

## **Review: STAND ALONE — Twenty audition monologues for young actors**

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The CD *Stand Alone*, contains twenty contemporary action packed audition monologues from the Australian Script Centre.

The individual monologues can be printed out. The plays that the monologues come from can be read but not copied out as can background material on the playwrights. The most remarkable thing is that the CD provide access to 20 plays that would not normally be available.

The monologues are rated by degree of difficulty, but this is not to be taken as prescriptive. In general, the most challenging ones have less character information in the text, or require a greater emotional journey, but many of the pieces will work at a number of levels.

Navigating around the CD is very easy. The monologues are divided into three categories: challenging, medium and straightforward. They are also divided into male and female. The playwright is clearly identified and all of the monologues are contextualised.

Photographs accompany the monologues. These provide a sense of the original style and period of performance. The biographical material provided on the playwrights is eye opening, not only because of the detail and the breadth of experience described, but also because of the opportunities that are offered to playwrights.

New Zealand students will be fascinated by the range of themes on offer. The timeframes vary from the 1840's to the present. The settings also vary from the raw outback to the glitzy city. The topics covered include racial prejudice, unlawful incarceration, the death of children, the supernatural, animal rights activism, transsexuality, physical abuse by parents and mismatched marriages. Australian attitudes towards alcohol, women, driving, risk taking, and inter-generational conflict are explored.

The range of characters presented in terms of age and social class makes for interesting reading. The “f” word appears fairly regularly, especially in the male scripts, and schools need to be aware of this if they load the CD onto individual PCs.

The monologues vary in length and style from the poetic to satirical. Each one presents its own challenges.

Students will find plenty of information and interest in these monologues. They will ‘hear’ the Australian accents when they read the monologues aloud and find plenty to interest them

All rights to the excerpts on the CD are reserved. Private performance for the purpose of audition is permitted, but no public performance or staged reading of the monologue is permitted without the permission of the author or the author's agent.

Overall, this CD is a welcome contribution to the publishing of plays which is problematic at the best of times. Our students need to be exposed to a range of plays. The reality for New Zealand drama students is that many of them will find themselves wanting to work across the Tasman. In order to do so, they need to understand what themes and ideas are of current interest to Australian playwrights. This play collection represents a great step forward in its utilisation of electronic media.

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## **Biography**



Susan Battye is a teacher, playwright and the Managing Director of Drama Magic Ltd, Editor of the Drama New Zealand web site, International officer for Drama New Zealand and former head of Drama at Epsom Girls Grammar School. She was the founding president of Drama New Zealand.