Faculty of Fine Arts and Music Application Booklet

Entry requirements for 2021 Entry to Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre)

*Please read the following instructions carefully*

**Audition for BFA Theatre.**

2020 first-round auditions for the BFA Theatre will be via video submission. Further information will be given to each candidate invited to call-back.

**There are five components to your video submission:**

1. Statement to camera
2. Self-devised piece
3. Shakespeare Monologue from this booklet
4. Contemporary Monologue from this booklet
5. 16 bars of song

1. **Statement to Camera:** Begin by stating your name clearly and in full. State the course for which you are auditioning. You must prepare a video submission or each course for which you are auditioning.

2. **Self-devised piece:** Create and film, in one take, a self-devised performance piece of a minimum of two minutes and a maximum of three minutes in length. Your self-devised submission is a chance for you to share your interests, passions, aesthetic and creativity as a theatre performer-maker. You will not be assessed on the use of technology nor the quality of the ‘filming’. You will be assessed on your potential as a performer and theatre-maker—further notes on filming and devising below.

3. & 4. **Shakespeare and Contemporary Monologue:** You must prepare and film one monologue from VCA contemporary list and another from the VCA Shakespeare list. Aim to choose contrasting pieces that you connect with and which demonstrates your range as a performer. Each monologue should be a maximum of three minutes in length. Each monologue must be filmed
in one take and uploaded for submission. Again, we encourage you to use a still camera/video device positioned to capture your whole body. You must announce the name of the character and name of the play before performing

4. **16 bars of song:** You must prepare 16 bars (approximately 4-6 lines) of any song to be sung acapella (without accompaniment). This is an opportunity for you to interpret the text and tell a story when working in another form. It is not a test of whether you sing well or not!

**Notes on Filming your audition pieces:**

- The most important thing is that we can see and hear you. Make sure that you are well lit (don't use backlighting). Please test the quality of light and sound before recording your pieces.

- Set your camera up so that the panel sees your entire body. Do not use closeups or mid shots.

- Devised pieces: move as needed and face the direction that best supports the intentions of your work but keep your body within shot at all times.

- Monologues: You must announce the name of the character and name of the play before performing. You may need to reset your space between your devised piece and your monologues. However, you don't need to edit or cut between your two monologues and song – these three elements can be presented in one take.

- Perform your monologues and song predominantly toward the camera, but you don’t have to stand on the spot.

- Please remember that this is a video submission for a theatre and performance course so bring your full self, full voice and entire body to the performance task even though you are performing in front of a camera.
Notes on preparing your devised piece:

This is an opportunity for you to create a performance that shows us something about your interests, abilities and aesthetic as a performer and theatre-maker. This is your chance to translate your ideas into a theatrical space and theatrical images and show us what you love to do and make on stage. You might want to share your interest in very dramatic work or comic work. You might want to show your passion for movement, or for telling stories or for creating images and theatrical spaces or characters. Show us the sort of theatre that you love to make and perform in!

This must be a solo performance and not include other performers. It must be filmed in one take.

Be aware that you will be required to present your theatre-making piece live in an audition room so, for this reason, remember that this is not a film-making exercise.

Your video submission should be a minimum of two minutes and a maximum of three minutes in length. We will not be able to see any more than 3 minutes of any individual performance piece.

The starting point for your piece should be something that stimulates your imagination as a performer and as a creator: it might be a character, or a historical figure, a photo, a story, a photo, painting, a piece of music, a poem or a news article or an issue that interests you and that you can use as a starting point for a short piece of theatre or performance.

Consider how to use any or all of the following in your piece:

- **Text** – this might be your own writing, or it might be ‘found’ text from real life (verbatim text) or text adapted from a novel, a poem, a newspaper, song, a political speech etc

- **Action** – the use of gesture, physicality, dance and movement. This could be ‘found’ movement created by copying and theatricalising actions from everyday life (walking a dog, making a bed, etc.) or it might be more transposed or dynamic movement that captures the essence of a feeling or theme. You might choose to use a combination of text and movement, or it might be a theatre piece solely in movement.

- **Objects** - the use of props, items of costume, signs, pictures, photographs, symbolic objects. You can use things realistically – for their intended purpose or against their intended purpose - a chair might be a chair, but it
could also be a bed, a car, a dance partner, a jail cell, a mountain to climb over.

- **Sound** - the use of live music (singing, any instrument you play), recorded music, sound effects, background noise.

- **Fiction** – are you playing a character, in an imagined setting, past or future?

- **Senses** – Think about how you can address your audience’s sense to evoke and communicate your ideas: what do we hear and see in addition to you during your performance? Do we hear noises from the outside world, are you performing indoors in a corner, or in front of a window? What colours do we see around you, behind you or do you deliberately perform in a neutral ‘blank’ space? (In a live call-back, how could you appeal to our other senses?)

- **Use of architecture and space**: Do you move a lot in the space or mainly stand still? Do you use the walls of the space, do you work in the centre of the space, or only on the edges against the walls? Do you delineate a smaller space in which to perform, or do you use the entire expanse of the space? Think about what use of space will be best serve your theme or story.

- **Time and timing**: Your piece should have a beginning, a middle and an ending. Think about how to construct your piece rhythmically with dramatic or comic build within the 3 minutes of your piece. Think about how to begin your piece? And importantly, how to end? Where does it crescendo – reach its highest point of action or interest?

- You may choose to support your work through the addition of simple **costume elements**.

- Should you be asked to attend a live call-back, you will perform this piece live
Notes on preparing your monologues from the VCA lists

It will help you as an actor to read the entire play from which your monologue is chosen to place the speech in context and understand more fully the situation that the character is responding to or speaking about in the monologue. Should you be asked to attend a live call-back, you may be asked questions about the character and their situation (the who, where what and why of the text) so that the panel can work with you further and give you direction based on a shared understanding of the character’s circumstances.

We are interested in seeing how well you can relate to and connect with the character. Make the character’s situation and circumstances your own at an imaginative level. Aim to connect with each image and with the character’s use of language and rhythm. Aim to present your monologue in a way which shows your connection with the monologue and the character – we are interested in seeing YOUR interpretation of the text.

Your monologue must be memorised. We cannot audition you if you haven't memorised the text. Memorising the text will allow you to concentrate more fully on your performance. There are lots of tips online about ways to help you memorise lines.

Before you film your monologue, it may help you to ‘perform’ it to some trusted friends or colleagues so that you remember that you are preparing a piece of theatre (i.e. for an audience) rather than submitting a screen acting audition.

Use your natural speaking voice and accent.

If you are unfamiliar with a word or with imagery or references, make sure to look them up so that you can commit with a full understanding of all the words in the monologue. Again, there are lots of word finder and pronunciation guides online.

You don’t have to stand still throughout your monologue – you can use movement and gesture to support the intentions of the character/speaker.

You can choose any character from either list.
Notes on What to Wear:

* For your monologues, wear neutral or plain clothes with minimal jewellery. It is not necessary to wear make-up or have to costume for your monologues. Remember that we are most interested in you and your performance skills.
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VCA SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUES
Applicant’s selection of classical speeches are non-gender specific. All genders are welcome to select freely from the Shakespeare list provided.

Berowne
Love’s Labour Lost: Act 3, Scene 1

And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love’s whip;
A very beadle to a humorous sigh;
A critic, nay, a night-watch constable;
A domineering pedant o’er the boy;
Than whom no mortal so magnificent!
This whimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy;
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid;
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
Dread prince of plackets, king of codpieces,
Solo imperator and great general
Of trotting ‘paritors:--O my little heart:--
And I to be a corporal of his field,
And wear his colours like a tumbler’s hoop!
What, I! I love! I sue! I seek a wife!
A woman, that is like a German clock,
Still a-repairing, ever out of frame,
And never going aight, being a watch,
But being watch’d that it may still go right!
Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all;
And, among three, to love the worst of all;
A wightly wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes;
Ay, and by heaven, one that will do the deed
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard:
And I to sigh for her! to watch for her!
To pray for her! Go to; it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue and groan:
Some men must love my lady and some Joan.
CARDINAL PANDULPH
King John: Act 3, Scene 1

So makest thou faith an enemy to faith;
And like a civil war set’st oath to oath,
Thy tongue against thy tongue. O, let thy vow
First made to heaven, first be to heaven perform’d,
That is, to be the champion of our church!
What since thou sworest is sworn against thyself
And may not be performed by thyself,
For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss
Is not amiss when it is truly done,
And being not done, where doing tends to ill,
The truth is then most done not doing it:
The better act of purposes mistook
Is to mistake again; though indirect,
Yet indirection thereby grows direct,
And falsehood falsehood cures, as fire cools fire
Within the scorched veins of one new-burn’d.
It is religion that doth make vows kept;
But thou hast sworn against religion,
By what thou swear’st against the thing thou swear’st,
And makest an oath the surety for thy truth
Against an oath: the truth thou art unsure
To swear, swears only not to be forsworn;
Else what a mockery should it be to swear!
But thou dost swear only to be forsworn;
And most forsworn, to keep what thou dost swear.
JAILER'S DAUGHTER
TWO NOBLE KINSMEN
ACT 2, SCENE 4

Why should I love this Gentleman? Tis odds
He never will affect me; I am base,
My Father the mean keeper of his Prison,
And he a prince: To marry him is hopeless;
To be his whore is witless. Out upon't;
First, I saw him; I, seeing, thought he was a goodly man;
He has as much to please a woman in him,
(If he please to bestow it so) as ever
These eyes yet looked on. Next, I pitied him,
And so would any young wench, o' my conscience,
That ever dreamed, or vowed her maidenhead
To a young handsome Man; Then I loved him,
Extremely loved him, infinitely loved him;
And yet he had a cousin, fair as he too.
But in my heart was Palamon, and there,
Lord, what a coil he keeps! To hear him
Sing in an evening, what a heaven it is!
And yet his Songs are sad ones. Fairer spoken
Was never Gentleman. When I come in
To bring him water in a morning, first
He bows his noble body, then salutes me, thus:
'Fair, gentle maid, good morrow; may thy goodness
Get thee a happy husband.' Once he kissed me.
I loved my lips the better ten days after.
Would he would do so ev'ry day! He grieves much,
And me as much to see his misery.
What should I do, to make him know I love him?
For I would fain enjoy him. Say I ventured
To set him free? what says the law then?
(snaps her fingers)Thy much
For Law, or kindred! I will do it,
And this night, or tomorrow, he shall love me.
ANGELO
Measure for Measure: Act 2, Scene 2

From thee, even from thy virtue!
What's this, what's this? Is this her fault or mine?
The tempter or the tempted, who sins most? Ha!
Not she: nor doth she tempt: but it is I
That, lying by the violet in the sun,
Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be
That modesty may more betray our sense
Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,
Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary
And pitch our evils there? O, fie, fie, fie!
What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?
Dost thou desire her foully for those things
That make her good? O, let her brother live!
Thieves for their robbery have authority
When judges steal themselves. What, do I love her,
That I desire to hear her speak again,
And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?
O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,
With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous
Is that temptation that doth goad us on
To sin in loving virtue: never could the strumpet,
With all her double vigour, art and nature,
Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid
Subdues me quite. Even till now,
When men were fond, I smiled and wonder'd how.
ROMEO
Romeo and Juliet: Act 2, Scene 2

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.
(JULIET appears above at a window)
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady, O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!
ANTONY
Julius Caesar: Act 3, Scene 2

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest--
For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men--
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And, sure, he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause:
What cause withheld you then, to mourn for him?
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.
LADY ANNE  
Richard III: Act 4, Scene 1

No! why? When he that is my husband now  
Came to me, as I follow'd Henry's corse,  
When scarce the blood was well wash'd from his hands  
Which issued from my other angel husband  
And that dead saint which then I weeping follow'd;  
O, when, I say, I look'd on Richard's face,  
This was my wish: 'Be thou,' quo'th I, 'accursed,  
For making me, so young, so old a widow!  
And, when thou wed'st, let sorrow haunt thy bed;  
And be thy wife—if any be so mad—  
As miserable by the life of thee  
As thou hast made me by my dear lord's death!  
Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,  
Even in so short a space, my woman's heart  
Grossly grew captive to his honey words  
And proved the subject of my own soul's curse,  
Which ever since hath kept my eyes from rest;  
For never yet one hour in his bed  
Have I enjoy'd the golden dew of sleep,  
But have been waked by his timorous dreams.  
Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick;  
And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.
JOAN LA PUCELLE
Henry VI, Part 1: Act 5, Scene 4

First, let me tell you whom you have condemn'd:
Not one begotten of a shepherd swain,
But issued from the progeny of kings;
Virtuous and holy; chosen from above,
By inspiration of celestial grace,
To work exceeding miracles on earth.
I never had to do with wicked spirits:
But you, that are polluted with your lusts,
Stain'd with the guiltless blood of innocents,
Corrupt and tainted with a thousand vices,
Because you want the grace that others have,
You judge it straight a thing impossible
To compass wonders but by help of devils.
No, misconceived! Joan of Arc hath been
A virgin from her tender infancy,
Chaste and immaculate in very thought;
Whose maiden blood, thus rigorously effused,
Will cry for vengeance at the gates of heaven.
Will nothing turn your unrelenting hearts?
Then, Joan, discover thine infirmity,
That warranteth by law to be thy privilege.
I am with child, ye bloody homicides:
Murder not then the fruit within my womb,
Although ye hale me to a violent death.
DUCHESS
Henry VI, Part 2: Act 2, Scene 4

Ah, Gloucester, teach me to forget myself!
For whilst I think I am thy married wife
And thou a prince, protector of this land,
Methinks I should not thus be led along,
Mail'd up in shame, with papers on my back,
And followed with a rabble that rejoice
To see my tears and hear my deep-fet groans.
The ruthless flint doth cut my tender feet,
And when I start, the envious people laugh
And bid me be advised how I tread.
Ah, Humphrey, can I bear this shameful yoke?
Trow'st thou that e'er I'll look upon the world,
Or count them happy that enjoy the sun?
No; dark shall be my light and night my day;
To think upon my pomp shall be my hell.
Sometime I'll say, I am Duke Humphrey's wife,
And he a prince and ruler of the land:
Yet so he ruled and such a prince he was
As he stood by whilst I, his forlorn duchess,
Was made a wonder and a pointing-stock
To every idle rascal follower.
But be thou mild and blush not at my shame,
Nor stir at nothing till the axe of death
Hang over thee, as, sure, it shortly will.
LADY PERCY  
Henry IV, Part 2: Act 2, Scene 2

O yet, for God's sake, go not to these wars!  
The time was, father, that you broke your word,  
When you were more endeared to it than now;  
When your own Percy, when my heart's dear Harry,  
Threw many a northward look to see his father  
Bring up his powers; but he did long in vain.  
Who then persuaded you to stay at home?  
There were two honours lost, yours and your son's.  
For yours, the God of heaven brighten it!  
For his, it stuck upon him as the sun  
In the grey vault of heaven, and by his light  
Did all the chivalry of England move  
To do brave acts: he was indeed the glass  
Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves:  
He had no legs that practised not his gait;  
And speaking thick, which nature made his blemish,  
Became the accents of the valiant;  
For those that could speak low and tardily  
Would turn their own perfection to abuse,  
To seem like him: so that in speech, in gait,  
In diet, in affections of delight,  
In military rules, humours of blood,  
He was the mark and glass, copy and book,  
That fashion'd others. And him, O wondrous him!  
O miracle of men! him did you leave. -  
The marshal and the archbishop are strong:  
Had my sweet Harry had but half their numbers,  
To-day might I, hanging on Hotspur's neck,  
Have talk'd of Monmouth's grave.
VIOLA
Twelfth Night: Act 2, Scene 2

I left no ring with her: what means this lady?
Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!
She made good view of me; indeed, so much,
That sure methought her eyes had lost her tongue,
For she did speak in starts distractedly.
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion
Invites me in this churlish messenger.
None of my lord's ring! why, he sent her none.
I am the man: if it be so, as 'tis,
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How easy is it for the proper-false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we!
For such as we are made of, such we be.
How will this fadge? my master loves her dearly;
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master's love;
As I am woman,—now alas the day!—
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!
O time! thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me to untie!
JULIET
Romeo and Juliet: Act 3, Scene 2

Gallopin', ye fiery-footed steeds,  
Toward Phoebus' lodging. Such a wagoner  
As Phaeton would whip you to the west  
And bring in cloudy night immediately.  
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,  
That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo  
Leap to these arms, untalked of and unseen.  
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites  
By their own beauties, or, if love be blind,  
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,  
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,  
And learn me how to lose a winning match  
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.  
Hood my unmanned blood bating in my cheeks,  
With thy black mantle, till strange love, grow bold,  
Think true love acted simple modesty.  
Come, night. Come, Romeo. Come, thou day in night,  
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night  
Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.  
Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-browed night,  
Give me my Romeo. And when I shall die,  
Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
And he will make the face of heaven so fine  
That all the world will be in love with night  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.  
Oh, I have bought the mansion of a love,  
But not possessed it, and though I am sold,  
Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day  
As is the night before some festival  
To an impatient child that hath new robes  
And may not wear them.
O, pardon me, my liege! But for my tears,
The moist impediments unto my speech,
I had forestall'd this dear and deep rebuke
Ere you with grief had spoke and I had heard
The course of it so far. There is your crown,
And he that wears the crown immortally
Long guard it yours! [Kneeling] If I affect it more
Than as your honour and as your renown,
Let me no more from this obedience rise,
Which my most inward true and duteous spirit
Teacheth this prostrate and exterior bending!
God witness with me, when I here came in
And found no course of breath within your Majesty,
How cold it struck my heart! If I do feign,
O, let me in my present wildness die,
And never live to show th' incredulous world
The noble change that I have purposed!
Coming to look on you, thinking you dead-
And dead almost, my liege, to think you were-
I spake unto this crown as having sense,
And thus upbraided it: 'The care on thee depending
Hath fed upon the body of my father;
Therefore thou best of gold art worst of gold.
Other, less fine in carat, is more precious,
Preserving life in med'cine potable;
But thou, most fine, most honour'd, most renown'd,
Hast eat thy bearer up.' Thus, my most royal liege,
Accusing it, I put it on my head,
To try with it—as with an enemy
That had before my face murd'red my father—
The quarrel of a true inheritor.
But if it did infect my blood with joy,
Or swell my thoughts to any strain of pride;
If any rebel or vain spirit of mine
Did with the least affection of a welcome
Give entertainment to the might of it,
Let God for ever keep it from my head,
And make me as the poorest vassal is,
That doth with awe and terror kneel to it!
PORTIA
The Merchant of Venice: Act 3, Scene 2

You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtue, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself: and even now, but now,
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.
VCA MALE CONTEMPORARY MONOLOGUES

PLAYLAND by Athol Fugard

GIDEON

Hell Marty, you're asking for a lot tonight. First it's the Bible stories I must believe and now it's your dreams...! (Beginning to lose patience again.) What's the matter with you man? You can't believe them like they was real, like they was something that really happened to you. A dream...is just a bloody dream. It's what goes on in your head when you are sleeping, when your eyes are closed. Like when you imagine things. Don’t you even know the difference between that and what is real? Must I also now explain that to you?

Real is what you can believe because you can touch it, and see it, and smell it...with your eyes wide open. Next time you sit there in the bush and have a boskak, have a good look at what you leave there on the ground, because that is what real means. When you can show me Heaven and Hell like I can show you shit, then I'll listen to the dominees and believe all your Bible stories.

And let me just also say that for somebody who is so certain he is on his way to Hell, you seem to be taking things easy, buddy boy. According to your Bible that is a fairly serious state of affairs you know. It’s not like going to gaol. When you get down there, you stay down there. There’s no such thing as getting time off for good behaviour. It’s a one-way ticket my friend. Suffering and agony non-stop. And for ever. But if you got no problems with that, then okay. Good luck to you.
PUNK ROCK by Simon Stephens

CHADWICK
Human beings are pathetic. Everything human beings do finishes up bad in the end. Everything good human beings ever make is built on something monstrous. Nothing lasts. We certainly won't. We could have made something really extraordinary and we won’t. We’ve been around one hundred thousand years. We’ll have died out before the next two hundred.

You know what we’ve got to look forward to? You know what will define the next two hundred years? Religions will become brutalised; crime rates will become hysterical; everybody will become addicted to internet sex; suicide will become fashionable; there’ll be famine; there’ll be floods; there’ll be fires in the major cities of the Western world. Our education systems will become battered. Our health services unsustainable; our police forces unmanageable; our governments corrupt. There’ll be open brutality in the streets; there’ll be nuclear war; massive depletion of resources on every level; insanely increasing third-world population. It's happening already. It's happening now.

Thousands die every summer from floods in the Indian monsoon season. Africans from Senegal wash up on the beaches of the Mediterranean and get looked after by guilty holidaymakers. Somalians wait in hostels in Malta or prison islands north of Australia. Hundreds die of heat or fire every year in Paris. Or California. Or Athens. The oceans will rise. The cities will flood. The power stations will flood. Airports will flood. Species will vanish forever. Including ours. So if you think I’m worried by you calling me names, Bennet, you little, little boy, you are fucking kidding yourself.
SECRET BRIDESMAIDS BUSINESS by Elizabeth Coleman

JAMES
Look, sex and love are separate things...Well, they can be, that's all I'm saying. This thing with Naomi-okay, it should never have happened-but it didn't have to impact on what I have with Meg. I thought that was the deal. It was a separate arrangement. She told me she just wanted a bit of fun, and now she turns around and does this...! I mean, where the hell did that come from? If I'd known Naomi felt like that I would've broken it off with her months ago. Well maybe. Oh shit, maybe not. But I just-I just wish women would say what they mean. You know plainly, clearly state what they want instead of expecting you to be psychic. Meg bought me this T-shirt at the Warner Brothers store, and it's got a picture of Superman on it. He's wearing this perplexed expression and he's saying you want me to leap tall buildings and be sensitive and supportive?! That's how it is with women. They want you to slay a dragon for them one second, then cry at a guide dog commercial the next.

And somehow you're expected to guess when they want you to be controlling and when they want you to be crying-and if you don't make the right guess at the right time it's instantly construed as proof that you don't love them enough. If you really loved me you wouldn't need to ask. How many times have I heard that? Well I'm sorry, I've loved a few people a lot, but no-one's ever stepped out of the shadows and handed me a crystal ball. Anyway, I know I'm trying to change the subject. The fact is, I've been acting like a prick.
IMAGINE IN THE CLAY by David Ireland

GORDON
Who’d go to a black doctor?...And would I get any promotion in those jobs I had? Not on your bloody life! They think I’m just a little bit simple. Ought to be home playing a didgeridoo. I’ve never seen a didgeridoo. I couldn’t throw a boomerang. I couldn’t stand still for two hours on a rock and spear a fish....They think I’m straight from the dead heart of the country. Primitive man! Keep him away from the women and kids! I’ll tell you where the dead heart of Australia is! It’s right back there in the city! Not out in the sand and the mulga and the stones burning hot under the sun and smoke going straight up into the sky like a spear at sunset. It’s in the big blackness under the neon signs. It’s back there in the forest of elbows—elbows shoving you out of the way and pressing on your ribs so you can’t breathe, and the nice polished shoes to kick if you get in the way...Anyway, they wouldn’t have me working as a boss over white boys; I’d just be the crap round the place. I couldn’t even ask anyone of for a beer, let alone stop by on Friday nights with the boys. All I could do was take a bit of grog “home”—and get tossed out for drinking on the premises...You take my advice, all of you, and go with the old bloke. Go and work in the mill; work somewhere, because you’re either going to work or get put in pens for foreigners and city people to come and look at like animals in a cage—“the most primitive aboriginals on earth, watch them eat witchetty grubs”. The only other thing you can do is let ‘em keep you on the move. And all because there’s no room for us in our own country? We’re just like New Australians here. But there’s the point. It’s not our own country any more.
SWEAT by Lynn Nottage

CHRIS
He had tats on his face. Big fucking tats. He looked ridiculous. I had to deal with that bullshit inside. You know, Aryan Brotherhood. But, Jason…that shit surprised me. He looked old, like a man. Like his dad useta, before he died. It kinda freaked me out…

(Escalating emotions): I dunno. A couple minutes, and your whole life changes, that’s it. It’s gone. Every day I think about what if I hadn’t…You know…I run it and run it, a tape over and over again. What if. What if. What if. All night. In my head. I can’t turn it off. Reverend Duckett said, “Lean on God for forgiveness. Lean on God to find your way through the terrible storm.” I’m leaning into the wind, I’m fuckin’ leaning…And.

(A moment)

And then there’s Jason. Crossing Penn, you know, and I’m just chilling, looking in the window of Sneaker Villa, not thinking about anything. He sees me. I see him. Neither of us could…um, move for a second. We…it was…I’ve been thinking about what I would do in that moment. How I would react, what I would say. I mean…fuck it. What we did was unforgivable…Next thing I know I’m walking fast toward him, I don’t know what I’m gonna do. But the emotions are right there in my chest. A fist pressing right there. Pressing. And I keep walking. And I’m expecting him to walk away, do something, but he just stands there like he’s been waiting on me all these years. And…we come face to face. Like right there. I can smell his breath, that’s how close we are. I can see the fucking veins in his eyes. And my fists clench. My fingernails dig into the palms of my hands and then it just happens…weird…We’re hugging. Hugging. I don’t know why. And for the first time in eight years, I feel like I could go home.
THE THREE SISTERS by Anton Chekhov

ANDREY
I'll say something then I'll go. Directly. In the first place, you have something against Natasha, my wife, and I've been aware of this from the very day of our wedding. Natasha is a wonderful, honest person, good natured and full of integrity—that's my opinion. I love my wife and respect her, understand?—respect—and I demand that others respect her as well. I repeat, she's honest and has integrity, and all your dissatisfaction with her is, if you will pardon me, sheer capriciousness!

PAUSE

Secondly, you seem to resent my not doing academic work, annoyed I'm not a professor. But my work is with the County Council. I'm a member of the board. And I consider service to the local community every bit as valuable and important as any academic job. I'm a town councilor, and - in case you're interested—I'm proud of it!

PAUSE

Thirdly. I have something else to say…I mortgaged the house, without asking your permission….That was wrong of me, I know, and I ask you to forgive me… I had to do it to pay my debts…thirty-five thousand…I don't gamble any more…I gave it up a long time ago, but the main thing I have to say in my defence is that you, you girls, have your pensions from father's will, whereas I had nothing…no income, that is…

Translation by Aubrey Mellor with Ludmilla Natalenko
UNCLE VANYA by Anton Chekhov

ASTROV
In general, I love life, but our life, the provincial parochial life in Russia, that I simply can't stand, and I despise it with all the strength I can muster. And as far as my personal life is concerned well, God knows, there's absolutely nothing good about that. You know when you're walking through a forest on a dark night and you see a small light shining in the distance, you don't notice how tired you are or how dark it is, or the sharp branches hitting you face...I work - as you know—harder than anyone in the district - Fate never ceases to knock me around. At times I suffer unbearable—but for me there's no light shining in the distance. I no longer expect anything for myself, I don't love people. I haven't loved anyone for a long time. They exhaust me. All of them, our good friends, are shallow in thought, shallow in feeling and can't see beyond their noses - in other words, they're stupid. The cleverer and more important among them are hysterical, eaten up with self-analysis and introspection...they're always whining, always hating someone or something. I love the forest, that's strange; I don't eat meat—that's also strange. There's no spontaneous, pure, free relationship between Nature or people any more...Not anymore!

Translation prepared by Robert Dessaix and Aubrey Mellor
THE GOLDEN AGE by Louis Nowra

FRANCIS
Are you looking at the sunset? *(Startled BETSHEB turns around. Smiling)* I’m not a monster... No more running. Look at us reflected in the water, see? Upside-down. *(He smiles and 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 works in a shoe factory. *(Pointing to his boots)* These came from my mother’s factory.

*(Silence)*

These sunsets here, I’ve never seen the likes of them. A bit of muddy orange light in the distance, behind the 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. *(Miming a football)* A ball like this. 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 goes wild!
BIG LOVE by Charles Mee

GIULIANO
I knew a man once
so kind and generous.
I was a boy
I was on a train going to Brindisi
and he said, I'm going to marry you.
He asked how far I was going.
To Rome, I said.
No, no, he said,
you can't get off so soon,
you need to go with me to Bologna.
He wouldn't hear of my getting off in Rome
or he would get off, too, and meet my family.
He gave me a pocket watch
and a silk scarf
and a little statue of a saint
he had picked up in Morocco.
He quoted Dante to me
and sang bits of Verdi and Puccini.
He was trying everything he knew
to make me laugh and enjoy myself.
But, finally,
he seemed so insistent
that I grew frightened of him.
He never touched me,
but he made me promise, finally,
that I would come to Bologna in two weeks time
after I had seen my family.
I promised him,
because I thought he might not let me get off the train
unless I promised.
He gave me his address, which of course I threw away,
and I gave a false address to him.
And when I got off the train,
I saw that he was weeping.
And I've often thought,
oh, well,
maybe he really did love me
maybe that was my chance
and I ran away from it
because
I didn't know it at the time.
CHOIR BOY by Tarell Alvin McCraney

PHARUS
I know, I know, Momma…I’m not going to embarrass anybody,
It will be good. Maybe…I don’t know if I am going to
Be singing this year. I know that’s the thing I’m good
At. No, I’m not giving any speech. You know I don’t like
Being up having freedom of will to say what I please.
Right. Right…Something I didn’t mean come right on
Out. I just called to say hey, really. I mean it’s getting close,
I didn’t even really believe it would happen
I mean I did, I know you would have killed me, but…
Mama, that’s not Christian. Or ladylike. I’m sorry,
I’m not trying to tell you how to be a woman. What?
I…right…right. He’s good. He asked about you
the other
Day. No that’s, that’s David, he’s the one going to be
A minister. Anthony is my roommate. On the…right
On the baseball team. Mama, please don’t let nobody catch
You saying that Anthony is a fine-ass lil’ boy. They will!
They will put you in jail. No…I don’t know what they doing for
Graduation, prolly just walking like I’m is…I am.
You…you coming, right? I know you got a lot but I
Just asked. Right you don’t have to be here to
Know I graduated. Hope you proud. You will be…
You will be.
OFF CENTRE by Haresh Sharma

VIDOD
Ask me another one…no, there is an answer. You see when we are on the conveyor belt in babyland, God gives us something special…blind, AIDS, hole-in-heart, short-sighted, schizophrenia, depression… actually He’s not there standing at the conveyor belt. That’s too tiring. His administrative assistant does it. God works from His aircon room. And that’s where He decides. And it’s not easy. But He does it well. And you know what I think? [whispers] I think it’s His admin assistant that’s corrupted…anyhow change, change. I was supposed to be given a good voice… be a top singer. Instead He gave me mental illness. Yours also is a mistake. You were supposed to be a doctor.

It doesn’t matter, Saloma. God… God is not important. I’ll take care of you, ok?
THE NORMAL HEART by Larry Kramer

BRUCE
No one did. He wouldn't tell anyone. Do you know why? Because of me. Because he knows I'm so scared I'm some sort of carrier. This makes three people I've been with who are dead. I went to Emma and I begged her: please test me somehow, please tell me if I'm giving this to people. And she said she couldn't, there isn't any way they can find out anything because they still don't know what they're looking for. Albert, I think I loved him best of all, and he went so fast. His mother wanted him back in Phoenix before he died, this was last week when it was obvious, so I get permission from Emma and bundle him all up and take him to the plane in an ambulance. The pilot wouldn't take off and I refused to leave the plane—you would have been proud of me—so finally they get another pilot. Then, after we take off, Albert loses his mind, not recognizing me, not knowing where he is or that he's going home, and then, right there, on the plane, he becomes...incontinent. He starts doing it in his pants and all over the seat; shit, piss, everything...and I sit there holding his hand, saying, "Albert, please, no more, hold it in, man, I beg you, just for us, for Bruce and Albert." And when we got to Phoenix, there's a police van waiting for us and all the police are in complete protective rubber clothing, they looked like fucking astronauts, and by the time we got to the hospital where his mother had fixed up his room real nice, Albert was dead.
DEATH AND THE KING’S HORSEMAN by Wole Soyinka

OLUNDE
How can I make you understand? He has protection. No one can undertake what he does tonight without the deepest protection the mind can conceive. What can you offer him in place of his piece of mind, in place of the honour and veneration of his own people? What would you think of your Prince if he refused to accept the risk of losing his life on this voyage? This...showing-the-flag tour of colonial possessions.

You believe that everything which appears to make sense was learnt from you...you white races know how to survive; I’ve seen proof of that. By all logical and natural laws this war should end with all the white races wiping out one another, wiping out their so-called civilization for all time and reverting to a state of primitivism the like of which has so far only existed in your imagination. Then I slowly realised that your greatest art is the art of survival. But at least have the humility to let others survive in their own way.

Mrs Pilkings, what do you call what those young men are sent to do by their generals in this war? Of course you have also mastered the art of calling things by names which don’t remotely describe them...Mrs. Pilkings, whatever we do, we never suggest that this is the opposite of what it really is. In your newsreels I heard defeats, thorough, murderous defeats described as strategic victories. No wait, it wasn’t just on your newsreels. Don’t forget I was attached to hospitals all the time. Hordes of your wounded passed through those wards. I spoke to them. I spent long evenings by their bedsides while they spoke terrible truths of the realities of that war. I know how history is made.
VCA FEMALE CONTEMPORARY MONOLOGUES

REASONS TO BE PRETTY by Neil LaBute

STEPH
Don’t, all right? Don’t try to act like it didn’t happen and I’m just having a “girl thing” here because that’s not the story, bud. It is not. (Beat.) We can’t eat lunch and kiss each other and start blabbing on the phone next week...We’re done, Greg. I am finished with our relationship and I’m gonna need you to acknowledge that before I go... (pointing) Flowers don’t save the day... (Beat.) I know now that I’m not supposed to be with you, in some bad situation with you that we could fuck up by having kids or getting married or I don’t know what. Sorry, but I’m not... Don’t speak for me. (Beat.) You always wanna say shit for me, vouch for me a sign shit that we should both have our names on and I’m not gonna have it anymore... You are not me so you don’t know. (Sits forward.) Listen to me very carefully, OK, ’cause I’m only gonna say this the one time. Fuck off... that’s what I want you to do, Greg, get the fuck out of my life and leave me alone, let me start over in a serious fashion, maybe in a relationship or not, I dunno, but if it is in something like that may it please, please be with someone who can keep from being an asshole and all over bearing and thinking they know everything because you don’t. You do not know a goddamn thing to do with me is what I’ve discovered in my fours years with you. Four years that are now gone... so totally lost and gone that it makes me cry when I see any little bit from our time together. A key ring or, or your name light up on my phone or... shit. (She starts crying.) Fuck, fuck, fuck.
VICTORY by Howard Barker

DEVONSHIRE
I do feel clean here. I do feel clean. The wind off the estuary. And the low cloud racing, and the grey flat water, the thin surf on the mudbank, really it is better than a marine landscape by Mr Van Oots and in any case I don't think I like sex. [Pause. She breathes.] Oh, this is pure, this is absolute life, I never felt so whole and so completely independent, this is the third letter in a week begging me back and in verse too! All very flattering but really it is pure dick, a woman should never forget a poem is actually dick, should she?...

To look at me you'd think she knows no pain, no, wouldn't you? I'm sure you say that, privately. Admit you say that...

Oh, you do, you do! Her lovely this, her lovely that, you do, of course you do, you think I have no agonies. But there are pains and pains, aren't there?...

I am twenty-four and have miscarried seven times. That is wicked, isn't it, of God?...

It is particularly cruel because I care for men. Last week I thought the floor of my body was being, was being bitten out, by rats, by dogs, I thought my whole floor was going, have you had that?...

I cannot keep a child in, absolutely cannot, yet I conceive from a look, what is the matter with God, my womb is only fit for a nun, is that His way, do you think? What's your advice? I believe in asking strangers for advice, you cannot trust your friends, I believe in essence all your friends wish you dead. Say yes or no.
JERUSALEM by Michael Gurr

NINA
And what is that idea? That everyone gets the disease they deserve? Yes, I am interested in it. And I’m particularly interested in the fact that you never hear it from the parents of a child born with its brain hanging out of its head. Karma? What goes around comes around? There’s something very nasty hiding in the idea of karma. It’s another way of not thinking. People get what they deserve? Sounds like the Liberal Party with a joint in its mouth.

Beat.

All bad deeds are accounted for? Really? In my experience there are great numbers of very bad people leading very happy lives. It’s a pretty false comfort, wouldn’t you say, to think they’ll all get a spank in Hell. To think they’ll all come back as a piece of dogshit.

Beat.

Surely the point is what we do now. Who we become, how we behave. To leave all the judgement up to God or the karmic compost— that’s a terrible impotence, isn’t it? Adults, grown men and women, with a dummy in the mouth. And look closely at this, Malcolm, look at the people who glue themselves to these ideas. For the happy and healthy these ideas are a way of feeling smug. Fifty cents in the poor box and the knowledge that the poor will always be with us. And those who actually suffer? What are they saying? I am suffering because God wants me to? I think of those American slave songs, so uplifting, and I want to be sick. In my training they take you around the wards. There was a woman, both breasts long gone into the hospital incinerator. She tried to hold my gaze while the sutures were taken out. Until the hospital chaplain came sliding across the lino. And her pale fierce eyes slid him right back through the curtain.

Beat.

You see, I don’t believe that justice is something you light a candle for. It’s just the way you behave.
THE MYSTERY OF LOVE & SEX by Bathsheba Doran

CHARLOTTE
I told Whitney I was in love with Jasmine. But that was dumb because Whitney told Ashley and Kayla. And Jasmine. And they came and found me in the bathroom at recess. And they asked me about it. “I never said I was in love with Jasmine. I said I loved her.” That’s what I said, quick as a flash. And I saw them consider this little word “in” and whether or not it made a difference. And I was thinking about it too, was leaving out that one word going to save me? And then Kayla said, “If you didn’t say it then why are you about to cry? There are tears in your eyes.” I said, “No, there’s not.” But there were. And they were about to spill out. Then Kayla said, “Blink.” And the three of them were just staring, waiting. So I blinked. And somehow the lid of my eye pushed back the tears. Nothing ran down my face. I thought God saved me. Now I have to change. That night I decided to become an Orthodox Jew and slept like a baby. The next morning I walked to the bathroom and cut my wrists. It had nothing to do with you and Dad fighting. It had to do with me realizing there was a major problem with the way I fell in love.
THE CALL by Patricia Cornelius

DENISE
This mother thing sucks. I hated it right from the start. Complete strangers came up and patted my belly as if it was going to bring them luck. And after the birth, which was fucking torture, mad people cooed and gurgled and talked in high-pitched voices. They smiled at me and expected me to smile back. Like, what the fuck! It’s this ‘You’ve got a little baby’ stuff. I go crazy while she sleeps in her cot and you’re at work and my friends have got a life and I’m on my own and I think, ‘Jesus Christ, what have I done. How in hell am I going to get through this?’ I push her in her pram to the shops because I’ve run out of baby swipes. I push her to the shops to buy disposable nappies and spend my last fifteen bucks. I push her to the shops because I can’t think of anywhere else to push her. Sometimes I think if I leave her there someone nicer might come and get her and it’d be much much better. I meet with other mothers and I pray to fucking God that I don’t look like them, or sound like them, or am like them. They tell me how smart their kid is, how early she talked, or walked. How their three-month-old baby is reading Shakespeare. And I look down at my fat little bald baby sucking on her dummy and think, ‘Oh, that’s funny because mine’s as thick as a brick’. This mother thing is weird. I’m bored. I’m lonely. And it doesn’t stop.
TRUCK STOP by Lachlan Philpott

SAM
Now. Right now. And it’s my birthday tomorrow. Turning fifteen. Mum gave me my present early, tickets to the Ke$ha concert. Most embarrassing night of my life. Mum took me but she looked so out of place. She bought all this glitter and shit so she could cover up her wrinkles, she said it was so we could bond again.

There were all these hot guys there and they could tell she was a freak all I did was try to lose her. Didn’t enjoy the music at all.

My new school sucks but it’s better than being at that shithole by the highway. Not that many friends yet. On the weekend I was so bored I even cleaned up my room. Chucked out stuff, tiaras and princess shit Dad bought for me.

I’m not a princess, I’m not a movie star. I’m a…

Bitch. I’m a bitch. I’ve been a total bitch to everyone.

I thought my life was a music clip or a movie. But it is not. I guess I’m just…

The fly circles around the room. Around me.
Camera pans in.
Close up on my eyes, on the tear as it dribbles over my cheekbones.
On my lips. Music starts.
Camera circles me.
THE SUBMISSION by Jeff Talbott

EMILIE

No way. You know what amazes me? Because on a certain level, some place in me, I get it, Danny, I get it. I get this mentality you have. I hear you. Because all of that must be frustrating. Really. But what stops me is that you can spout such bullshit within a blink of saying how sympathetic you are, how we’re the same. It’s such a fuckin’ load that I wish…Maybe it’s the gay thing, right? Maybe it’s the fact that you’ve either spent so much time on your knees or facing the headboard that you literally can’t keep anything straight. Get it? Can’t keep anything straight? It’s such bullshit that you can spend your time, and maybe this is both of you, maybe it’s all of you, I don’t know, I’m certainly not going to stoop to some “you people” kind of statement, not like you did, I’m just not built that way. But its fucking ridiculous that you can look at the world and identify all the places were you think people are less than you because they can’t understand your whatever, your fucking pain, even if they’ve been through some of the same waters. And not just because those theatres you’re so mad at, those places that, whatever you said, just give away some percentage of their season to, you know, to…us. Yeah, us. Well, they are all run by fucking gay men. All of them…Fucking most of them. Gay men taking away your, Jesus, your precious birthright and handing it over to all those awful, talent-free black folds. Makes your whole point seem a little…what’s the word? Gay. And you’re right, I don’t know what high school was like for you, I don’t know what it was like to be last on the bench for dodge ball or whatever. What it was like, what it must’ve been like to not be able to choose between Maria or Anita for who you’d most like to be in fuckin’ West Side Story…So, I’m sorry I took your fucking play away from you, but I’m starting to think it wasn’t yours to begin with…And the big sick irony is, in the end, you may have written one good thing, but you still needed a black woman to get anybody to pay attention.
BIG LOVE by Charles Mee

LYDIA
You know, everything you say may be right, Thyona
but I have to ask myself,
if it is
then why don't I feel good about it?
I have to somehow go on my gut instincts
because sometimes
you can convince yourself in your mind
about the rightness of a thing
and you try to find fault with your reasoning
but you can't
because
no matter how you turn it over in your mind
it comes out right
and so you think:
I know it's right but I don't think it is
or I think it's right but I know it isn't
and you could end up thinking
you're just a moron
or some sort of deficient sort of thing
but really there are some things
when you want to know the truth of them
you have to use not just your mind or even your mind and your feelings
but your neurons or your cells or whatever
to make some decisions
because they are too complicated
they need to be considered in some larger way
and in the largest way of all
I know I have to go with my whole being
when it says I love him and he loves me
and nothing else matters
even if other things do matter even quite a lot
even if I'm doing this in the midst of everyone getting killed
I can't help myself
and I don't think I should.
Probably this is how people end up marrying Nazis
but I can't help it.
PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS by Duncan Macmilan

EMMA
I’m worried that a trained medical professional with this many certificates can also wear a crucifix. You don’t believe the scientific method disproves the existence of…such a boring conversation of course it does of course it fucking does I really need you to be cleverer than this. I really need you to at least match me intellectually because otherwise I’m going to leave and if I leave I don’t know if

(Beat)

I’m not powerless. I’m not helpless. I don’t believe addiction is a disease and I’m scared and angered by the suggestion that from now on it’s either eternal abstinence or binge to death. I can’t surrender to a higher power because there isn’t one. There just isn’t. And you, as someone who lives in the twenty-first century should know that…I wake up in wet sheets. In places I don’t recognise. With bruises I can’t account for. Men I don’t know. I’ve stolen from people. I’ve slept on the streets. I’m in trouble. I know that. But this book, this process can’t help me. You can’t help me.

(Beat)

You want me to conceptualise a universe in which I am the sole agent of my destiny and at the same time acknowledge my absolute powerlessness. It’s a fatal contradiction and I won’t start building foundations on a flawed premise…there is no meaning to anything. There are no beginnings, middles and ends. I am not the product of the decisions I’ve made or the things that have happened to me. I will not be reduced to that…my brother had a brain haemorrhage while reading Pinocchio to a group of five year olds. Mark. He was two years younger than me and never touched drugs or alcohol. He ran fucking marathons. For charity. I should have died a thousand times but it was him who

(Beat)

if I tell you I was sexually abused or the child of alcoholics, if I tell you I returned from back-to-back tours of Iraq and started to self medicate wouldn’t that all just be a massive simplification of the complexity of just being a human fucking person?
DREAMPLAY ASIAN BOYS VOL.1 by Alfian Sa’at

AGNES
I am a daughter of a god. While travelling, I saw a globe spinning in space, surrounded by mist. My father told me, it is a place called Earth. But it will be gone very soon, since its inhabitants are destroying each other. “But Father,” I said, “Surely there is something that we can do.” And he said, “There is a little red dot on the face of the Earth, do you see that? That is where the poison is brewing. If you want to save the Earth, that is where you should begin your mission. Because that is where the ill winds blow and the people are suffering. That is where they are destroying each other. Where they worship false goddesses like Barbara Streisand, Greta Garbo, Bette Davis, Madonna, Gloria Gaynor, Diana Ross, Ge Lan, Meena Kumari and Anita Sarawak. They will never recognize a true celestial being like yourself…But I told my father, no, let me go down and see it myself. I will show them the way to true happiness. I must lead them from their false glory holes where they are looking for counterfeit crystals and dazzle them with the real diamonds of my tiara. I must teach them not to use blood of their ancestors for nail polish and the placenta of their descendants for foundation. For I am Goddess. I am Diva. I am Mother!
CLYBOURNE PARK by Bruce Norris

LENA
Anyway. All right. (Taking her time.) Well… I have no way of knowing what sort of connection you have to the neighborhood where you grew up?

And some of our concerns have to do with a particular period in history and the things that people experienced here in this community during that period—both good and bad, and on a personal level? I just have a lot of respect for the people who went through those experiences and still managed to carve out a life for themselves and create a community despite a whole lot of obstacles? Some of which still exist. That’s just a part of my history and my parents’ history—and honouring the connection to that history—and, no one, myself included, likes having to dictate what you can or can’t do with your own home, but there’s just a lot of pride, and lot of memories in these houses, and for some of us, that connection still has value, if that makes any sense?

For those of us who have remained.

And respecting that memory: that has value, too. At least, that’s what I believe. And that’s what I’ve been wanting to say.
KING HEDLEY II by August Wilson

TONYA
About seventeen years. That's a whole lot of difference. I'm thirty-five years old. I done seen the whole thing turn around. When I had Natasha I was as happy as I could be. I had something nobody could take away from me. Had somebody to love. Had somebody to love me. I thought life was gonna be something. Look up and the whole world seem like it went crazy. Her daddy in jail. Her step-daddy going to jail. She seventeen and got a baby, she don't even know who the father is. She moving so fast she can't stop and look in the mirror. She can't see herself. All anybody got to do is look at her good and she run off and lay down with them. She don't think no further than that. Ain't got no future 'cause she don't know how to make one. Don't nobody care nothing about that. All they care about is getting a bigger TV. All she care about is the next time somebody gonna look at her and want to lay down with her.
ALL THIS INTIMACY by Rajiv Joseph

JEN
Ty...I wasn’t going to bring this up today, but seeing as you have laryngitis, I figured this might be the best time to have this conversation. Because any inclination you might have to interrupt me, well, that just won’t be possible because you can’t speak. Ha. Oh well. (TY gets up, pulls out a notebook, pen, and scribbles on a page.)

Okay, okay...Just sit still for a second and let me speak before you start to scribbling away like a madman, jeez! I knew you’d do this or something, just sit and let me say my peace! (JEN reads what he wrote.)

Look, I know it is, but I kind of have to seize the moment here. Whenever we talk you always talk me out, you put words in my mouth. (TY writes again and shows the page. JEN reads.)

No! That’s NOT what I mean! (TY hits himself in the face with the notebook.)

Listen. (TY gestures sarcastically.)

Okay. Ty. (Beat)

So. As you know. As we both well know...there has never been a time in my life, really ever, when I haven’t been, you know...in school. And I know I’m always saying this, okay?

Let me finish! (JEN reads the notebook. TY scrawls something brief. She reads.)

You know I don’t like that word, and it’s rude. (He scrawls another word, seemingly profane.)

Nice. Thank you. Shut up.
Okay! God! I can’t believe you have laryngitis and you’re still interrupting me! Constantly! (TY scrawls. JEN does not read.)

Look, I’m going to talk and you can listen or you can not listen, but here it is. When it comes to figuring out what to do with my life, I’ve been seriously claustrophobic. Because choosing things narrows down your life, it limits you and it freaks me out. I’m not kidding. Every time you make a decision, you narrow your life more and more...I meant that’s what you’re supposed to do! It’s about carving out an identity before you get old and die! (TY scrawls.)

No. NO! I don’t want sushi! I’m not staying for dinner! (TY scrawls.)

BREAK UP, Okay? BREAK. UP. Me. Break Up. With You. How about that! Oh, but this has never happened to Ty Greene before because he’s too smooth a talker and no one can ever get two words in—(Ty scrawls.)

I’m not going to read your shit!