

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Voyage of the Poppykettle

by Bruce Paterson

EXTRACT

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Sc 1.

Soundscape of waves at the shoreline, rushing up the beach and being pulled back to the sea.

The PERFORMERS enter and address the audience.

PERFORMERS

You.....are human.....we are another
people.....you humans rarely see us,
and if you do, you think you are imagining.....
which is true.....we walk the shadow-line
between what is real, and what is fantasy.....
.....we have a double nature- we are
imagined, and become real....

One of the performers as ARNICA addresses the audience.

ARNICA

.....We lived in Peru, a country in South
America.....and dwelled in harmony with
the land and all of nature....

Another Performer enters as AVANTE, moving his arms as if paddling a canoe.

AVANTE

Peli-caaan!!!

ARNICA

To the real world- the human world, we
appear small.

The Third Performer enters as BROWN PELICAN.

AVANTE

Pelican, where are you?!

BROWN PELICAN

Up here, Avante!.....

(greedily)

.....I can see a whole school of anchovy.....
.....just waiting...

AVANTE

Pelican, you ate our whole catch this
morning.

BROWN PELICAN

.....only the big ones....there were plenty of others- all those littlies you threw back.....

AVANTE

If I didn't there wouldn't be any fish.

BROWN PELICAN

Yeah yeah...

(diving)

....Yee-h-!.....

He stops diving as Avante prays to the gods- Pelican bows his head impatiently.

AVANTE

We thank you, El Nino, god of the seas.....for these gifts from your waters.....

Pelican, thinking he's finished, dives but bows again as:

AVANTE

.....for your guiding currents....and for the.....

Pelican, fed up, dives.

BROWN PELICAN

....Yaaaaaaaaahhhh!!!!.....

AVANTE

Pelican!

Loud eating noises from Pelican.

BROWN PELICAN

See Avante, there's plenty!.....

A fish swims about the performance space.

BROWN PELICAN

....Hey!.....Haaa!!...

(swims about chasing it)

The fish jumps over the canoe and Avante joins in the chase, laughing with delight.
