



Foundation in Acting Course

2023 Audition Pieces

Australian National Memorial Theatre Ltd

Registered Training Organisation 3600

Foundation in Acting 2023 Audition Pieces

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A Property of the Clan

Nick Enright

JARED

I wasn't in a party mood. And Wayne Hanley and Culcott and Davo and them were all... It was like everyone was really agro. Anyway, I wandered off on my own, and went in the water, down the other end of the beach, and I was splashing around, a bit pissed but not that pissed, and I started to wonder what it would be like to... you know... It's the way I was feeling. Anyway I came out and went up to the sandhills, and I had a couple of cones I bought off Davo, and I was sitting up there, having a smoke, having a think, a think and a smoke, and starting to feel okay, you know, and it was quiet. And I was just getting myself together to come and find you and... I saw down below me, Scott Abbott, dragging someone across the sandhills. Scott was pulling her by the arm. 'Tracy. Come on, Tracy. Come on'. She was... blind, legless. Off her face. And he pulled her down on the ground, and he never stopped talking the whole time, talking her into it, talking her through it. And then she wasn't giggling no more, she started to sound like... like some animal in pain.

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The Golden Age

Louis Nowra

FRANCIS

(Betsheb is sitting, staring out at the evening sun. Near her feet are flowers she has just picked. She hums a tune to herself. FRANCIS enters and watches BETSHEB for some time.) Are you looking at the sunset? *(BETSHEB turns around, startled.)* *(Smiling)* I'm not an ogre...no more running. *(Silence. He walks closer to the river.)* Look at us reflected in the water, see? Upside down. *(He smiles, she smiles back. Silence.)* So quiet. I'm not used to such silence. I'm a city boy, born and bred. You've never seen a city or town, have you? Where I live there are dozens of factories: shoe factories, some that make gaskets, hydraulic machines, clothing. My mother has worked in a shoe factory for years. *(Pointing to his boots)* These came from my mother's factory. *(Noticing something in the water)* See, a fish. Do you people fish? *(Silence)* These sunsets here, I've never seen the likes of them. A bit of muddy orange light in the distance, behind the factories and chimneys, is generally all I get to see. *(Pause)* You'd like the trams, especially at night. They rattle and squeak, like ghosts rattling their chains, and every so often the conducting rod hits a terminus and there is a brilliant spark of electricity, like an axe striking a rock. Spiss! On Saturday afternoon thousands of people go and watch the football. A huge oval of grass. A ball like this. *(Pretending he has it)* Someone hand passes it, whish, straight to me. I duck one lumbering giant, spin around a nifty dwarf of a rover, then I catch sight of the goals. I boot a seventy-yard drop kick straight through the centre! The crowd go wild! *(He cheers wildly. BETSHEB laughs at his actions. He is pleased to have made her laugh.)* Not as good as your play though.

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Gary's House

Debra Oswald

GARY

One day the old man sends me and my big sister off to stay with Nana. When I say, "Nana " you've got a picture of some lovely old lady, right? Well not this bitch. She didn't like kids and she was nasty with it, you know? Anyway, a week later, he drives us home again. Mum's not there. She'd been really sick and that, so I'm going – "Where's Mum? And he wouldn't answer me. I'm seven years old, right? Seven years old. He never told me she died. This friend of my Mum comes over – nice lady – and she says, "Hop in the car, Gary. You're going to your new house today." So I'm thinking, "Whacko. New house. Dad'll be there. Sister'll be there." Only it's strangers. Foster parents. Dickheads. Fair dinkum, I don't know how they pick out some of these people to look after kids. I was seven years old and one bloke belted me like he was killing a dog with a shovel. Made me eat my dinner on the back porch like a stray. I ended up biting that fuckwit on the leg. They moved me again. The last foster parents – they were Salvos – they were nice. But by then I was a little shithead. Acting up. Ended up in juvenile detention. Four years. Stayed out of trouble since then but. Been in plenty of fights and made a mess of things, but I stayed out of trouble. Moving around. Prawn trawler. Oil rig. Abattoir. Sitting on bulldozers in the desert in WA. And all the time I was thinking – "If I ever find that bastard, I'll kill him."

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The One Day of the Year

Alan Seymour

HUGHIE

Do you know what you're celebrating today? Do you even know what it all meant? Have you ever bothered to dig a bit, find out what really happened back there, what this day meant? Wacka was an ordinary soldier who did what he was told. He and his mates became a legend, all right, they've had to live up to it. Every year on the great day they've had to do the right thing, make the right speeches, talk of the death they left there. But did any of them ever sit down and look back at that damn stupid climb up those rocks to see what it meant? It's here.

Encyclopedia for Australian Kids. You gave it to me yourself. Used to make me read the Anzac chapter every year. Well, I read it...enough times to start seeing through it. Do you know what that Gallipoli campaign meant? Bugger all. A face-saving device. An expensive shambles. It was the biggest fiasco of the war. [Starts to read rapidly] 'The British were in desperate straits. Russia was demanding that the Dardanelles be forced by the British Navy and Constantinople taken. The Navy could not do it alone and wanted Army support. Kitchener said the British Army had no men available.' So what did they do? The Admiralty insisted it be done no matter what the risk. Britain's Russian ally was expecting it. There was one solution. Australian and New Zealand troops had just got to Cairo for their initial training. Untrained men, untried. 'Perhaps they could be used.' Perhaps. Perhaps they could be pushed in there, into a place everybody knew was impossible to take from the sea, to make the big gesture necessary...to save the face of the British...the British, Dad, bloody Poms. THEY pushed those men up those cliffs, that April morning, knowing, KNOWING it was suicide.

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Sweet Road

Debra Oswald

JO

We always used to head off on family holidays at this time of the day. Really early. Dad'd have the station wagon packed up ready the night before. Me and my brother lay out our travelling clothes on the bedroom floor, in the shape of us. And then suddenly it was four o'clock in the morning with Dad whispering, 'Wake up, sweetheart'. And we'd see the sliver of light on in the kitchen and Mum filling the thermos. 'You two should eat a piece of toast.' But we couldn't eat anything – there was always that hollow, sickly feeling in the guts – not enough sleep and too much excitement. We'd get into our clothes – wobbly on our legs. We'd totter out to the carport. Look at our neighbours' sleeping houses. It was like we knew some secret they didn't. They were still snoozing away, dumb to the world, but we were heading off. Intoxication – I mean, being awake and wearing clothes and driving in the car before the sun was up was so overwhelmingly special, you must be going to some exotic, unexpected place that a kid couldn't even imagine yet. Anyway, we'd always go to some budget caravan park on the coast with lots of bossy signs – 'No Pets', 'No Fish Cleaning', 'No Ball Games'. There were always mysterious patches of soggy grass and that vague smell of sewage. The thing was though, when we headed off at dawn, last year's soggy, stinky van park didn't matter – like it didn't dim my hopes one tiny bit. Who knows where we'd end up this year? Leaving at that special time, you could go anywhere...

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Crazy Brave
Michael Gurr

DEBORAH

We were members of the public. We bought tickets. We dressed up. We walked in. And along with all other members of the public, the actual members of the actual public, who, like us, had paid seventy-five dollars for their tickets, we were given vouchers. Two vouchers. One for champagne. One for the souvenir key-ring. So we got our key-rings, and we got our champagne and we stood amongst the throng on the vast and beautiful imported tiles until the trumpets began to play. And the lights changed, and we looked up, hundreds of members of the public looking up to the balcony where the dignitaries stood. Men of unimaginable wealth and their women of unimaginable breasts. Famous faces glittering down at us. Young pigs and their tit-models. And as the greatest of the dignitaries, the man whose money had built the place, the man who had named the museum restaurant after his laminated wife, as he stepped forward to speak, with his beautiful white cuffs around his beautiful wrists, as the great hall was utterly hushed – we threw gladbags full of vomit at them. After all, they throw vomit at us. I tell you: the combination of Givenchy and vomit leaves an unforgettable impression (beat). How did we get away? Did we take the limo? No, I think we ran like the fucking clappers.

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The Gut Girls
Sarah Daniels

ELLEN

I pawned all my books today, but it doesn't matter. It wouldn't have mattered in the end what I'd said or done. It wouldn't have made a shred of difference what five hundred of us had done. We'd still have been out of work. They'd still have got their way – those people with their schemes and funds and clubs and allowances – all thought up out of fear – out of fear that we the ones who made their wealth might get out of hand. So we need to be tamed and trained to succumb to their values and orders. What's the point of kicking against it when all you damage is your foot. And I'm left trying to explain myself to, yes, even to Jasper and Sebastian who reply, 'But Ellen, at least she found them all work.' Yes, but in service – in service. I could tell by the look on their faces that they couldn't see anything wrong. Why should they? After all, isn't that what we're here for? You service your husband and your children. What's wrong with servicing those deemed better than you – at least you get paid for it. I don't want to keep arguing and kicking against it. I don't want to stick out like a sore thumb and be seen as odd. Who am I to call the others fools, when I am the biggest laughing stock of the lot – actually believing that I had any say over what happened to me or anyone else.

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Furious

Michael Gow

ALISON

Mothers would make the best detectives. They'd soon solve most cases. Clues, Mr Henning. The tiniest things give people away and mothers notice more than anyone. Anticipation is a pretty clear sign. That's because we've all wanted time to pass quicker so that we can rush off to be with someone. Then there's the name repeated once too often in the one sentence. A subject brought into the discussion simply so that that name can be repeated. Yes, that's a real giveaway, the name. Music. Played too loud, or taken off as soon as someone else comes into the house, music that's never been listened to before. And why would my son wear a key pinned inside his school blazer? [She throws the key on the floor]. There are no secrets from mothers. I thought your job was to create. You've done nothing but destroy. You destroyed my family. I'm going to tell everyone about you. I want every gutter newspaper to know, every journalist on television, every sensational news program to expose you. If I had a gun, I'd kill you.