tours internationally and have been nominated for multiple Canadian Folk Music and Western Canadian Music Awards, including Best Songwriter, Best Roots Group, and Best Vocal Group. He is a former Canadian SLAM poetry champion and World SLAM runner-up. He was the 2012 Poet of Honor at the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word and the 2015 Poet of Honour at the Victoria Spoken Word Festival. He's taught spoken word at Langara College, and is an active arts educator with a variety of organizations, including: Wordplay, Prologue, and the Vancouver Biennale. He has an MA in Philosophy from the University of Waterloo.

### AWARDS

- ◆ Best Vocal Group, Canadian Folk Music awards, 2018 (Nominee)
- ◆ Best Songwriter, Western Canada Music Awards, 2018 (Nominee)
- ◆ K.M. Hunter Arts Award finalist, 2017.
- ◆ K.M. Hunter Arts Award finalist, 2016
- ◆ Pick of the Fringe winner, Critics Choice Award (nominee), Vancouver Fringe Festival, 2015.
- ◆ Georgia Straight Critic's Choice, Vancouver Fringe Festival, 2015 (nominee).
- ◆ Favourite Male Performer, Victoria Fringe Festival, 2015.
- ◆ Best Solo Show, Best Overall Show, Victoria Fringe Festival, 2015 (nominee).
- ◆ Poet of Honour, Victoria Festival of Spoken Word, 2015.
- ◆ Best Vocal Group, Canadian Folk Music Awards, 2014 (nominee with The Fugitives).
- ◆ Best Roots album (duo or group), Western Canadian Music Award, 2014 (nominee with The Fugitives).
- ◆ Canada Council grant for Spoken Word and Storytelling, 2014
- ◆ Poet of Honour, Canadian Festival of Spoken Word, 2012
- ◆ Canada Writes (Shortlist), Creative Non-fiction, 2012.

A more comprehensive bio and CV can be found at <https://www.brendanmcleod.ca/bio>



Please note: *Brain* is a monologue that runs slightly less than one hour. For engagers wishing to present a full-length evening with intermission, *Brain* can be presented as Act I and Brendan will perform other material and songs in Act II. Such an evening should be billed as *Brain and Other Stories*.

# Brain — Technical Requirements

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## Masking

- Standard existing black masking
- No special hangs required

## Lighting

- General warm wash
- Area lighting centre stage

## Sound

- If audience is 300-plus a body mic may be required

## Set-up

- Load-in & Set-up: 15 minutes

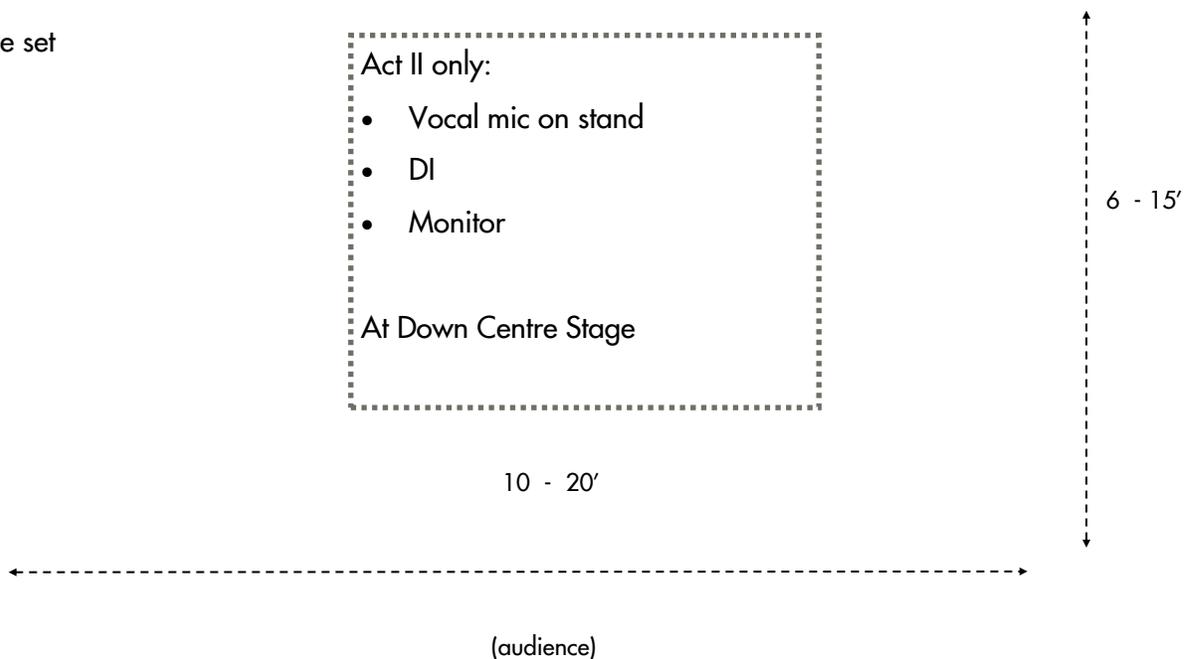
## Crew

- One (1) Light & Sound operator

If two acts are being presented as *Brain and Other Stories*, then a vocal mic, DI, and monitor will be required for the second act.

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Stage set



# BRENDAN MCLEOD

## MEDIA QUOTES

### For *Brain*

"What theatre is all about... McLeod is so smart, his rapid fire delivery so clean and confident, his wit so casual, copious, and reassuring." – *The Georgia Straight*

"An intensely personal, tightly edited, smartly comedic hour-long monologue...Taking a frank, often funny look at mental illness, McLeod busts some big taboos (and) offers a larger philosophical and scientific inquiry into the mystery and miracle of consciousness." – *Winnipeg Free Press*

"This show is the full package. It's soulful, heartfelt theatre that is moving and challenging, skillfully crafted and entertaining." – *Plank Magazine*

### For other performances:

"Canada's top SLAM spieler" – *CBC*

"This poet is an ambitious performer" – *Edmonton Sun, Edmonton*

"McLeod's observational sentiment is spot on" – *Uptown Magazine, Winnipeg*

"One of the most intelligent and dynamic performance poets on the globe." – Chair, *Spoken Word Canada*

"Brendan McLeod is one of the best performers I have ever seen – powerful, moving, funny – absolutely brilliant!"  
Director, *Off the Shelf Festival of Writing and Reading*, Sheffield, UK



[www.brendanmcleod.ca/](http://www.brendanmcleod.ca/)