

# WYZ WIMMIN & FRIENDS SCRIPT COLLECTIONS

The collections listed have running times of around two hours with an interval. In common with many (most?) amateur theatrical companies, Wyz Wimmin members are aged somewhere between fifty and seventy and the majority of its members are women. This being so, most scripts have been written to suit this demographic - which makes these collections perfect for those companies that struggle to cast roles for males and/or younger actors – and if your theatre company is in regional Australia, your audiences match the demographic of your actors.

## UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

This collection of monologues toured a variety of venues including a local winery and the production sold out at every venue.

### **DOG MEAT** by Carrolline Rhodes

A romance that began at a regional art exhibition and ended on a vast sheep station, soured when a stray dog taken in as a pet came between the lovers. This monologue is amusingly macabre. The character is aged somewhere around fifty.

### **EM** by Anne Joyce

Em is elderly and lives alone. She's read reports about home invasions, so she exercises extreme caution when she hears the screen door click. This very relatable character touched audiences while making them laugh. This character is aged seventy+.

### **FAIR TRADE** by Carrolline Rhodes

Claire rehearses the speech she is going to deliver to St Peter when she gets to the Pearly Gates. In a monologue that is surprising, poignant and funny, she talks about her difficult marriage, about becoming a widow, and then being seduced by a younger man. She is somewhere in her sixties.

### **TIM TAMS** by Carrolline Rhodes

This quirky monologue is about the breakdown of Jennifer's marriage and her interaction with the obnoxious couple who live next door. Jennifer is aged thirties to forties, and she takes the audience on the journey from the shock of abandonment to slapping down the sleazy neighbour who thinks she needs a bloke in her bed and he's offering to oblige.

### **AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE** by Carrolline Rhodes

The character in this amusing monologue is aged in her fifties. She is reminiscing about the breakdown of her marriage and the remorse of her husband who now wants to come back.

### **A SIMPLE MAN** by Auriol Duncan

This elderly lady's brother is dying, and she takes the audience to his bedside as she reminisces about their lives as siblings. It is simple, poignant and engaging.

**FLY AWAY HOME** by Carrolline Rhodes

Daphne's husband went back to England for one last visit, but while he was there, he met his first love and decided that England was home despite having lived in Australia for fifty years. He plans to return and expects the first love to be waiting for him. Funny and at times biting, ultimately it is a story of the power struggle between a husband and wife.

**Fly Away Home** has had performances beyond 'Up Close & Personal' including being a feature piece at an International Woman's Day gathering and the Wyz Wimmin actor who plays this character loves the role.

**Sting** by Carrolline Rhodes

Shazza has had a hard life but suddenly she sees a way to get rid of her dead loss boyfriend and to gain the wherewithal to live a cashed-up life. Macabre and funny, its premise is uniquely engaging. As well as being part of a Wyz Wimmin production, this monologue was selected to be performed by the Newcastle Micro Theatre Festival and won the 'Audience Choice Award'. Shazza is in her thirties.

<b>LOVE BITES</b>
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This collection includes one-act plays as well as monologues. This was one of the Wyz Wimmin's touring productions, and again audiences loved the characters and the performance.

**Death by Marriage 1** by Kathleen Crawley

This script in three parts features Poppy Bridgestone, is a flamboyant ex-pat socialite (akin to Primrose Dunlop) who might have a skeleton or two in her past. Hunter Dickson is a news hound who is on Poppy's case, digging for more than gold...

Poppy can be aged from forties upwards. Hunter Dickson can be any age (this character could be female instead of male.)

**Nonna** by Willa Hogarth

Nonna is one of the most popular characters the Wyz Wimmin has brought to the stage. Lonely since her husband died, and finding herself increasingly irrelevant in her family's lives, she invites a friend to come and live with her. This friend suggests that Nonna should also invite a man they both know to join them. The friend doesn't move in, but the man does. Funny and poignant, this monologue helps celebrate Australia's multiculturalism.

**Happy Ever After** by Carrolline Rhodes

In this two-hander, the Mother of the Groom (MOG), is very different to the Mother of the Bride. Inevitably they clash, and somewhere between choosing the dress and deciding on flowers, warfare erupts. Caught in the middle and ducking for cover are the bride and groom. MOG is a pretentious snob. The other mother is a nice, quiet, ordinary, woman. They can be aged from middle forties, upwards.

**Seminal Secrets** by Willa Hogarth

When a husband reveals he was a sperm donor in his youth there are unexpected consequences for his wife and family. Totally contemporary, this monologue is funny and engaging. The character can be aged from forties upwards.

**Death by Marriage 2**

Poppy's quest for love and a life of privilege within the British aristocracy takes some dark ups and downs, twists and turns.

**Nonna 2** by Willa Hogarth

Feisty Nonna now has a live-in boyfriend but she still misses her husband and encounters problems. Will she be able to compromise?

**Escorting an Eightieth** by Carrolline Rhodes

Alison is about to turn eighty and her family wants to give her something special for her birthday. A weekend at a flash resort is one suggestion. Alison has an entirely different idea. Quite coincidentally, this monologue was written around the same time as the film 'Good Luck to You Leo Grande' (on Netflix) and it brings to the stage the physical longings of an elderly widow. Authentic and funny, audiences were mesmerized.

**Death by Marriage 3**

Will Poppy's love-life be dealt an Ace? Or will she be left crying crocodile tears?

<b>YOURS SINCERELY</b>
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This collection was inspired by 'Letters Live' (refer to YouTube). The actors read letters, some of which are factual, but most are fiction. It is an easy production to stage (all that's needed is a lectern) and actors like it because they have the script (a letter) in their hands.

**Polly** by Anne Joyce

Polly was born in England in 1940 and at her mother's insistence, seven year old Polly is writing to elderly Great Aunt Hetty. Through the voice of a child, the audience is taken into Polly's world circa 1947.

The actor delivering the monologue can be any age.

**In the Clink** by Carrolline Rhodes

Judy is an elderly woman who is totally over others being served before her and she hatches a cunning plan to make sure she cannot be ignored by those behind the counter. Although her plan works brilliantly – no one can fail to notice her – it creates mayhem, and Judy ends up in a women's correctional centre. Funny and authentic, audiences loved this character.

**Printed Woman** by Willa Hogarth

Wilma is fast approaching old age and she writes to a long standing friend about her fear of aging and her decision to utilise progressive medical options to prevent her body deteriorating. Are the risks worth it?

This script was selected for the Newcastle Microtheatre Festival. It is very in-the-moment, and audiences loved this character.

**Madame Diva** by Anne Joyce

An actress, Leanne is looking for a sea change and she is disappointed to find her arrival at Blessingham Beach not welcomed by the local amateur theatrical society. In her letter she gives vent to her feelings. The character is elderly.

**Gran's Bible** by Willa Hogarth

A young woman writes to her beloved Gran about what happens when she escapes from a mental health unit. This powerful monologue held the audience spellbound. The character is aged between twenty and thirty.

**Tribe** by Carrolline Rhodes in collaboration with Frederick Millard.

A gay man in his sixties, Jean-Paul Dubois, writes to a nephew who has recently 'come out' as being gay. Jean-Paul takes the audience on a journey that begins when homosexuals were frequently ostracised, through the early days of Mardis Gras, to the present day. This monologue enthralled audiences and several people have said it is a story that needs to be told.

**Public Relations** by Carrolline Rhodes.

Marta is a former political staffer who is incensed when the politician she had an affair with lands a plum job overseas and relocates there with his wife. She tells the story of their liaison and her plans to sabotage his new life. The character is in her forties.

**Pieces of Glass** by Willa Hogarth.

The character confides in her best friend about strange events that she cannot explain. Did she step into a parallel dimension. Is she crazy or not? This quirky monologue brings sci-fi to the stage. The character can be aged from thirties up to fifties.

**By Gaslight** by Carrolline Rhodes

What happens in the past is said to make you who you are today, but what if you don't want to be the person you have become? A dramatic monologue about mind games and manipulation, the character is somewhere in her sixties.

**No Clothes**

Recently arrived for a new life in Canada with her young family, Pam writes to her brother back in the UK to tell him about the theft of her washing and the difficulties of settling into a new life. The character is in her thirties.

**Gaggin's Circus** by Carrolline Rhodes.

This script was developed from a collection of (authentic) WWII letters written by Flight Sergeant Norman Locklier of No 466 Squadron and sent to his family in Victoria. A two-hander, it is a powerful dramatic narrative that gradually builds in intensity.

## CHEERS ME DEARS

This production was presented as lunch time theatre at a local winery and was a great success. The four scripts were: **Fly Away Home**, **Em**, **Seminal Secrets** and **Happy Ever After**.

## CHEERS ME DEARS SECOND PRODUCTION AS LUNCH THEATRE

This production was similar to the Winery production but the mixture was **Fly Away Home**, **Em**, **Happy Ever After** and **Gaggin's Circus**.

## INTO THE SPOTLIGHT A two-act comedy - Playwright Carrolline Rhodes

The residents of Reedy River Retirement Resort want a jacuzzi installed, but management has refused the request. They decide to raise the money themselves by staging Cinderella and driving the idea is Marjorie Staithingwaite, who claims to have a lifetime's experience in theatre.

Among residents roped into the production there is a former schoolteacher who directed successful school musicals, and then there is Bob who is a famous drag queen, plus Esme, who has been in amateur theatre since Methuselah was a boy. There are nine characters in total, most without any idea of how to act, but those with acting experience are highly opinionated and they resist Marge's attempts at direction. The biggest question of all is whether the community will pay to see a bunch of geriatrics performing pantomime. The story arc of this 2-act comedy takes them from a bickering bunch of elderly people to a group that finds its strength in coming together. Running time with interval is around two hours.

**'Funny, quirky and wonderfully performed...'** Mark Fitzpatrick is the author of eighteen feature films and has written, directed or performed in many stage productions. He has worked with Cate Blanchett, Heath Ledger and Jackie Chan, and was in the audience for the sellout performance of the Wyz Wimmin & Friends' production of 'Into the Spotlight' at Nambucca Community & Arts Centre on 11 May 2024. This is his reaction:

'I was pleasantly surprised at not only the performances but the whole production. I thought Anne did a wonderful job directing it. It's not easy negotiating all those actors on stage at once.

'It was funny, quirky and wonderfully performed. It had a satirical flavour as well, which I saw in the script. And the ladies pulled it off. All the actors played their roles exquisitely. I thought Helen (Esme/Wicked Stepmother) was hilarious. It's not easy playing a character who is an actor, then seeing that character as an actor playing a role in a play. I thought the transformation from the actor to their Cinderella characters was brilliant, because I still saw the DNA of their stage characters in their Cinderella roles. It was so believable that these 'amateur actors' in the play then 'performed' in a play within the play. Great Job! And then seeing them all come together at the end with a newfound kinship. Which was great for their 'character arcs', as they were all squabbling and detrimental (in character) to each other earlier throughout.

They complimented your wonderful script with their performances, and that is what you want. And what about the crowd? I was blown away at the size of the audience.'

## Notes

- The cast's ages range from fifties to middle eighties.
- The play is set in the Nambucca Valley but it can easily be adapted to suit any small town/regional area.
- Scenery is not necessary.
- Props/furniture are basic and easily sourced.

Extracts from an email sent by Nambucca Valley's Mayor to the Wyz Wimmin: 'Please pass on my congratulations to all of the performers and the 'behind the scenes' workers on a wonderful production. I don't know about anyone else in the audience, but I had had a rough week and the fun, light-hearted and totally entertaining nature of your play was like a whole of mind and body massage that just soothed away all of the negativity of a stressful week. I guess that is just one of the values of good quality performing arts – when you become so immersed in the entertainment that time stands still, at least for a while and you forget everything else.'

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## WW&Fs PLAYWRIGHTS' OTHER SCRIPTS

### Carrolline Rhodes

As an emerging playwright, Carrolline Rhodes was mentored by Janis Balodis (Associate Director MTC, Artistic Associate QTC, member of Literature and Theatre Boards of the Australia Council) and Shirley Barnett (who studied drama at Melbourne Conservatorium and was a member of Melbourne New Theatre, performed with Bert Newton, and was the driving force behind Coffs Harbour's CHATS for many years). Nearly thirty years later, Carrolline has had plays performed in Noosa, Coffs Harbour, the Nambucca Vally, Newcastle and Melbourne and she has a collection of scripts that have been produced by a variety of companies.

### 1-ACT PLAYS

#### **Body Talk** (Running time around forty minutes) by Carrolline Rhodes

After being widowed for a long time, Lydia, who is in her sixties, has met a man and it is getting close to the time they will end up in bed together. The prospect of being naked in front a man excites and terrifies her. She is very conscious of the ravages of time, and the changes in people's attitudes towards sex. Faithful throughout her marriage, what will this new man expect?

Mandy is twenty years younger and has had a lot of experience with men. When Lydia arrives at their regular art workshop and finds the other members of the group aren't coming, Lydia grasps the opportunity to ask the younger woman's advice.

It is a play for its time, with many older women finding themselves unexpectedly on the dating scene, and the universal truths within it will resonate with audiences. As the action

unfolds, the audience learns that Lydia is breaking a taboo that is becoming more common when older women find sexual freedom. NOTE: ADULT THEMES, not suitable for children. This one-act play was commissioned by Julie Fuad and Catherine Beynon and was performed in Bellingen Memorial Hall as part of the production 'Breaking Taboos'. Julie and Cath each performed an Alan Bennett monologue and this two-hander concluded the performance.

## MONOLOGUES

**The Home & Away Trilogy** (running time around forty minutes) by Carrolline Rhodes  
Set in London and spanning the years from WW1 through WW2 and beyond, three monologues come together to tell the story of a mother and her two daughters. Each of their lives are shaped by men with privilege and power. The characters are all in their sixties. One has a distinct East Enders' accent, another has a generic English accent, and one has an Australian accent.

**Emu Ward** (Running time around ten minutes) by Carrolline Rhodes  
Pam is in her seventies and was recently taken to A & E, then admitted to hospital overnight. The next morning a nurse greets her by saying: *I'm Rhiannon, your aged care nurse. How are we this morning?* It takes me a few seconds to digest 'aged care'. I reply, *I don't need an aged care nurse.* She comes back, *Well we are in our seventies, aren't we?* I say, *You're ageing well then...*

It is one of the monologues selected through the 'Mad Women Monologue Competition' for performance at the Butterfly Club in Melbourne. You can watch it on YouTube, with Susie Sparkes as Pam.

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=carrolline+rhodes+emu+ward](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=carrolline+rhodes+emu+ward)

In the Nambucca Valley, it had a performance at a function celebrating a milestone for the local hospital auxiliary, and the audience, which was chiefly made up of health care professionals, loved it.

**Marley, Rum & Raisin** (running time around ten minutes) by Carrolline Rhodes  
This monologue hasn't been on stage yet but will probably be part of the WW&F's next 'touring the halls' road trip. Marley is elderly but still as feisty as she was in her youth. She is arrested for shop lifting and while the judge waives a fine, he records a conviction, much to Marley's disgust. This funny monologue captures the plight of elderly shoppers.

**When Lydia met Dave** (running time around eight minutes) by Carrolline Rhodes  
Lydia recently met a lovely man and knows they will end up in bed, but it's been a while since she has been with a man, and she turns to a younger friend for advice. This monologue was originally written as a two-hander (Body Talk) and was performed as part of the 'Breaking Taboos' production.

**Half the Sky** by Carrolline Rhodes

This is a collection of seven monologues for female actors (females being said to hold up half the sky). This collection would run for around two hours with interval. The monologues range from outrageously funny to macabre and everything between. It is a mixture of monologues already performed plus new ones waiting for a production.

## PLAYS

### **MS GOD** by Carrolline Rhodes

This full length play is about domestic violence, a subject that is currently dominating Australian newspaper headlines. Set against a backdrop of war, the play is set in 2003 and has four characters.

- Meg was born in London. England, two years before the end of WWII. She came to Australia as a child, part of the great diaspora that brought hundreds of thousands of immigrant families to Australia during the 1950s. She is childless and lives in northern NSW.
- Mum is Meg's mother. Born in London around 1920, she currently lives in Sydney. A widow, she has a distinct working class accent.
- Carly is the same age as Meg. They met in high school and became close friends but haven't seen each other for several years, although they have kept in touch. Carly lives in Darwin.
- Jacko is Meg's husband and is the same age as Meg but he is Australian-born.

Jacko, Meg's husband was a veteran of Vietnam and has recently died. Meg has asked her mother and Carly to join her for Jacko's final farewell.

Mum flew to the airport nearest to where Meg lives and has spent the night at a motel waiting for Carly to arrive and drive them the rest of the way to the farewell which - to their consternation - is being held in a park that has recently been gutted by fire. They are the only guests.

Both Mum and Carly knew that Jacko was violent towards Meg, although Meg always denied it.

As the play unfolds, not only is Jacko's violence revealed, the audience realises his malice was many faceted.

The play ends without resolution for the women. The neat tying up of ends is beyond them, although there is a dark moment – a few seconds – of vengeance.

This powerfully theatrical play is confronting and is yet to be performed.

### **Willa Hogarth**

Willa began her writing career with successfully published short stories and also won a place on the Byron Bay Mentorship program with a novel. She was inspired to become a playwright through a workshop with Carrolline Rhodes in 2016 and her continuing mentorship has helped Willa develop her skills. She has also completed on-line workshops with the Gotham Writers' Workshop based in New York which involved working with Richard Caliban, an American playwright and director.

Apart from several of her monologues being produced by Wiz Wimmin and Friends, monologues and plays have also been produced by the Dorrigo Theatre, and as a part of winning their competitions, the Newcastle Microtheatre Festival and the Playhouse Players in Melbourne.



## PLAYS

### **Seminal Chaos**

A 30 minute one act play with 6 characters (3 men and 3 women) The 2 main characters are in their late 40s. After one of his donor 'sons' contacts him, Luke reveals to his wife, Carla he was a sperm donor in his youth. Two more donor kids appear, one of them, Melissa, is pregnant and promptly has twins. Much to Carla's disgust, Luke wants to help all three including having Melissa and her twins to stay. Carla threatens to leave. However, 'grandmotherhood' takes over.

This play won the Playhouse Players Competition in 2003 and was performed at the Doncaster Theatre in Melbourne.

### **My Beautiful Son**

A 30 minute one act play with 4 characters (2 women and 2 men). Protecting her son versus letting him go - the conflict Michelle faces when her 17 year-old-son, Alex wants to become a transgender girl. To complicate matters, he wants to 'come out' at school. Michelle knows he will suffer in their small-town school and tells him to wait. Her husband, Greg supports his son which creates more conflict. After a suicide scare and seeing Alex dressed as a girl for the first time, Michelle realises she must allow her son to decide his future.

This play was shortlisted by the Noosa Arts Theatre and the Edythe Brook Cooper playwriting competitions.

### **Dark Sisters**

A 15 minute play with three women in their early 60s. After the death of her domineering husband, Jo's two close friends, Allison and Steph come to support her with the non-traditional funeral arrangements her husband has ordered. These include washing and dressing him to ordering a mini-truck to take him to the crematorium. Jo finds a letter he has left for them which reveals a secret - affairs with both Allison and Steph. How will Jo react and will they remain 'sisters'?

### **Slowlove.com**

A 20 minute one act play with 6 characters (3 men and 3 women). Jeff is not coping with the death of his wife. His older sister and two children are concerned. His old mate, Greg suggests he should meet women on a dating website for older people. Sexy Melissa bursts into Jeff's life and much to the shock of his family, she moves in after a month. But will the relationship last?

## MONOLOGUES

### **Nude Swimming**

Jasmine is at loggerheads with her husband Mike. He is refusing treatment for cancer and she is desperate to change his mind. Suddenly he reveals a more controversial plan: he wants to end his life while he is still healthy and asks Jasmine to assist him. How will she react to this request from the man she desperately loves? Jasmine is in her 60s and the monologue runs for about 10 minutes.

### **Nonna 3**

This is the third monologue in a trilogy involving the popular character, Nonna. (See *Love Bites* program for Nonna 1 and 2.) Here she finds out her live-in boyfriend was previously married. Problems emerge: a divorced daughter with no money turns up; Nonna ends up babysitting her kids; Silvio wants to get married. Nonna has had enough. What will she do? The monologue runs for 10 minutes.

### **Gran's Secret**

This is a follow up monologue to Gran's Bible. (See *Yours Sincerely* program.) Casey escapes from the mental health unit yet again. This time is different - she visits Gran who tells her she can't keep doing this. Casey is devastated and plans to leave town. Can she make it work? Casey is in her 20s and the monologue runs for 10 minutes.

### **Wogs**

A woman shows how she feels about her new refugee neighbours and comes up with every stereotype one can think of. But after she hears about their recent crisis she becomes more empathetic. Obviously a topical subject, the character can be middle-aged to elderly and runs for about 10 minutes. This monologue was performed at the Newcastle Microtheatre Festival 2019.

### **My Daughter, My Country**

Conflict simmers between a migrant woman and her Australian-born daughter. The mother is traditional, the daughter wants to be Australian – own a smart phone, have a boyfriend, change her name. A compromising photo posted on the Internet paradoxically enables them to find understanding. The character is middle-aged and runs for about 10 minutes.

This monologue was highly commended in the Clearway Voices of Women competition 2020.

### **Heartfelt**

After her successful heart transplant, Marnia finds she has a personality change. She no longer wants to cook or clean, has a fascination for motor bikes and is attracted to an old friend. She wonders if she has taken on the personality of the heart donor. Will her life totally change? The character is in her 60s and the monologue runs for about 10 minutes.

### **Mountain Man**

Annie is on a hiking trip in the French Alps and her French guide is a handsome man that she falls madly in love with even though she has a relationship at home. Could this man change her life? The character is in her 50s and the monologue runs for about 10 minutes.