

Connections Plays 2019

STUFF

by Tom Wells

Vinny's organising a surprise birthday party for his mate, Anita. It's not going well: his choice of venue is a bit misguided, Anita's not keen on leaving the house, and everyone else has their own stuff going on. Maybe a surprise party wasn't the best idea?

A play about trying (but not really managing) to help.

Cast size: 9

Why I wrote this play

'I wanted to write about friendship, loss, and the way people try to do the right thing for their mates when there isn't really a right thing to do.'

VARIATIONS

by Katie Hims

Thirteen-year-old Alice wishes her life was completely different. She wakes up one morning to find that her life *is* different. In fact, it's so different that all she wants to do is get back to normality. But how does she do that?

A play about family, string theory and breakfast.

Cast size: 13

Why I wrote this play

'I wanted to write about that feeling we can all have, that we wish our lives were different, particularly when it comes to our families. I also love stories about parallel universes and plays that repeat themselves. I wondered "What if a young girl wakes up repeatedly to all the various families she might have had?"'

SALT

by Dawn King

Life is never plain sailing, but when a new government initiative comes into place offering young people the chance to train and learn skills overseas, droves of teens jump at the chance to secure their future. Once on board the transport ship, the promises of the glossy advert seem a far cry from what lies ahead.

A play about generations, choices and hope.

Cast size: 12 – 20

Why I wrote this play

'I was interested in the idea of young people being treated badly by the older generation, of their being "sold out". I was also drawn to the idea of a ship full of young people who are sailing away to find their futures and fortunes in a similar way to how young people have gone to sea or joined the army/navy for many centuries. I wanted to write about young people taking control, and finding their own path to their own future.'

CHAOS

by Laura Lomas

A girl is locked in a room. A boy brings another boy flowers. A girl has tied herself to a railing. A boy doesn't know who he is. A girl worries about impending catastrophe. A woman jumps in front of a train. A boy's heart falls out his chest. A butterfly has a broken wing.

Chaos is a symphony of dislocated and interconnected scenes. A series of characters search for meaning in a complicated and unstable world. Bouncing through physics, the cosmos, love and violence, they find order in the disorder of each other.

Cast size: 8 – 30

Why I wrote this play

'I'm interested in chaos. I think most of the time we try to impose order on our lives – we're scared of the mess of being alive; we want to contain it, to put our hands around it. I wanted to write something that embraced chaos, that celebrated it, in all its strange unpredictable energy, in all its trouble, and its beauty. I didn't want it to always make sense, but I did want it to feel very alive – all the ways I remember feeling as a teenager.'

FLESH

by Rob Drummond

A group of teenagers wake up in a forest with no clue how they got there. They find themselves separated into two different teams but have no idea what game they are expected to play. With no food, no water and seemingly no chance of escape, it's only a matter of time before things start to get drastic. But whose side are people on and how far will they go to survive?

This is a play about human nature, the tribes we create and cannibalism.

Cast size: 12 – 20

Why I wrote this play

'I was interested in the question, "What's Wrong with Cannibalism?" On the surface, it seems like a slightly comedic, almost ridiculous question. However, it is in answering such questions – and answering them honestly – that the truth of human nature can really be explored.'

THE SMALL HOURS

by Katherine Soper

It's the middle of the night and Peebs and Epi are the only students left at school over half-term. At the end of their night out, former step-siblings Red and Jazz try to navigate their reunion. With only a couple of hours until morning, Jaffa tries to help Keesh finish an essay. As day breaks, Wolfie is getting up the courage to confess a secret to VJ at a party.

Their choices are small yet momentous. The hours are small but feel very, very long. And when the night finally ends, the future is waiting – all of it.

Cast size: 8 – 12

Why I wrote this play

'I wanted to write about the differences between adolescence and adulthood and explore whether snapshots of our lives as adolescents can illuminate the people we eventually become, as well as the way time can feel like a wide-open expanse when you're young. Ultimately I wanted to write a piece that paid

tribute to the small yet momentous events and choices of being a teenager, while showing how those fit into the larger shape of a life.'

BARRO

by **Nell Leyshon**

choreography by **Anthony Missen**

A group of classmates is torn apart by the opportunity to perform their own dance. As they disagree and bicker, two distinct physical groups emerge and separate into opposing teams.

When a strange outsider appears – out of step with everyone else – the divide is disrupted. A contemporary narrative dance piece about individuality, community and heritage.

Cast size: 10 – 50

Why I wrote this play

'I wanted to write a play that used the language of the body as well as the tongue. The point where text meets movement is a fascinating place to explore, and I thought it important to engage young people who might not be interested in straight performance, but something more dynamic. I also wanted to address how many judgements we make when we meet new people, both conscious and unconscious.'

AGELESS

by **Benjamin Kuffuor**

'Generations to come will view this as the moment that the curse of ageing was removed and the world was able to look to tomorrow without the fear of a failing mind or body.'

In a not too distant future, Temples pharmaceutical corporation has quite literally changed the face of ageing. Their miracle drug keeps its users looking perpetually teenage. With an ever youthful population, how can society support those who are genuinely young?

A play which questions what it means to be young and the ways in which generations collide.

Cast size: 15

Why I wrote this play

'Writing for a young cast forced me to think about a premise that interrogated the idea of youth. This led me to think about how ageing is viewed in the West as something to fear: many industries owe their existence to our quest to avoid ageing in a cosmetic sense and increasingly in a more cerebral sense too.'

The final two plays in the Connections 2019 portfolio will be confirmed in summer 2018.