



The Play Bureau Newsletter

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Firstly, thank you for your patience over the past three months as I have been away due to unforeseen circumstances.

Sandra and Anne have filled the void and we are now up to date, I think.

We will be closing for a few weeks on December 20th and officially opening on January 14th. Mail will be cleared, and email checked sporadically.

From all of us here, have a wonderful festive season and a healthy and prosperous New Year

Helen

Season's Greetings...



What's New?

HOT OFF THE PRESS!!

The Verdict

Drama

By Barry Reed adapted by Margaret May Hobbs
9 M 5 F

Frank Galvin is a washed-up veteran lawyer and an alcoholic, now reduced to ambulance-chasing cases. He is presented with one last chance to redeem himself when he is given an open-and-shut medical malpractice case that no one thinks he can win. Up against the unforgiving Boston medical establishment, he courageously refuses an out-of-court settlement, believing it is negligence that has condemned a young mother to life in a coma and not simply an unfortunate accident. Smelling a cover-up, he instead takes the case and the entire legal system to court.

Iris

Drama

by Alison Carr

1M 2 F

Julie and Ruby are sisters coming to terms with the death of formidable matriarch Iris who still manages to control their lives from beyond the grave. On the night of the funeral, Julie gets off with Gerry, the crime scene cleaner. Maybe that'll help. It doesn't.

When their mother's unusual bequest unearths a story that leaves some indelible marks, something more than a deep clean is needed



The Clean House

by Sarah Ruhl

Comedy

1 M 4 F

After its acclaimed run at Yale Repertory Theatre, this extraordinary play by an exciting voice in the American drama was done to equal acclaim at several major theatres coast to coast before winding up Off-Broadway at Lincoln Centre, where it had an extended run. The play takes place in what the author describes as "metaphysical Connecticut," mostly in the home of a married couple who are both doctors. They have hired a housekeeper named Matilde, an aspiring comedian from Brazil who's more interested in coming up with the perfect joke than in house-cleaning. Lane, the lady of the house, has an eccentric sister named Virginia who's just nuts about house-cleaning. She and Matilde become fast friends, and Virginia takes over the cleaning while Matilde works on her jokes. Trouble comes when Lane's husband Charles reveals that he has found his soul mate, or "bashert" in a cancer patient named Anna, on whom he has operated. The actors who play Charles and Anna also play Matilde's parents in a series of dream-like memories, as we learn the story about how they literally killed each other with laughter, giving new meaning to the phrase, "I almost died laughing." This theatrical and wildly funny play is a whimsical and poignant look at class, comedy and the true nature of love.

Cry It Out

by Molly Smith Metzler

Comedy

1 M 3 F

Four months ago, Jessie was a corporate lawyer with a glamorous Manhattan life. Today, she is in dirty yoga pants, covered in breast milk, trying to comfort a screaming newborn. Isolated in a sleepy Long Island suburb while her commuter husband works long hours, Jessie is desperate to talk to anyone besides Food Network. So when she spies a fellow new mom and neighbour, Lina, at the local Stop & Shop, she vaults over the cantaloupe to introduce herself. Happy to have found each other, the two moms agree to meet for coffee during naptime in the sweet spot behind their adjoining yards where both their baby monitors get reception, and a fast friendship is born. Jessie and Lina may be from vastly different financial backgrounds—Jessie is Ivy-educated and of the manor born; Lina has a night-school nursing degree and terrible credit—but they have one huge thing in common: they've been cracked open by the love they feel for their newborns. One coffee quickly becomes a daily coffee, as Jessie and Lina laugh through the highs and lows of motherhood. But their intimacy is punctured when a stranger who lives in the mansion up on the cliff appears in the yard, asking if they would include his wife, a new mom who is having "a hard time," in their coffee klatch. Reluctantly, the duo tries to become a trio, but with very mixed—and surprising—results. After all, this is a town where the haves and the have-nots live in very close company; up on the cliff is Sands Point, one of the most expensive Great Gatsby-esque neighbourhoods in the whole country. How could that woman possibly be having a "hard time"? A comedy with dark edges, *Cry it Out* takes an honest look at the absurdities of being home with a baby, the power of female friendship, the dilemma of going back to work, and the effect class has on parenthood in America.

Blokes What I Have Known

By Kate Moira Spencer

Comedy

2 F

Marie-Claire is a French barmaid at the small but intimate lounge bar of The Pines Hotel near Bristol Airport, England. Marie-Claire takes pride in her surroundings as she dusts, cleans and prepares to welcome clientele.

In walks the rather over-the-top Sue, a mature woman who soon demonstrates that she has experienced a colourful life. Settling down to enjoy more than a few large gin and tonics, Sue awaits the arrival of her latest squeeze. They are off to Greece to spend the weekend together. As Sue starts drinking, her enthusiasm increases, and the stories soon emerge of the unsuspecting blokes and accompanying disasters that have littered her love life. Marie-Claire is the interested, appalled, shocked and envious bystander to Sue's adventurous male escapades.



Make Time For Love

Drama

By Raymond Hopkins

2 M 7 F

Brian Hardisty is a pillar of society and well respected in the local community. For her part, Julie, his wife enjoys the status their lifestyle brings. However, all is not as it seems in this idyllic family. Brian feels trapped in their loveless marriage. He also resents the endless civic commitments he has taken on. Completely out of character for this stable, upright citizen he decides to make a clean break from everything. He secretly starts planning to leave the marital home and travel round the world alone. Unbeknown to Brian, a local television company has organised an award ceremony in recognition of his outstanding work in the community. By a twist of fate, the presentation broadcast is due to go out live on the same day that Brian disappears to begin his travels.

Something To Say

Dark Comedy

By Richard Everett

2 M 2 F

Maddie has something important to confess to her husband David, but he is not in the mood to listen. Maddie's desperate attempts to get his attention initially fail and when she finally gets through to him and makes her confession, David's reaction is both unexpected and extreme. It is not what Maddie had anticipated or hoped for and as David's response becomes increasingly more bizarre, what unfolds is an evening that neither of them had expected.

This darkly comedic and beautifully observed study of infidelity probes a marriage in crisis with touching insight and wit.

The Irish Curse

Irish Comedy

By Martin Casella

5 M

What "The Irish Curse" is – and how it manifests itself – is the raw centrepiece of this wicked, rollicking and very funny new play. From its blistering language to its brutally honest look at sex and body image, The Irish Curse is a revealing portrait of how men, and society, define masculinity. In doing so, it dares to pose the fundamental question that has been on the minds of men since the beginning of time: "Do I measure up to the next guy?" Size matters to a small group of Irish-American men (all professionally successful New Yorkers) who meet every Wednesday night, in a Catholic church basement, at a self-help group for men with small penises. This alleged Irish trait is the focus of their weekly sessions, as they all feel this "shortcoming" has ruined their lives. One evening, when a twenty-something blue-collar guy joins the group, he challenges everything the other men think about "the Irish Curse" ...tackling their obsession with body image and unmasking the comical and truthful questions of identity, masculinity, sex and relationships that men must face every day in the world.

Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em

Comedy

By Guy Unsworth/Raymond Allen (published only at present)

4 M 2 F

A sparkling farce, hugely enjoyable as laugh-out-loud entertainment. Unsworth's pacey script is packed full of cracking jokes and wordplay. Some Mother's Do 'Ave 'Em can be enjoyed across the generations - this is a farce with a heart and Unsworth's revival is a welcome comeback for Frank Spencer. This adaptation of the 1970's sitcom stays true to the original while delivering a fresh farce that's entirely of its own.

Hangmen

Drama

By Martin McDonagh

12 M 2 F

In his small pub in Oldham, Harry is something of a local celebrity. But what's the second-best hangman in England to do on the day they've abolished hanging? Amongst the cub reporters and sycophantic pub regulars, dying to hear Harry's reaction to the news, a peculiar stranger lurks, with a very different motive for his visit.

Don't worry. I may have my quirks but I'm not an animal. Or am I? One for the courts to discuss.

Strong Language



Most Popular Plays this Year for Play Bureau: Classics Prevail

1. Our Town – Thornton Wilder
2. Noises Off by Michael Frayn
3. The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe by C S Lewis
4. James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl
5. The Real Inspector Hound by Tom Stoppard
6. Radium Girls by D.W Gregory
7. 'Allo 'Allo by Jeremy Lloyd / David Croft
8. Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose

Most Popular Authors Produced in NZ 2018 at Play Bureau

1. Roald Dahl
2. Timberlake Wertenbaker
3. Thornton Wilder
4. Agatha Christie
5. Tom Stoppard
6. Tim Kelly
7. David Wood
8. Michael Frayn
9. John Godber
10. David Tristram

2018 New Plays – Play Bureau Picks

Jail House Frocks by Devon Williamson

The Revlon Girl by Neil Anthony Docking

A Bunch of Amateurs by Nick Newman

All the best for your 2019 productions.

We look forward to hearing from you in the New Year