

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Collected Short Plays

by Alex Broun

EXTRACT

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COLLECTED SHORT PLAYS : PLAY 1

Southern Cross
Swastika

Cast

HEINRICH

HERMAN

JOSEF

Setting

Bar.

Time

Night.

Production History

Southern Cross Swastika was first produced at Short & Sweet 2003 at the Newtown Theatre in Sydney. Directed by Travis Williams.

Also in 2003 the play was then produced as part of The Suction Soiree at The Friend in Hand, Glebe, Sydney. Again directed by Travis Williams.

In 2004 the play was produced as a part of “Refugitive”, two anti-war pro-refugee plays at The Cellar, Sydney University. Again directed by Travis Williams.

Southern Cross Swastika

Bar. Night.

HEINRICH, JOSEF and **HERMAN** sit at a table. They drink beer.

HEINRICH: The Olympics were important -

HERMAN: Important ? They were magnificent.

HEINRICH: The Olympics were important in terms of our progress as a nation. They were an important step in nation building.

JOSEF: (TO **HERMAN**) You must learn to listen friend.

HEINRICH: Don't make this personal.

JOSEF: No. It is where he falls down and he needs to know it. If you had read my last pamphlet you would -

HERMAN: I am listening now.

JOSEF: (POINTING TO **HEINRICH**) Our friend here has the ability to see the bigger picture. Where our current direction is taking us. The future.

HERMAN: Really ?

JOSEF: Where as you only see the spectacle, the moment. The fun. That is why he is the Party secretary. That's why he won the vote.

HEINRICH: Joe. The election is over. I was lucky enough to win. (PATTING **HERMAN ON THE BACK**) Our friend was mature enough to accept the result with grace. Now we must move on. There is much to be done.

HERMAN: Thank you, friend.

HEINRICH: The Olympics. We all accept they were an important part of the process. Our athletes superlative performance announced to the world our true potential. What we can be.

HERMAN: Agreed.

HEINRICH: The superb facilities, the unequalled opening ceremony. It was widely accepted as the best Olympics ever.

JOSEF: To us.

HEINRICH: No. To our friends and supporters everywhere.

THEY CLINK GLASSES.

HEINRICH: But now we must take the next step. We have shown and continue to show our superiority on the sporting fields - but if this country is to develop. To be all that it can be. We have to be leaders now – not just followers.

HERMAN: But our allies –

HEINRICH: Our allies are only important in what they can do for us. How they can help to strengthen our position.

HERMAN: Dangerous talk.

JOSEF: We will never be truly great until we can stand alone. Proudly independent.

HEINRICH: True. And we have the resources and the ability to be a truly great power. But do we have the discipline. The ruthlessness.

HERMAN: Ruthlessness ?

HEINRICH: Let's look at the current situation. It's embarrassing. A distraction.

JOSEF: Agreed.

HEINRICH: And that is why tomorrow I'm going to put to the Party another solution - as it is clear the current method is not working.

JOSEF: Clear.

HEINRICH: The camps are not working. We put these ...people in there, indefinitely, and then what are we left with.

HERMAN AND JOSEF: Heil Hitler.

HEINRICH NODS AND EXITS. **JOSEF** LAUGHS AND WHACKS
HERMAN ON THE BACK. HE FINISHES HIS BEER

AS THE LIGHTS FADE.

COLLECTED SHORT PLAYS : PLAY 2

Armistice Day

Cast

PHIL a Korean War Veteran, 70s

KENNY a young man, 20s

Setting

War Memorial in a large city

Time

Armistice Day. Dawn.

Production History

Armistice Day was first produced at Short & Sweet 2002 at the Newtown Theatre in Sydney. Directed by Andrew Matthews.

ARMISTICE DAY

War Memorial. Dawn.

PHIL, a War Veteran, dressed in suit and with medals pinned on his chest, enters. He carries a can of beer. He walks slowly to the War Memorial.

KENNY, a young man in battle fatigues, enters. He watches **PHIL**.

PHIL reaches the War Memorial. He opens the can of beer and pours a little on to the Memorial. He goes to place the beer on the ground next to the Memorial but it's too far to lean and he struggles.

KENNY moves to **PHIL**.

KENNY: Let me.

KENNY puts out his hand. **PHIL** gives him the beer and **KENNY** places it down next to the memorial.

The two men step back and stand in front of the Memorial in silent reflection. Pause.

KENNY: So, how many did you kill ?

PHIL DOES NOT RESPOND.

KENNY: Hey Grand-dad, I said how many did you kill ?

PHIL: Pardon me.

KENNY: Your hearing aid on the blink ? How many did you kill ? You know ? Wogs, Niggers, Gooks. How many did you blow away ?

PAUSE.

PHIL: I'm not sure.

KENNY: Come on grand dad. Don't be modest. You're among friends now. How many ? Five, ten, fifty. Got some nice medals there, must've killed a few.

PHIL: I was given these for acts of bravery.

KENNY: Exactly. Killing the enemy.

PHIL: Saving the lives of my fellow soldiers.

KENNY: Yeah, by killing the enemy.

PAUSE. **PHIL** TURNS AWAY.

KENNY: And what we're you packing ? Semi-automatic, automatic. SK - 47. Or did you pack the heavy artillery ? The large calibre. The big boys. Cause some real havoc.

PHIL: They carried them.

KENNY: Who ?

PHIL: The enemy. They carried SK- 47s.

KENNY: That's right. Russian Assault rifles. They had them. Bloody gooks. Gunned you down. Bet you lost a few eh ? In your own Company. Saw a few of your best mates picked off before your two eyes. Held them in your arms as they struggled for their last breath.

PHIL: I lost a few. We all did.

KENNY: Too right. Damn shame. Bloody shame.

KENNY PULLS OUT A BLACK TEXTA. HE OFFERS IT TO **PHIL**.

KENNY: Will you sign my fatigues ? Add your initials to my personal roll of honour.

HE SHOWS **PHIL** HIS SHIRT SLEEVE WHICH HAS A FEW AUTOGRAPHS ALREADY SIGNED. **PHIL** LOOKS AT HIM.

KENNY: But only if you've actually done the business. Only if you've put a few Gooks down. Every man who's sign this shirt is a certifiable Gook killer.

HE CONTINUES CHANTING AS THE LIGHTS FADE.

END PLAY.

COLLECTED SHORT PLAYS : PLAY 3

Tel Aviv Disco Bombing

Cast

ARIEL

JULIA

Setting

Office.

Time

Afternoon.

Production History

Tel Aviv Disco Bombing was first produced at Short & Sweet 2005 at the Seymour Centre in Sydney. Directed by Katy Alexander.

Tel Aviv Disco Bombing

Office. Tel Aviv, Israel. 2pm.

ARIEL at his desk, reading. There is a knock at the door.

ARIEL: Yes.

THE DOOR OPENS SLIGHTLY. JULIA IS THERE, CARRYING A FOLDER.

JULIA: It's only me.

ARIEL: (STANDING) Julia. Yes, come in. Come in. Sit down.

ARIEL GUIDES HER TO A CHAIR.

JULIA: Please tell me I didn't miss it. Please.

ARIEL: No – you made the deadline.

JULIA: Thank you. I was fretting.

ARIEL: There's plenty of time for the deadline.

ARIEL SITS DOWN. HE PICKS UP SOME PAPERS.

JULIA: Is that it ?

ARIEL: Yes.

JULIA: (STANDING) I'm sorry. I thought you'd had time to ...
Impatient. I'll come back.

ARIEL: No, it's fine.

JULIA: You've read it ?

ARIEL: Yes.

JULIA: Already ?

ARIEL: Yes.

JULIA: And ?

PAUSE. SHE SITS.

JULIA: It's good, isn't it ?

ARIEL: No, not good. Great.

JULIA: Thank you.

ARIEL: Perhaps the best story you've done since you came to us.

JULIA: I was happy.

ARIEL: First class.

JULIA: Thank you.

ARIEL: Does anybody else –

JULIA: No. I didn't tell anybody. Not even my husband.

ARIEL: Good.

JULIA: I was busting to but ...

ARIEL: Well done.

JULIA: So ... where do you think it will run ?

ARIEL: This is a cover. No doubt.

JULIA: I thought so. I don't mean to – but I did... A cover. Yes !
(OPENING FOLDER) And I've been down to see Cassandra
and found some amazing photos. Look at this one of one of the
... This could be the cover.

JULIA MOVES TOWARDS ARIEL. ARIEL HOLDS UP HIS HAND.

ARIEL: Julia – I can't use this story.

JULIA: But ...you just said.

ARIEL: Cover.

JULIA: Yes cover. You said -

ARIEL: It is a great story.

JULIA: But then ...

ARIEL: A truly excellent piece of journalism.

JULIA: Then why -

ARIEL: That doesn't change the fact -

JULIA: But, I don't –

ARIEL: That I can't use it. (PAUSE) You know what is happening
tomorrow ?

JULIA: How could I not know ?

ARIEL: Well ...

JULIA: How does my story affect that ?

ARIEL: Don't be so naïve.

JULIA: Pardon me.

ARIEL: We may not be the biggest paper but we are certainly read.