

## **MADE AND PLAYED IN MANITOBA -- 2012**

The following are synopses of 26 one-act plays, written by 7 Manitoba playwrights who are members of MAP (Manitoba Association of Playwrights). The authors will make their plays available to ACT Community Theatres for production at ACTFEST 2012, in Neepawa, MB, May 4-6. There will be no royalty fee.

If your group would like to take part in the second annual **Made and Played in Manitoba** at next year's ACTFEST, please contact the playwrights directly to obtain a copy of the script or scripts that appeal to you. For more information about the project, contact project coordinator Ron Blicq ([rblicq@gmail.com](mailto:rblicq@gmail.com)).

The plays are listed in three groups: (1) 11 plays running 30 minutes or less; (2) 9 plays running 30 to 60 minutes; and 6 plays running longer than 60 minutes.

***NOTE:** Some plays may be too long to be presented at the ACT Festival, which has a production limit of 60 minutes. They may however, be appropriate for a local group production or for production for the Gimli Summer Festival and are likely royalty free. Contact the author directly for information.*

## **Group 1: Plays of 30 Minutes or Less**

### **Bruce Sarbit**

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#### ***The Line***

**Synopsis:** (Situation Comedy) Mom, Dad, and their teenage child are visiting Mom's mother's, Baba's, apartment in the days before the bottom dropped out of humongous long-distance charges. As midnight approaches, and the rates drop significantly, Baba prepares to phone her overseas family. Midnight here, what time is it there: are they ahead or behind, before or after? It all depends on "the line."

**Running Time:** 20 minutes.

**Characters:** 4 (Male, middle aged (~50); Female, middle aged (~50); Male or female, late teens (~16-18); Female, older (~70-80).

### **Dale Watts**

#### ***Julio and Ronabette***

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**Synopsis:** In a typical day in a California courtroom, Judge Janey "The Hammer" Horton presides over a small claims case between Ira Capulstein and Julio Montalban, who has damaged Capulstein's property while attempting to seduce Ira's daughter Ronabette.

**Type of Play:** Comedy

**Suggested Audience:** Adults

**Set:** Two podiums, one each at stage left and right; a desk with high-backed leather chair

**Approximate length:** About 15 minutes

**Number in cast:** 4: 1 male approx 50; 1 female approx 50, 1 male early 20's; 1 female about 17

### **Ron Blicq**

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#### ***The Christmas Present***

**Synopsis:** Every year, Frederick has difficulty finding an appropriate Christmas or Birthday gift for his wife, Gloriana, who always seems to find a reason to return it and exchange it for something "more appropriate." This year, one week before Christmas, Frederick visits a new shop called "The Shop for Men – Who Are Shopping for Women." Here he meets Carla, an attractive salesperson who questions him about his wife's preferences and makes many suggestions. The "buying spree" ends with Carla making a suggestion Frederick has difficulty resisting.

**Type of Play:** Comedy-Drama.

**Suggested Audience:** Adults, although there is nothing in the play that would be offensive to young people.

*Set:* there is a clothing rack with various garments on it, and a shelf with other possible gifts.

*Approximate length:* 20 minutes.

*Number in Cast:* 1 male, approx 40-45; 1 female, approx 25-30.

### **Talia Pura**

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#### ***Strawberry Jam***

An elderly hoarder must be moved out of her home. Her daughter doesn't know that she has taken out a hit on the health inspector.

2 women - one elderly, one younger

Drama; 15 minutes

#### ***Delivery***

A couple is in the final stages of delivering their first child

1 man; 1 woman

Comedy; 20 minutes

#### ***Four Old Biddies***

Comedy in three short scenes. Four women are feeding pigeons in a park outside of the old folks home in which they live. The nurse from the home wants them back inside.

5 females

Comedy; 20 minutes.

#### ***The Appointment***

A one-act play about an older couple waiting outside the doctor's office for the husband's first appointment with the doctor who will treat his cancer. He convinces her that he doesn't want any extensive treatment. He prefers to use whatever time he has left and not prolong it with painful treatments.

2 females; 1 male

Drama; 10 minutes.

#### ***Mrs. Edwards***

An elderly woman is placed in an old folk home against her will. She isn't interested in cooperating with the activity nurse. Her grandson comes to visit her.

2 females; 1 male

Comedy; 10 minutes.

### *Forever*

A man comes back to his hometown and visits the home of his former best friend and his wife. The husband doesn't know that his wife and friend used to be in a relationship.

1 female; 2 males

Drama: 15 minutes.

### *Ten O'clock*

A young woman is kept company by her sister, as she waits for her husband's call from his posting in Afghanistan.

2 women

Drama - 10 minutes

### *The Sister*

A young woman visits her sister in a hospital, as they recall the childhood that only one of them was able to escape from.

2 women

Drama - 10 minutes

## ***Group 2: Plays of 30 to 60 Minutes***

### **Bob Armstrong**

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### *Haven*

**Synopsis:** In this comedy of memory and grief, three siblings gather at the family cottage, following the deaths of their parents, to determine what to do with their inheritance. For the two older siblings, the cottage represents conflicting views of their family and how it was affected by their father's depression and mother's eventual Alzheimer's. One wants to keep it to remember the good times, while the other wants to sell it to forget the bad. For their brother, who may have inherited the father's tendency toward depression, the cottage is a haven in an increasingly terrifying world. As their brother's anxieties worsen during a weekend at the cottage, the siblings come to a better understanding of their parents, their family and themselves.

**Running time:** 50-55 minutes

**Cast:** Originally produced with two females and one male, using multiple casting. Can be done with four females and two males.

## **Dale Watts**

### ***High Infidelity, Relatively Speaking***

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**Synopsis:** After the demise of a much-travelled airline pilot, the family survivors discover he was a bigamist who had two families. When the families confront each other they realize they are connected in many more ways than originally thought, including financially.

**Type of Play:** Comedy-farce

**Suggested audience:** Adults

**Set:** Small dining room table and chairs; couch; coffee table and end table; easy chair

**Approximate length:** 60 minutes

**Number in cast:** 7: 1 female about 50; 1 female about 45; 2 males about 50; 1 male about 30; 1 male about 25; 1 female early 20's

## **Bruce Sarbit**

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### ***Bad Faith***

**Synopsis:** (Drama) An Adaptation of Jean-Paul Sartre's short story, "*Le Mur*" ("*The Wall*"). Each for a different reason, four people are arrested during a civil war. Following individual interrogation, they are threatened with death by firing squad the next morning unless they cooperate, then are held overnight in a basement cell. Backs to the wall, how will they respond?

**Running Time:** 60 minutes.

**Characters:** 7 (minimum; can be up to 9). The characters can be any gender, but must be adults.

## **Ron Blicq**

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### ***The Sicilian Win Test***

**Synopsis:** Barry is a 36-year-old bachelor who would like to find the right woman to marry but has backed away each time because he fears what she will be like in 20 years' time. He has discovered a special wine that has a property that loosens the imbiber's tongue and he sees a different side to the potential bride. First we meet Shelley, who is delightful but under the influence of the wine shows a pettiness that Barry resists. Then we meet Lorraine, who passes the wine test and he is elated. Barry is ready to propose when an unexpected side to her character emerges and she turns the table on him.

**Type of Play:** Comedy.

***Suggested Audience:*** Mainly adult, but there is nothing in it offensive to young people.

***Set:*** A dining room with a dining table and two chairs, plus a separate area representing the wash-hand basin in a bathroom (as seen from through the mirror above the basin. Table china and flatware plus some cooked foods.

***Approximate length:*** 40 minutes

***Number in Cast:*** 1 male, approx 35; 2 females, approx 27 – 30.

## **Talia Pura**

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### ***Cheap Goods***

A husband and wife own an antique shop, with many interesting customers.

1 man, 1 woman - multiple characters - could also be played by a larger cast. (Could be cut to fewer scenes)

Comedy; 60 minutes

### ***Transcona Heights***

Two neighbours discuss life in their shared backyard. They have little in common, except their real estate. One is a married woman with a large dog and a wild son. The other is a recently separated mother with a lovely little daughter, who feels she should be living in better surroundings.

2 females. 1 young boy. 1 young girl

Comedy. 35 minutes.

### ***Demons of the Mind***

A woman is in jail after killing four of her five children. Her lawyer tries to reach through her psychosis in an effort to understand her and help her mount a defense of insanity, in a state that doesn't recognize it as a legitimate plea, and is demanding the death penalty.

1 man, 1 woman

Drama: 60 minutes

### ***Dances With Sheep***

A Murder Mystery in three short acts. A classic who-done-it with a movie theme. A famous director has just been murdered. Was it done by one of his ex-wives? The reporter? The famous egomaniac star?

4 females, 2 males

Comedy; 45 minutes

### *Purple Petunia*

A Murder Mystery in three short acts. A classic who-done-it with a cruise ship theme. The captain has just fallen overboard. Or was he pushed? If so, who did it?

2 females; 4 males

Comedy. - 45 minutes

### ***Group 3: Plays Longer than 60 Minutes***

#### **Scott Douglas**

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#### *Stone Soup – The Musical*

**Synopsis:** A down-on-his-luck con artist and his young protege try to scam a free lunch from a small Depression-era town, and end up embroiled in the town's plan to secede from Canada.

**Running time:** 1-1/2 hours

**Cast:** 4 female, 6 male, plus as many children and extras as you want

#### **Bob Armstrong**

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#### *The Offal Truth*

**Synopsis:** Politics, economic development, country music, purity and shame collide in a hallucinatory farce set in the fictional prairie town of Crystal Springs. When a mysterious foreign entrepreneur promises to revive Crystal Springs with his new plant for converting hog manure into synthetic gasoline, a young mayor's dreams of saving his town (and stepping out from the shadow of his father) appear set to come true. But his mother has other thoughts. The plant is also key to the political future of the deal-making premier of the province, and his harried executive assistant and mistress. Dealing with the plant, hog manure, and what they represent will force all of the characters to confront things that, like manure, they'd rather hide away.

**Running time:** 90-100 minutes

**Cast:** Written for a cast of five (three males, two females), with all cast members playing dream characters as well. Companies seeking roles for larger numbers of performers could have the dream characters played by different actors.

## **Robert Johansson**

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### ***Charles Wesley: A Musical Play***

**Synopsis:** This is a play for one man and choir. Charles Wesley, the hymn writer, tells about the founding of the Methodist Church, interspersed with his hymns.

**Running Time:** 80 minutes.

**Number in Cast:** One man of mature, but undefined years, and a choir.

### ***Never Trust a Naked Marriage Counsellor***

**Synopsis:** A farce. Norah isn't letting her husband's walking out on her interfere with her work at the Marriage Clinic, but when Nick walks in with another woman for sex counselling things are bound to get . . . complicated.

**Running time:** 90 minutes (if no intermission)

**Number in cast:** 2 women and 3 men, professionals of that vague age 30 something.

### ***Power: J. S. Woodsworth and W. L. MacKenzie King***

**Synopsis:** the story of January, 1926 when Woodsworth, leader of the Independent Labour Party, sent W. L. McKenzie King, the Liberal Prime Minister of the first minority government in Canadian history, a letter asking about his intentions in regard to Old Age Pensions and Relief for the Unemployed. King invited him to dinner. There are two versions of the play: a two hander for King and Woodsworth, and a one-hander for Woodsworth.

**Running time:** Two person play 90 minutes. One person play 60 minutes.

**Number in Cast:** 2 men aged 50, or one Woodsworth aged 50+.

### ***The Ecstasy of St. Teresa***

**Synopsis:** The spiritual and practical struggles of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross in the Spain of the Spanish Inquisition. Some optional music for the Dark Night of the Soul, and the Song of Songs.

**Running Time:** 65 minutes

**Number in Cast:** Flexible. Characters: the Chorus, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, The Grand Inquisitor, Gracian the provincial, Segra the Nuncio, St. John of the Cross's jailor, His fellow monks, the Rebellious nuns, The Mayor of Avila. But we did it with two men and two women. We used a young Chilean woman for the songs and the younger Teresa, and a 30 something for the older Teresa. There are voices for the nuns but we used taped voices.

## *The Red Saloon*

**Synopsis:** This is a musical about Winnipeg in 1872. Louis Riel is on the run with the Orangemen hot on his trail. The Temperance Movement is gearing up to do battle with the demon rum. In spite of it all love still finds a place to bloom. And everyone meets at the Red Saloon on the corner of Portage and main.

**Running Time:** 90 minutes We also have a scale down 60 minute version Scenes from the Red Saloon.

**Number in Cast:** 8 men, 2 women, and choruses: John Lennon, proprietor of the Red Saloon, Frances Cornish, a leader of the Canadian faction, Donald Smith, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Louis Riel, leader of the Metis, Philipe, a young Metis man, Tache, Roman Catholic Bishop, Constable One, Constable Two, Chorus of Saloon men. Kate MacGregor, a young suffragette, Isabelle Lennon, wife of John Lennon, Chorus of Suffragettes.