



## Happy Belated New Year!

The year has started with a hiss and a roar and we look forward to another year of Drama.

For all the people waiting to read Whisky Galore, our apologies for the wait as a package from the UK went AWOL and was delivered to the wrong city, and that person has decided to keep the contents. We are slowly making our way through the list with the one reading copy we have. If we have missed you please let us know.

Over the past few months we have been doing a stocktake and update. For the reading groups we are adding the plays we have reading sets for and you can access this list in our catalogue on the web site. You need to be in advanced search. Full length plays are nearly finished and then we will be adding in the 1 acts. It is a slow process but will be complete within a few months.

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Warm Regards Helen

# The Play Bureau Newsletter

## February 2020

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Welcome to 2020.

Many groups are well into their first production for the year!

### New Plays:

**Better Off Dead:** by Alan Ayckbourn Comedy  
4 M 3 F

Irascible author Algy Waterbridge is hard at work on his thirty-third crime novel.

While Algy's wife is getting more forgetful, and his PA frequently oversteps the mark, the constant interruptions come to a head with an unfortunate newspaper interview. As Algy's fictional characters take over, the lines between fiction and reality become blurred.

A comedy of confusion about a grumpy old man who might not be so grumpy after all.

**Native Gardens:** by Karen Zacarias Comedy  
2 M 2 F

Pablo, a high-powered lawyer, and doctoral candidate Tania, his very pregnant wife, are realizing the American dream when they purchase a house next door to community stalwarts Virginia and Frank. But a disagreement over a long-standing fence line soon spirals into an all-out war of taste, class, privilege, and entitlement. The hilarious results guarantee no one comes out smelling like a rose.

**The Gods of Comedy** by Ken Ludwig Comedy  
4 M 3 F

Daphne and Ralph are young classics professors who have just made a discovery that's sure to turn them into academic superstars. But something goes disastrously wrong, and Daphne cries out in a panic, "Save me, gods of ancient Greece!"...and the gods actually appear! The Ivy League will never be the same as a pair of screwball deities encounters the carnal complexity of college co-eds, campus capers, and conspicuous consumption.

**The Libertine** by Stephen Jeffreys Comedy  
8 M 5 F

This 'intriguing new comedy of sexual manners' (Evening Standard), is based on the life of Rochester, the famous Restoration poet and rake, 'bubbles and fizzes like champagne... and the dialogue drips with wonderful witticisms'



## The Convict's Opera by Stephen Jeffreys

Play With Music

6 M 4 F

Stephen Jeffreys' The Convict's Opera reimagines the world's first ever musical, The Beggar's Opera, as a performance on board a creaking convict ship bound for Australia.

To pass the time on their journey to Australia, the convicts put on John Gay's musical satire, The Beggar's Opera, introducing us to treacherous highwayman MacHeath and sweet Polly Peachum as they juggle love and deceit in the dirty underbelly of eighteenth-century London. It's a world the convicts have left far behind, and will probably never see again.

## Bull In A China Shop by C B Gilford

Comedy Mystery

5 M 7 F

When a housefull of sweet little old ladies discover that a handsome bachelor lives across the street, they are delighted. When they learn that he is none other than Detective Dennis O'Finn, of Homicide, they are faced with the problem of how to attract his attention. The answer is simplicity itself: a nice, genteel homicide with a cup of tea as the murder weapon. When a brash young woman reporter begins to suspect the truth, she becomes the next target. O'Finn is terribly embarrassed when at last he discovers that he himself is the motive for these madcap goings-on, and, in desperation, manages to solve the case. But the dear old ladies are too fond of him and in the end they turn the tables on him! First a short story in 'Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine,' later a success on 'Alfred Hitchcock Presents,' and now a stage veteran of hundreds of performances.

## Death By Chocolate by Paul Freed

Farce / Mystery/Thriller

6 M 6F

Members of the newly renovated Meadowbrook Health Resort are dropping like flies, including famed chef Edith Chiles! On the eve of the grand re-opening, this is not the best advertisement. It's up to John Stone, the manager, to find the cause and the murderer. Delightfully sarcastic and cynical, Stone finds himself teaming up with Ed Parlor, mystery writer and amateur sleuth, in a wacky race against time. The clues point to a sinister box of chocolates, and the suspects include all the outlandish characters working for the resort. Could it be Lady Riverdale, owner of the resort and a woman with dark secrets? Or Ralph Deadwood, gym instructor and all around cad? Dick Simmering, the aerobics instructor? Anne, the panic-stricken nurse? Or could it be Sweet Pea Meadowbrook, overweight and grieving daughter of the recently deceased founder of the resort? Death by Chocolate combines all the elements of classic murder mysteries with a scathing satire of today's health crazes.

## Rust by Kenny Emson

Drama

1 M 1 F

Nadia and Daniel have a secret. In fact they have quite a few. They've just signed on the dotted line for a studio flat. Under a pseudonym, naturally – Mr and Mrs White. After years of school pick-ups, TV takeaways, and the day-to-day drudgery of married life, this is their chance to wipe the slate clean. But as much as they try and redefine the rules, and themselves, the outside world is closing in. Ultra-contemporary, sexy and funny, Kenny Emson's play Rust pushes the boundaries of trust, love and lust to the limit.

## Emilia By Morgan Lloyd Malcolm

Historical Drama

13 – 29 F

A riotous, witty reclaiming of the life of an exceptional woman – now available for performance by all-female-identifying casts in educational institutions.

Four hundred years ago, Emilia Bassano wanted her voice to be heard. It wasn't. Could she have been the 'Dark Lady' of Shakespeare's sonnets? What of her own poetry? Why was her story erased from history?



In Morgan Lloyd Malcolm's electrifying play, Emilia and her sisters reach out across the centuries with passion, fury, laughter and song. A fight for love, hope and acceptance in a culture where a 'gift' can bear the ultimate price. Rights available to educational institutions.

### **The Watsons** by Laura Wade

Historical Drama

(script available for perusal, rights not released)

What happens when the writer loses the plot? Emma Watson is nineteen and new in town. She's been cut off by her rich aunt and dumped back in the family home. Emma and her sisters must marry, fast. If not, they face poverty, spinsterhood, or worse: an eternity with their boorish brother and his awful wife. Luckily there are plenty of potential suitors to dance with, from flirtatious Tom Musgrave to castle-owning Lord Osborne, who's as awkward as he is rich. So far so familiar.

But there's a problem: Jane Austen didn't finish the story. Who will write Emma's happy ending now? Based on her incomplete novel, this sparkingly witty play looks under the bonnet of Jane Austen and asks: what can characters do when their author abandons them?

### **The Welkin** by Lucy Kirkwood

Historical Drama

2 – 4 M 13 – 16 F

Rural Suffolk, 1759. As the country waits for Halley's Comet, Sally Poppy is sentenced to hang for a heinous murder. When she claims to be pregnant, a jury of twelve matrons are taken from their housework to decide whether she's telling the truth, or simply trying to escape the noose.

With only midwife Lizzy Luke prepared to defend the girl, and a mob baying for blood outside, the matrons wrestle with their new authority, and the devil in their midst.

### **Murder On The 518** by Michelle Giles

Murder/Mystery

7M 9 F

All the usual suspects and a flexible cast of extras make this airtight murder mystery perfect for schools, colleges, and community theatre programs.

Red-eye travellers on the westbound 518 are in for a surprise when first one passenger, and then another, mysteriously drop dead right before their eyes and just as the train is halted by a rock slide in an isolated canyon. Because the pair appears to have been poisoned, anyone and everyone in the train dining car is a suspect!

Unable to call for help, the eccentric passengers including two newlyweds, an astronomy professor, a sports recruiter, a CEO, a movie star, an aspiring musician, and others try to work together with the waitstaff to find the murderer before they reach their destination and the killer escapes for good!

Unfortunately, not everything (or everyone) is as it seems.

This family-friendly mystery is sure to keep the audience guessing right up until the train pulls into the station. Hold on tight Murder on the 518 is quite the ride

### Rights Just Released For:

### **3Women** by Katy Brand

Dramatic/ Comedy

1 M 3 F

3Women, the hilariously frank debut play from the award-winning comedian and writer Katy Brand, is a tale of female family bonding and buried resentment, it raises the question – what does it mean to be a woman in the twenty-first century?

This story places three generations of women and their own very different identities and opinions into one hotel suite for a single night of redemption. What will be revealed?



## The Meeting by Andrew Payne

Dramatic/Comedy

3 M 1 F

Stratton and Cole are waiting to meet Jack so they can seal the deal that will make or break their careers. But Jack isn't coming to the meeting, he's been dragged out of the building by security following an 'incident' with a female colleague.

Now they have to negotiate with his deputy – a woman. The men can't quite believe their luck. But far from being a soft touch, Jack's stand-in proves a much tougher nut to crack.

Andrew Payne's Hampstead debut is a biting comedy about the battle of the sexes in the boardroom and how perceptions can be deeply misleading.

## Captain Corelli's Mandolin by Louis de Bernieres adp. Rona Munro Drama

9 M 5 F

Kefalonia, 1941. Captain Corelli, an enigmatic young Italian officer, is posted to the idyllic Greek island as part of the Axis occupying forces. Shunned by the locals at first, he proves to be civilised, humorous – and a consummate musician.

The captain is soon thrown together with Dr Iannis's strong-willed and beautiful daughter, Pelagia, who discovers all of the complexities of love, and how it can blossom in the most unexpected and profound way.

## New For Children:

### Golly Gee Whiz!

Musical

By Joanne Bogart ( delightful, great tunes)

3 M 3 F plus 15

Winner of the National Youth Theatre Award for Outstanding New Musical and the Shubert Fendrich Memorial Playwriting Contest, this rousing show offers 10 spectacular musical numbers that give every young actor their moment in the spotlight! Golly Gee Whiz! is the quintessential "backyard musical," a loving tribute to the terrific Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland Hollywood film musicals of the 1930s and 40s. The residents of Happyville, USA, aren't all that happy. Usually loaded with a golly-gee-whiz sort of unstoppable optimism and ready to make the world a better place, they all seem to have come down with a case of boredom and grumps. They have good reason to feel so lousy. After all, it's the middle of the Great Depression. But that's when Mickey and Judy set 'em straight and get everyone to work to put on a show! Why, if they all pitch in together, they can do something good for the town and raise some money to help out the local businesses! By working together, they put on such a great show that folks come from miles around to see it, and re-establish Happyville as the bustling town that it once was. Ask for a free E script

### The Rainbow Fish Musical

Musical

By Austin Zumbro ( large or small cast versions)

8 M 5 F

Everybody loves the international bestseller and award-winning book, The Rainbow Fish, with its wonderful message of friendship and belonging. Now you can bring the magical, colourful world of the deep blue sea to life on your stage!

With shiny, multi-colored scales, Rainbow Fish is the most beautiful fish in all of the ocean, and the only one of his (or her!) kind. When Rainbow Fish refuses to share his vibrant, shimmering scales, the whole ocean seems to turn against the vain creature. Unhappy that no one adores him anymore, the Rainbow Fish seeks out the wise Octopus, who helps him learn that it's far better to be admired for being kind than for being beautiful.

With a bubbly, energetic score and a script that invites wonderful creativity and flexibility, the universal message at the heart of this delightful musical becomes much more than just a simple children's story.



## North Pole's Got Talent *By Lavinia Roberts*

2 M 3 F + 15 - 28

Here's the perfect opportunity to get a whole class of young actors onstage for the holiday season! It's just days before Christmas at Santa's Workshop, and there's still lots of work to be done — like getting the elves and reindeer in the proper holiday spirit with song, dance, and big belly laughs! Elf hosts Holly Daze and Mistletoe Merryman welcome judges Mrs. Claus, the pun-loving Ruby the Red-Lipped Reindeer, and Old St. Nick himself to judge the talent show in this reality TV spoof. Contestants Jack Frost and Snow Queen get a chilly reception at first, but even they can't take the warmth and good spirit out of this friendly competition! North Pole's Got Talent! features a large, flexible cast with plenty of room for extra elves and additional talent acts. All get a chance to show off in this fast-paced, laugh-a-minute one-act where nobody has more than 25 lines, but everybody's got some special Christmas talent to share!

## Real Pirates Don't Wear Tiaras *by Tod Wallinger*

5 M 6 F

If ye be searching for a true fish-out-of-water story, then this here be the play for thee! Princess Amber and her sisters are sad to see their princes sail off. The not-so-noblemen have been tasked with taking down the dreaded pirate Blacktooth, who's known for his crimes against humanity — like never showering or brushing his teeth! As the princes set sail, the princesses decide to act out their own pirate adventures, only to find they're being spied on by Blacktooth himself. Believing the princesses to be bloodthirsty pirates and in need of a new crew after he forced his last one to walk the plank, Blacktooth makes them an offer they can't refuse: serve on his ship or else! Turns out, the real pirate life is nothing like the princesses' make-believe — the food is frightful, the rats are repugnant, and Blacktooth has the most vile breath on the seven seas! And when the princesses find the princes lounging on a deserted island without a care in the world, all hopes of being saved fall squarely on the shoulders of Amber and her sisters. This rollicking spin on the traditional pirate's tale proves you don't have to be a pirate to be fierce and fearless!

## What's on around the Country

Title	Author	Group	Date
Mr. Burns - A Post Electric Play	Anne Washburn	Ara Institute of Canterbury	Mar 03 - Apr 09
Waiting For God	Michael Aitkens	Whangarei Repertory Society (Octagon Theatre)	Mar 06 - Mar 22
A Skull In Connemara	Martin McDonagh	Titirangi Theatre Inc	Mar 10 - Mar 21
Proof	David Auburn	Ellerslie Theatrical Soc	Mar 12 - Mar 21
Steel Magnolias	Robert Harling	Te Aroha Dramatic Society	Mar 15 - Mar 27
The Memory Of Water	Shelagh Stephenson	Theatre Hawkes Bay	Mar 18 - Mar 28
Murder On The Nile	Agatha Christie	Nelson Repertory Theatre	Mar 18 - Mar 21
Any Given Day	Linda Maclean	A Little Box At The Top Of The Stairs Productions	Mar 19 - Mar 21
Educating Rita	Willy Russell	Hawkins Theatre	Mar 19 - Mar 22
The God Of Carnage	Yasmina Reza	Hawera Repertory Society	Mar 19 - Mar 28
Things My Mother Taught Me	Katherine DiSavino	Foxton Little Theatre Soc Inc	Mar 20 - Apr 04
Penalties, Pints And Pirouettes (Smaller Cast Version)	Neil Troost	Feilding Little Theatre Players Inc	Mar 20 - Apr 04
Love From a Stranger	Agatha Christie	Cambridge Repertory Society	Mar 21 - Apr 04
The BFG (Big Friendly Giant)	Roald Dahl	Hamilton Playbox	Mar 21 - Apr 04
Boeing Boeing	Marc Camoletti	Marlborough Repertory Soc Inc	Mar 25 - Apr 04
First Things First	Derek Benfield	Mairangi Players Inc	Mar 27 - Apr 04
Girls Like That	Evan Placey	Wellington High School	Apr 01 - Apr 03
Educating Rita	Willy Russell	Te Awamutu Little Theatre	Apr 01 - Apr 12
Waiting For God	Michael Aitkens	Hutt Repertory Theatre	Apr 15 - Apr 25
Calendar Girls	Tim Firth	Gisborne Unity Theatre	Apr 15 - Apr 30
Waiting For God	Michael Aitkens	Elmwood Players	Apr 15 - Apr 25
The Boys In The Band	Mart Crowley	Riccarton Players	Apr 15 - Apr 25

Brassed Off	Paul Allen	Porirua Little Theatre Inc	Apr 16 - Apr 24
T/V Thriller	Phoebe M Rees	Cambridge Repertory Society	Apr 18 - Apr 19
Last Tango In Little Grimley	David Tristram	Cambridge Repertory Society	Apr 18 - Apr 19
Enchanted April	Matthew Barber	New Plymouth Little Theatre Society	Apr 22 - May 01
Caramba's Revenge	William Norfolk	Rotorua Little Theatre Society Inc	Apr 29 - May 09
A Kind Of Justice	Margaret Wood	University of Otago- Theatre Studies	Apr 30 - May 01
Quartet	Ronald Harwood	Torbay Drama Society	Apr 30 - May 09
Prepare To Meet Thy Tomb	Norman Robbins	Dargaville Little Theatre	May 01 - May 09
Allo 'Allo	Jeremy Lloyd	Greytown Little Theatre	May 01 - May 09
Gasping	Ben Elton	Matamata Dramatic	May 02 - May 09
Rough Justice	Terence Frisby	New Plymouth Repertory Society	May 05 - May 16
Like A Virgin	Gordon Steel	Inglewood Dramatic Soc	May 06 - May 16
Shirley Valentine	Willy Russell	Tadpole Productions	May 07 - May 17
Steel Magnolias	Robert Harling	Dannevirke Theatre Company	May 07 - May 16
Love From a Stranger	Agatha Christie	Howick Little Theatre	May 09 - May 30
Present Laughter	Noel Coward	Canterbury Repertory Theatre	May 13 - May 23
The History Boys	Alan Bennett	Christchurch Boys High School	May 20 - May 23
Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf? - (Definitive Edition.)	Edward Albee	Velvet Stage Works	May 20 - May 23
Deathtrap	Ira Levin	Dolphin Theatre Inc	May 21 - Jun 08
The Ghost Train	Arnold Ridley	Rangiora Players	May 27 - Jun 06
The Irish Murderer	Tom G Robertson	Dolphin Theatre Inc	May 29 - Jun 12
Spotlight	Buddy Thomas	Dolphin Theatre Inc	May 30 - Jun 13
Persuasion	Ashley J. Barnard	Dolphin Theatre Inc	May 30 - Jun 13