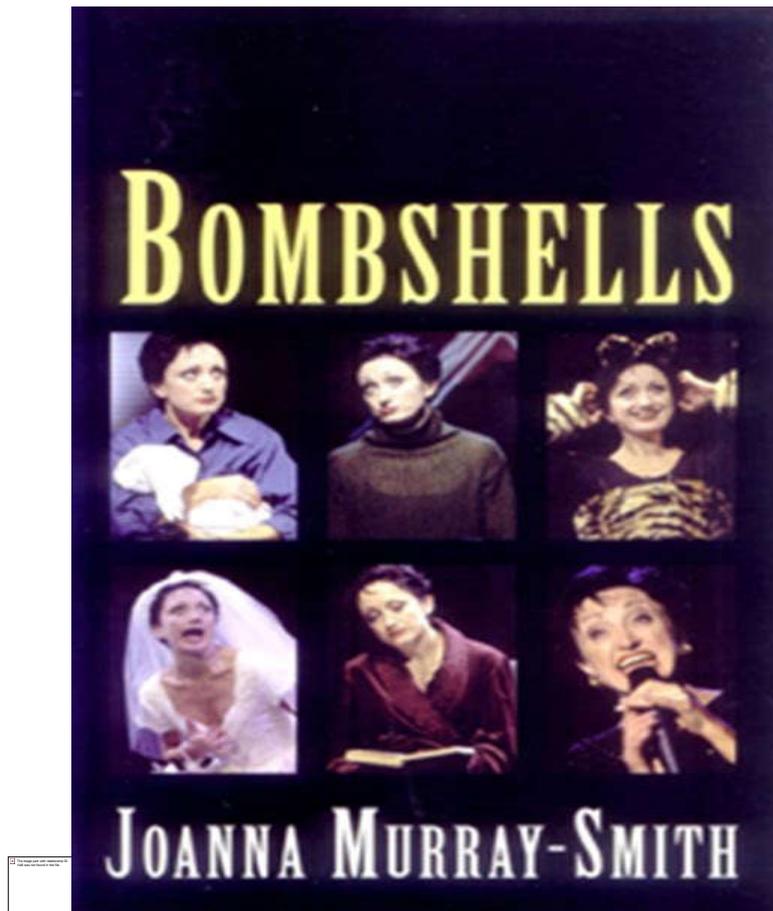


'BOMBSHELLS'

Audition Information



 Written by Joanna Murray-Smith

Directed by Theresa Saunders

Auditions:

Sunday 10th February 2019, 1pm-4pm

Z-PAC Theatre - 15 Zephyr St Scarness

ABOUT THE PLAY/PERFORMANCES

PERFORMANCE DATES: 30th May - 16th June

NO. OF PERFORMANCES: 13 (including a premier and at least 5 matinees).

REHEARSALS: Tuesday evenings (beginning 12th Feb) 7 pm - 9.30 pm.
Sundays 1 pm - 5 pm.

Thank you for your interest in auditioning for Z-PAC's production of *Bombshells* by Joanna Murray-Smith.

Bombshells is a contemporary Australian play, part social commentary, part comedy. It takes the form of 6 monologues, each of which attempts to traverse the tricky landscape of modern womanhood. Essentially, the play is about 6 women, the critical junctions in their lives, their external calm and internal chaos; it is about 6 women on either the brink of a breakdown or break through!

Two roles will require singing and dancing. Most include the hilarity of honesty, exposing what some women would just love to say out loud. Consequently, all roles are rambunctious. Though, it is the quiet moments that are the most poignant, when these women are at their most fragile.

Originally written for one performer, this production will consist of between 3 and 6 cast members.

N.B.: Some coarse language / sexual references.

Joanna Murray-Smith: "Many of us are trying to lead multiple lives: child, mother, wife, lover, star, giving small doses of oxygen to each and imploding under the weight of so many competing roles."

“Each tale is a “tiny crystal ball” exquisitely crafted with carefully measured amounts of humour and pathos.” - The Sydney Morning Herald

“...the script succeeds on every level. It is insightful, it is well structured, it is written with clarity, grace and an elegant sense of wit.” - theatreview.org.nz

“A rare combination of comedy, truth and rapture...” - The Times

“Jaw-droppingly good...” - Sunday Times

THE CHARACTERS

Meryl Louise Davenport (aged 30s - 40s)

A frustrated and frantic woman with too many babies and not enough time for dreaming. She puts on a brave face, but feels very judged and so, is full of self-recrimination and doubt.

Tiggy Entwhistle (aged late 40s, early 50s)

Tiggy is a member of a Cactus League who timidly delivers a bitter-sweet speech outlining the virtues of cacti as a faithful companion, drawing parallels between the phallic plant and her faithless husband. A woman giving a talk about cacti but she is really talking about being left by her husband.

Mary O'Donnell (teenager who **must be able to dance**).

Mary is a schoolgirl who wants to outshine her school friends at the talent show. She is ferociously competitive and will not tolerate a loss to her most-hated rival, Angela McTerry. But, at what cost?

Theresa McTerry (aged 30s - 40s)

A tipsy bride-to-be getting dressed for her wedding and more in love with being a bride than with the reality of marriage. And her biological clock is ticking. As her monologue progresses, her feet grow cooler and colder as she realises that she is self-destructing her own future.

Winsome Webster (aged 60s+)

A widow who, due to her husband's death, has been forced to carve out her own way forward in a lonely life. One of her interests, to keep herself busy, is to read

(often the most boring and monotonous of texts) for the blind. It is in this activity that she unexpectedly finds a sexual encounter.

Zoe Struthers (aged 40s++ who must be able to **sing cabaret and adopt a (preferably American) accent**).

An aging American diva star who is making a comeback on stage. While doing so, she is unable to deliver her concert without referencing the many tragedies in her life such as an early pregnancy, the death of her mother, and more. But she is an extravert-ed trooper.

BEFORE AUDITION, PLEASE KNOW...

- ✓ A high degree of physicality is required; it is a high energy play with lots of standing, movement and pace. Mary is a skilled dancer and Zoe a cabaret singer.
- ✓ All actors will be involved in the 'on stage, in light' mechanics of the play, throughout the play, (moving flats, on-stage costume changes, prop movement, background performances in other monologues etc.) It is NOT a case of performing individual monologues only!
- ✓ It is intended that all characters will wear the exact same wig, removing, passing it over and assisting in attaching to the next character 'in light'. You would have to be comfortable to do this.
- ✓ **VERY important:** Rehearsals will run for 3 weeks beginning Tuesday, Feb 12. After which, the director is absent for 4 consecutive weeks. On the resumption of rehearsals on Tuesday April 2, **ALL LINES DOWN.** (You will have had 4 weeks of non-rehearsal time to do this.)
- ✓ Not all cast will be required for all rehearsals (in the first 6 weeks of rehearsing). However, all cast will be required from 30th April onwards. A specific rehearsal schedule will be published shortly after auditions conclude.
- ✓ Having said all that, the purpose of *Bombshells* and its rehearsals, is to have lots of amazing fun and laughs with a like-minded bunch of creative, energetic, positive people, while smashing out a fantastic crowd-pleasing production! If that sounds like something you'd enjoy too, come join us Audition Day.

AUDITION DAY: SUNDAY 10th FEBRUARY

- ✓ Please bring along your completed Z-PAC THEATRE AUDITION form. When you arrive, Joanne (our Z-PAC Promotions Co-ordinator), will collect your form. If

possible, a photographer will take a snap photo (this helps us match names with faces later). You will then be invited into the theatre where auditions will begin promptly.

- ✓ At the audition we will ask you to read some of the script excerpts attached, (once, maybe multiple times). Please be prepared to stay for the entire audition period. You don't need to memorize the lines but it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the excerpts. We will be looking to get a feel for your personality, delivery ability and what it would be like to work with you on this show.
- ✓ Please make note on the audition sheet any days/dates you will NOT be available. On the odd occasion, there can be some flexibility on rehearsals, but SHOW DATES ARE FIXED.
- ✓ It is our intent to not have callbacks but, if absolutely necessary, such callbacks would be scheduled 5 pm onwards, Monday 11th Feb. Either way, you will receive an email prior to or on Feb 11th to let you know that roles have been cast. Please remember that there are only between 3 and 6 roles and there might be many wishing to audition.
- ✓ But also please consider that you don't have to be an actor to experience the process and fun of this production. There are so many other areas you could volunteer for, like: props, costumes, lights, sound, assistant stage manager, publicity, producer, set decorator, make-up!

MERYL LOUISE DAVENPORT

A thirty-something woman is on stage, alone. She begins very slowly and then builds in pace until she is on a frenetic stream-of-consciousness sprint. The scene begins with Meryl in bed breastfeeding, revisiting a conversation with her son.

MERYL: Ben's in the kitchen. I want Coco Pops. No. Yes. Coco Pops are evil. Coco Pops are not evil. Coco pops are breakfast cereal. No, no you can have Weetbix. Weetbix suck. You're not having Coco Pops. Psychopaths are evil. Child slavery is evil. Coco Pops are not evil. Liam's allowed to eat Coco Pops and how come everyone else gets a nice mother? Okay, eat the Coco Pops. Eat the damn Coco Pops! What's wrong with Ben? Ben doesn't like me and he's only eight. He already hates me. Why do I yell at him? Why can't I control myself? I've fucked up the last eight years and it's not his fault. He's the kid he's the kid I'm the mother I'm the mother - it's my

fault because I am an egomaniac and a control freak. How many countries are there in Africa? I don't know. How many do you *think* there are? I don't know, Amy. I'm trying to feed the baby. But how many do you *think* there are? Alright, thirty.

Baby in bassinet. Stick plug in baby's mouth. Get breakfast, quickly, quickly, can't be late, always late, need a coffee, teacher said we have to make an effort to get Ben into class on time. Teacher said children suffer if they're late. Hurry hurry do the lunches hurry up, lunches, lunches -

Abandoning the idea.

- *money* for the lunches. Where's the money, where's the money, baby crying, in the shower, wash, quick, out, quick, dry, quick, clothes hurry hurry. Never look 'quite right', never look 'put together', never look 'well groomed'.

Always dreamt I'd scoff at women who just threw themselves together. Now I am one. Lipstick, that'll do it, whack it on, that way the other mothers will think I'm in control, I'm on top of things. Where's the money for the leukemia-money-raising head-shaving of the Geography teacher? Where's the money for the children's hospital appeal? Amy needs the form signed for the excursion. Amy says it has to be in today. It *has* to be in today or I won't be allowed to go. It *has* to be, it *has* to be, it *has* to be. Need a coffee, need a coffee, keys keys keys keys KEYS. School bags tennis rackets handbag nappy-bag dry-cleaning dummy dummy school hats need hats keys keys keys KEYS.

TIGGY ENTWHISTLE

A woman tentatively moves to a podium at the centre of the stage. She reflects all the characteristics which she later uses to describe the cacti: 'a covering of slender, soft hair... slender, needle-like body... long, soft, woolly covering'. She surveys the audience, appalled at the task before her. Then musters her will and clears her throat. She is a picture of timidity attempting to overcome itself. A slide projection screen behind her is blank.

TIGGY: Good afternoon

...

Clears her throat...

I would like to start by saying that it is a privilege and a pleasure to be here.

More clearing of throat, gathering of courage.

Membership of this Society has provided me with a sense of belonging and the informal atmosphere of sharing information and pleasant interaction has meant much to me over the past personally trying twelve months. Those of you from North Heatherton know that I am a comparative newcomer to the world of succulents.

Slide of tall skinny cactus.

But I'm sure you'd agree - without wishing to blow my own trumpet at all - that I have made up for lost time with the dedication and passion I have applied to this remarkable plant. Toot! Toot!

Nervous laugh...

And in the midst of my personal troubles, of which quite a few of you are aware, I can only stress that my cacti have played an essential part in holding me together.

I was not, in fact, going to make mention of this, but for Majorie Venables - many of you may know Majorie - who took me aside when I was asked to speak today and said: 'Tiggy, if you want to do justice to our beloved friend the cactus, how better to show its significance than to tell the good people the way in which it has pulled you through the relentless pain of your existence.'

Beat.

...

And I don't believe it is too far-fetched to say that my cacti love me. When Harry ... when all that happened ... I could feel the companionship of the cacti flooding over me. There are very few cactophiles who do not see their succulents as members of a valued extended family. The cactus, is not, for instance, like a rose. It is not like a begonia or a daisy, lovely as they are.

Slide of a rose with a brutal "X" across it.

The most endearing aspect of the cactus is the deceptiveness of its attraction. And this is where it is important to counteract the many myths about cacti. Despite popular belief, their spines are not poisonous, and the common assumption that they flower only every seven years is completely untrue. *I can flower again and again and again.* He didn't believe me, he didn't think we could recapture... but the point is, he wouldn't even...

Composing herself:

During the cooler months or on days of full sun, a fine mist of water will help to avoid the unpleasant shrivelling of mature plants. Do you see? Do you see? A fine mist is all it takes. Is that too much to ask? Is it? IS IT? Harry, is that too much to ask? A mist of - of sweetness of - love - a faint spray of compassion or - or fantasy - something - something.

MARY O'DONNELL

Mary has just discovered that her enemy, Angela McTerry has 'stolen' her song (that Mary had planned a dance recital to) and Mary has just minutes to find another song and choreograph a dance to go with it.

Okay. Okay. Stay calm. You'll think of something. This is actually very useful. Very useful. Just like showbiz. Things happen. Plans come unstuck but the SHOW MUST GO ON. ...

Beat

I'll improvise. That's what real performers do. That's what Al Pacino does! That's what Meryl Streep does! She just makes it up. She lets the spirit of her profound creativity run free. I'll dance like no one's danced before!

Rushing to her CD collection.

Look at the CDs. What CDs did I bring...? Pointer Sisters...Falco...Carpenters...Shaft

Beat.

SHAFT.

Beat.

Shaft.

Beat. Slowly building:

'Mary O'Donnell performs a dance routine from that classic of soul and groove: Shaft!' 'Mary O'Donnell does Shaft!' 'What did Mary O'Donnell do?' 'SHE DID SHAFT.' Who else has danced to Shaft? Who else at St Brigid's has communed with that big black mother Isaac Hayes? Nobody, that's who! Could Angela McTerry do Shaft? No, she could not! ... and the song is about a ...

A touch of doubt as she reads the CD cover notes:

-Super-Hip Renegade African-American Cop...He walks the mean streets of Hell's Kitchen and she walks the mean streets of...St Brigid's. He's trying to subvert the mainstream dialectic for the benefit of his black brothers in Harlem and she's trying to subvert the mainstream dialectic for her white sisters in Lower Sydenham. I can be anyone I want to be! I've got style! I've got pizzazz! I've got... thirty-four seconds to come up with something!

Mary gingerly makes her way to centre stage and peers out at audience. She gets into position. The music begins. From this point on, Mary has to invent the choreography, trying to keep physically in sync with the song's rhythm.

MARY: Jesus Jesus Jesus Jesus Jesus, HELP ME! This is Mary O'Donnell speaking, God. I go to St Brigid's. I am enormously ENORMOUSLY talented, oh God, and it would be a travesty if Angela McTerry won the talent show. I know this may not sound very important to you, God, but I'm telling you that if Angela McTerry wins, it is not simply a win for the McTerry family including Theresa, a trollop *par excellence*, but a win for Satan himself. Because Angela McTerry *is* Satan, God. Believe me, I know. I'm telling you that if Angela McTerry wins then you have LOST THE RACE AND HUMANITY IS DOOMED.

THERESA MCTERRY

Theresa puts on her veil and regards herself. The music begins and she starts to walk down the aisle.

THERE HE IS, THERE HE IS, THERE HE IS, OH MY GOD OH MY GOD MY GOD MY GOD MY GOD, IT'S HAPPENING! IT'S REALLY HAPPENING! I *want* to be possessed. I want to be held, nurtured, nestled, owned. I want to lie around in negligees eating cream buns. I want to roam the high plains of the domestic interior barefoot and pregnant,

moving languidly between kitchen and bedroom, nourishing the varied appetites of the man I love...

She reaches the imaginary groom. She lifts the veil back.

Hello Ted! Hello, every morning and every night for the rest of my life! Hello, man of my dreams!

Sweetly:

Ted.

She takes him in, this time with a little less conviction:

Ted.

Now really not sure at all:

Ted Ted Ted Ted. What's with the mauve cummerbund? He looks like the waiter from the Love Boat. And he's so short. He looks like...a pot plant...I can barely see him...He makes the vicar look like Schwarzenegger...and he shouldn't have gotten Trent to be best man - he's too tall. Trent.

A knowing smile.

Easter before last. Got me to stand on the Yellow Pages in spiked heels up against the dining room wall...Ted would never get me to stand on the Yellow Pages, Ted's a flat-on-your-back kind of a fellow and that's fine. That's fine, each to his own, and for a lifetime situation, you're probably not going to want to stand on the Yellow Pages in a pair of stilettos. ...

Beat. With renewed zeal:

Here we go. Here we go. What's Ted saying? What's Ted saying? *We should never have written our own vows!* 'I promise to nurture you like a small sapling growing beside the mighty river of love. I promise to water you and dispense sunlight over you and allow you to grow into a -

Beat. Trying to get her mouth around it:

Large. Sturdy. Trunk.’ - The vicar looks kind of sexy in that outfit...

Do vicars have sex? In just a couple of seconds I will never be able to have sex with this vicar or any other living man. *Or dead.* Living or dead. They’re all totally off the cards. They’re gone, they’re over, they’re not even a blip on the radar. From now on it’s me and the girls down one end of the table talking about George Clooney, and Ted and the boys down the other talking about stock options. Do you love Ted Theresa? Do you regret it? Do you regret it? Do you regret it?

Beat.

I do.

WINSOME WEBSTER

Winsome is introverted, her comments quiet and poignant. She volunteers, reading to the blind.

Usually, Patrick would make tea. Very deliberately and capably, even carrying it into the sunroom on a tray, and he’d ask me to describe the garden and I’d tell him how the maple leaves had turned to red or how the leaves were finally gone.

Mostly, I’d read the same kind of books: ‘Those of us who are neither collectivists believing in nations, races, classes or periods as unified psychological entities, nor dialectical materialists untroubled by the discovery of “contradictions”...E.H. Gombrich. No relation to Anita Brookner. I tried to read intelligently, but at one point, I put down the book and said, ‘Patrick, I don’t have the foggiest what I’m saying.’ And he said, ‘Winsome, you read magnificently.’ *Winsome, you read magnificently.*

I went home and the next day I had dinner at Vonnie’s - Vonnie’s done a Thai cooking class so it’s all lemongrass this and lime-leaf that, when we’d all be happier with a chicken casserole - and I was thinking about what Patrick had said, but I didn’t say anything. And on Sunday, whilst talking to Helen, I didn’t say anything either. I was bursting to tell a widow or two, but I felt foolish...

Anyway - Friday I could barely stand the train trip to town I was so excited. I embarrassed myself by the effort I was making, appearance-wise. I'm rather a sensible-tweed-skirt-and-blouse kind of a dresser, but I'd popped down to the boutique in the village and picked up a black skirt and flared sort of top, which my mother would have described contemptuously as 'exotic', but which I considered fetching. With my silver beads, I thought it made me look a touch bohemian, like an 'author' or a famous feminist, or at least the kind of woman who still had sex. Now, I know Patrick is blind, but it was really more for me. I wanted to feel more interesting in his company, as if I was less of a Winsome and more of an...Abigail.

I sat in the sunroom. It was a lovely day. I looked up and in his hands was a book, no cover. 'I have something else for you to read, Winsome.' It had a marker in it, about a third of the way through, and I opened the page, saying, 'Of course, Patrick, whatever you like.'

Beat. She reads.

'Jefferson could see the distant figures of the women lying by the river. It was a perfect midsummer afternoon, the smell of honeysuckle in the air carried on a gentle breeze and Jefferson felt the distinct sensation that the day was meant for pleasure.

Beat.

'Jefferson felt the distinct sensation that the day was meant for pleasure.' Curious. 'When Jefferson reached the river bank, he could see -

Slowing down:

- Persephone lying...naked amongst the buttercups, Delia beside her in a curiously relaxed pose.' I looked up. He sat, eyes closed, his chin tilted towards the sun, as if listening intently to the words... 'Jefferson knelt beside the hedgerows and contemplated the elegance of the female form. Delia appeared to be...stroking the... hip line of Persephone's undulating body and gazing at her with rapt intent. Softly, she ran her -

Beat.

- tongue over Persephone's rose-hued skin.' All right. All right. Enough! 'Patrick,' I cried, 'I can't read this! I'm a widow!' 'Keep reading, Winsome, please just keep reading.'

ZOE STRUTHERS

A spotlight in the black illuminates the savagely painted face of the aging American diva who sings without accompaniment:

ZOE.

I've got something to say -

The crowd erupts into wild applause.

I'm not going away -

The lights come up, the piano joins in, and the whole woman is revealed as she continues to sing, building in pitch and confidence, strutting her extraordinary stuff. She walks around the edge of the stage, waving and blowing kisses as she sings to members of the cheering audience:

I'm not shedding a tear...

I'm not wearing a frown...

I'm not going under!

I'm not going down!

I'm not defeated at all!

I've not gone to the wall!

Say what you will and say what you do,

This baby's not met her Waterloo!

I'm turning on my engines!

I still got some thrust!

Nobody can say that I've bitten the dust...

My temperture's risin',

Now ain't that surprisin' -

THE LADY IS BACK!

A male show-bizzy voice.

ANNOUNCER. Ladies and gentlemen - I give you Zoe Struthers!

She breaks off singing to great applause. She takes a moment to savour it, then beckons to the audience to quieten down.

ZOE. Hello, Melbourne!

The crowd applauds, whistles. Bad Australian accent:

Goodonyamate!

The audience goes wild.

It is so, so good to be back! I love this city!

You may recall that I was last on your fair shores in 1997. A lot of water under the bridge, oh me oh my! Lot o' water. But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, right?

Cheers.

You do? Right. Well, a lot of them said: 'She's over. She's washed up.' And you know, there was a time there I would have agreed with them.

Very serious, quiet:

For a while there, the magic vanished. I'll be honest with you folks, I didn't really know who I was any more.

Beat.

But guess what? There was life in the old girl yet!

Z-PAC THEATRE AUDITION

SHOW: 'BOMBSHELLS' by Joanna Murray-Smith

Name: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Please note: You must be a Financial Member of Z-Pac Theatre to be involved in a production. To be a member, go online to zpactheatre.com .

1. Will you accept any role in this production? Yes _____ No _____

If not, please list which roles you will accept:

2. Please list a summary of relevant theatre experience. Attach a resume if you wish.

3. Would you be interested in working back stage, if not cast in this show? Yes _____ No _____

4. If yes, please circle or highlight what you would like to be involved with:

Props	Costumes	Lights	Assistant Stage Manager	Sound
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Producer	Publicity	Set	Make-up	Hair
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5. Are there any one-off or repeating appointments/conflicts (like work, booked holidays, child's extra curricular etc) that would interfere with Tuesday evening and Sunday afternoon rehearsals between now and the show? If so, please list. (Attach an extra page, if necessary).

6. Anything else? Do you have any interesting or useful talents? Please share.

7. If your audition is successful, you may not have to attend every rehearsal in the first weeks. Circle your preferred times: Tue 7pm / Tue 8pm / Sun 1pm / Sun 2pm / Sun 3pm

