



## Playshare Synopses

**Please note: Copyright for all plays remains with the authors. Permission must be granted prior to production.**

All enquiries regarding *Playshare* should be made to NAYD at 01-8781301 or [info@nayd.ie](mailto:info@nayd.ie)

### ***Alien Nation*** by Max Hafler

A play about racism.

Males: 7/6

Females: 2/3

Also: At least five more people to work in chorus and play small parts.

Age range: 16-23, with one old character, Granddad, who could be changed to Grandma if it served your group.

Approx. running time: 40-45 minutes.

Setting: A city in the west.

First performed by: Galway Youth Theatre, 2002.

Fergus and Conor's friendship is tested when Ferg decides that he is going to have a Romanian refugee beaten up, who he thinks is going out with his older sister. Issue-based without being preachy, the play tackles issues of racism and cultural identity head-on.

The play is fast moving with a lot of rhythm, chorus, singing and movement work, intermeshed with short naturalistic scenes. It needs strong playing, and a few good singers in the group would be helpful.

Published in *Playshare – Volume 1* (NAYD, 2005)

### ***Around The World in 80 Days*** by Jules Verne

Adapted by Philip Brennan and Stephen Colfer

Cast Size: 26 + crowd

Males: 16

Females: 10

Age Range: 10 +

Approx. running time: 110 minutes.

First Performed by: Dreamstuff Youth Theatre, 2006.

A hilarious new adaptation of *Jules Verne's* classic. This play has great scope for physical comedy, satire and buffoonery. The multiple settings involved offer great scope for an imaginative production and the comic style of writing brings a great element of fun to the story.

Having a large cast, this play will suit youth theatres with a large membership but doubling up on roles to reduce numbers is also possible. Its many exaggerated characters present an opportunity for youth theatres to develop the art of comic timing and physical range.

**A Single Tear** by Catherine Simon

Cast Size: Flexible / up to 20 people  
Males: 8 / flexible  
Females: 12 / flexible  
Approx. running time: 60 minutes.  
First Performed by: Act One School of Acting, 2004.

An old lady takes a trip down memory lane when her grandchildren come to visit. The visit triggers memories of her past that are harsh, sad, romantic and funny. The play explores how she coped with the difficult things that happened to her in her life, and what kept her going. What would you do if your perfect world got turned upside down by war?

This play uses photographs and life-action to recreate the past. The original production used projected photos to dramatic effect; these are available on disc on request.

**Battlestations** by Max Hafler

Cast size: Depending on the skills of your group, you could use a much larger group, some for the cast and some for the chorus.  
Males: 2  
Females: 6/7  
Approx. running time: 30-35 minutes.  
Setting: Small town in Ireland.  
First performed by: Galway Youth Theatre, 2003.

Set in the recent past, *Battlestations* takes place during the time that peace vigils against the war in Iraq were being organised. While it explores the political angle of the story, its main concerns are the universal themes of being tested and standing by your principles.

*Battlestations* is a development of a piece written for the 24hr Project at the Cúirt International Festival of Literature, Galway 2003.

***Buzzin' To Bits*** by Mark O'Rowe

Cast Size: 14  
Males: 8  
Females: 6  
Age range: 12 - 24  
Approx. running time: 110 minutes.  
Setting: Estate playground.  
First performed by: Dublin Youth Theatre.

It's Tallaght, 1997 in the estate and 'de girls' are just hangin' out in the playground after school, chewing the fat and comparing notes (not of the school kind). Trouble is, neither they nor the lads will be left in peace because Peadar and Jimmy (the original Tallaght cowboys with hurley sticks) are determined to rid the estate of drugs by whatever means.

A classic play about young people caught up in the Dublin anti-drug vigilante movement. Rapid-fire exchanges drive this play along with grittiness, naturalism and a bundle of laughs.

Published in *Playshare – Volume 1* (NAYD)

***Children At War***

Cast Size: 13  
Males: 5  
Females: 8  
Age Range: 13-20  
Approx Running Time: 65 minutes  
Setting: Cyclorama for multi-media projections, a large empty space and a young girl's bedroom.  
First Performed by: Stage Craft Youth Theatre, commissioned by South Tipperary County Council's Per-cent for Arts scheme. Directed by Shane Dempsey

One girl, one game, one divided planet: 12 unique stories. ***Children At War*** explores the extraordinary lives of young people involved in conflict across the globe. Real events from World War 1, Vietnam, Chechnya, Bosnia, Israel, Palestine, Northern Ireland, Iraq, and Sierra Leone were used as a point of departure for the cast to create this vibrant piece of theatre. The play also explores virtual reality in gaming, where fantasy and reality collide.

***Children At War*** was devised with 13 actors but could possibly incorporate larger casts.

***Cinders 2000*** by Pete Mullineaux

A full-length play with dance and original songs.

Cast Size: 18+  
Males: 9+  
Females: 9+  
Age range: 15 - 25  
Approx. running time: 90 minutes.  
Setting: Pizza café.  
First performed by: Galway Youth Theatre.

This is a colourful and sassy interpretation of the classic fairy story, mixing original songs, stand-up comedy and offering fantastic scope for dance choreography. There are a large number of fully developed principal roles as well as a flexible chorus, which includes smaller character parts. Themes of political corruption are the background to a three-way battle between the magic of the heart, the power of money and, of course, the 'out of this world' intervention of one crazy Fairy Godmother!

***Drones*** by Noel MacAoigh

A full-length quest play.

Cast size: 17  
Males: Flexible.  
Females: Flexible.  
Approx. running time: 90 minutes.  
Setting: An open stage.  
First performed by: Dundalk Youth Theatre.

Difficult to describe but richly rewarding, *Drones* is a play about bees on a quest to find a book in the medieval town of Dalk. Five acts of layered Shakespearean tension ultimately lead to most of the characters' inevitable deaths, but not before they encounter a range of fantastic personages and events. This is not issue-based drama; it is genuinely affecting, sharply witty, and vastly entertaining.

***Expecting*** by Cavan Youth Theatre and Colin Thornton

A full-length black comedy set in the future.

Cast size: 7-15. Works best with a small cast doubling up.

Males: Flexible.

Females: Flexible.

Age range: 13-24

Approx. running time: 60 minutes.

Setting: The future – a society subjugated by technology – with scenes including a family home, a school, a convent and a hospital.

First performed by: Cavan Youth Theatre.

In a dark and cold future, a secret government project known as Medemetry makes a major scientific and medical breakthrough and male pregnancy becomes possible; women having babies soon becomes a shameful and dangerous thing. In a world where almost everything is illegal, one girl must conquer her demons and stand up to her family.

This piece should be played fast with the cast working to create its own vision of the future. Loud techno music is used to heighten the action. The text is open to change: male pregnancy and its implications could be explored to create a new text.

***Festival***

Devised by Waterford Youth Arts, with Alan King

Cast Size: 18

Males: 9

Females: 9

Age Range: 13-22

Approx Running Time: 1hour 40 mins

Setting: The Hill Of Tara

First Performed by: Waterford Youth Arts, September 2007. Directed by Alan King

When the Irish Government decide to build a motorway through the hill of Tara, superstar metal band RUKKAZ decide to mount a protest music festival against the destruction.

As our cast descends on the historic site for the festival, all is not as it seems. As the powers of good and evil are pitted against each other in a battle that could destroy mankind, most festivalgoers just want to have a party.

Blending youth culture with political fact and the fantasy of Irish Folklore, Festival is a modern, funny look at our contemporary pop culture and our treatment of political issues.

***Folie Tha'*** by Ciarán Gray

A One-Act Comedy.

Cast Size: 13  
Males: 2  
Females: 11  
Age range: 14 - 17  
Approx. running time: 45 minutes.  
Setting: Good-sized open space.  
First performed by: Tam Lin Drama Workshop.

The play centres on a group of teenage girls who are off to Paris for a disco/jazz dance competition. Their group is called Dance Trance and is run by a woman called Marie. We never actually see her because she is off chatting up a Frenchman. In fact, the only adult we see in the play is a priest. They encounter a lot of problems in a very short period and eventually return to Dublin to live more or less happily ever after.

The comedy is derived from word play and the confusion that arises because of what is said and what we think is being said. A great one for girls!

Published in *Playshare – Volume 1* (NAYD, 2005)

***XIV – Fourteen*** by Droichéad Youth Theatre and Sharon Cromwell

Cast Size: 18  
Males: 6  
Females: 12  
Age Range: 14+  
Approx. running time: 60 minutes.  
First Performed by: Droichéad Youth Theatre, 2006.

A tale of lies, betrayal, intrigue and revenge in the days of the Roman Empire, *XIV - Fourteen* tells the story of two children who are swapped at birth in order to ensure that a Roman General is blessed with a son as his heir. Through clever rhyming passages and a well-structured plot, the story unfolds as we discover Lucius' wife to be complicit in a child swap, which deprived Vibius of his rightful heir.

A script full of opportunity for Youth Theatres to explore the uses of chorus, ensemble playing and rhythm.

**Leaving** by Gerry Stembridge

Full-length comic drama.

Cast Size: 16  
Males: 8  
Females: 8  
Age range: 15 - 25 years.  
Approx. running time: 90 minutes.  
Setting: A classroom.  
First performed by: Dublin Youth Theatre

It's 2:45 am on the last day of school for the Leaving Certificate gang and they're planning a surprise for the teachers and students of their community school. Armed with outsize lingerie, paint and dirty mags, it is all meant to be a prank, a bit of craic. But when an older brother and his cronies arrive on the scene it all begins to go horribly wrong.

Sharp dialogue and witty repartee contribute to exploring issues about adolescents moving into adulthood. This play is about excitement, anguish, confusion and conflicting loyalties. It contains strong language. Written in the late 1980s, musical references can be easily updated.

Published in *Playshare – Volume 1* (NAYD, 2005)

**LOL** by Martin Murphy

A One-Act Cyber Thriller.

Cast Size: 7 / flexible  
Males: 2 / flexible  
Females: 5 / flexible  
Age range: 15 - 25 years  
Setting: Bare stage apart from a desk, chair and computer.  
First performed by: Dublin Youth Theatre.

Jenny is an ex-Net Police agent looking for a quiet life, but being a detective is in her blood and when Dawson tempts her with a missing person case, she can't resist. Crackers, hackers, cookies, viruses - they're all there to help and hinder Jenny in her search. She ends up in a computer chat room, which, as unlikely as it might seem, acts as a brilliant theatrical device whilst maintaining all the integrity and total *dudeness* of the Net.

Spills, thrills - the Matrix eat your heart out!

***Party Politics*** by Activate Youth Theatre and Geraldine O'Neill

A full-length issue-based play about sexually transmitted diseases.

Cast size: Flexible, ranging from 6-16.

Males: Flexible.

Females: Flexible.

Age range: 15-24

Approx. running time: 70 minutes.

Setting: A medium size space with wall to hang a large piece of white paper.

First performed by: Activate Youth Theatre.

The issues within this play include sexual risk and misadventure; however, over three productions the stories have changed, as have the cast size and gender balance. So the first production concentrated on HIV, the second on hepatitis B and C, and the third on Chlamydia. All stories are fictionalised versions of real experiences told by young people which are often poignant but expressed with humour and music. Each was thoroughly researched in consultation with Aids Alliance and re-worked with members of Activate Youth Theatre.

*Party Politics* dispenses with the preconception that issue-based drama is patronising and tedious. The energy, realism, pathos and genuine fun of this play shines through as a dynamic piece of theatre in its own right.

***Phear*** by Patrick Fagan

One act issue-based play about drugs.

Cast Size: Flexible.

Males: Flexible.

Females: Flexible.

Age range: 15 - 24 years.

Approx. running time: 30 minutes.

Setting: An open stage.

First performed by: Dublin Youth Theatre.

*Phear* is the uncompromising re-telling of an ordinary teenager's learning curve with drugs and peer pressure, eventually finding what is of value to him in his life. Originally staged with 4 actors (of either gender) all playing the character of Mark, *Phear* uses spiky language, snappy dialogue, and spacey music to drive its theme home.

This is a fiery play by a young person aimed at other young people. It does not judge, but candidly tells of Mark Johnson's journey into forbidden landscapes.

**Realize** by Donal Beecher

A full-length play.

Males: 5

Females: 9

Approx. running time: 75 minutes, without interval.

Setting: An audition room for pop stars, with flashbacks. The set needs an imaginative use of space and lighting.

First performed by: Act One Youth Theatre.

*Realize* is a comedy, set in the world of pop stars' auditions. It begins at the call-back stage. As the play unfolds, we find out the real reasons why they are all there. Needless to say, we also find out that none of them has a chance of making it!

*Realize* contains music and some dancing. However, no one needs to sing or dance well. In fact, sometimes the worse the better!

**Red Lorry, Yellow Lorry** by Pete Mullineaux & Moya Roddy

A full-length play for a large cast.

Cast Size: 26

Male: 5

Female: 5

Also: 11-16 additional roles can be played by either sex; this includes 5 crucial movement parts, which can be played by other characters doubling up.

Age range: Suitable for actors in mid/late teens.

Approx. running time: 80-90 minutes.

Setting: A landfill site and adjacent common ground.

First performed by: Galway Youth Theatre, 2004.

Ireland in the not-too-distant future, where Celtic Tiger has become the Celtic Tip! Romeo & Juliet meets Macbeth meets The Field as two rival clans in the waste-disposal business fight over access to what was once a sacred piece of common land.

This is a big, exciting piece, combining a range of performance styles and with fantastic scope for percussion and movement choreography.

***Requiem for Lena*** by Veronica Coburn

A one-act drama.

Cast size: 8  
Males: 0  
Females: 8  
Age range: 8-60  
Approx. running time: 60 minutes  
Setting: Dublin, 1940s to present day.  
First performed by: The Gaiety School of Acting, 2002

A young woman sorts through her mother's belongings after her death – a suicide. As the young woman looks at old photos, recalling memories and family stories, her mother and her six aunts bring to life vivid moments from their lives. They remember and recreate Dublin in the 1940s and 50s. Their stories illustrate the hopes, dreams and social circumstances that defined women of that time. The piece was inspired by Mozart's Requiem.

Published in *Playshare – Volume 1* (NAYD, 2005)

***Teacher*** by Christian O'Reilly

Cast Size: 5  
Males: 1  
Females: 4  
Age Range: 15 +  
Approx. running time: 60 minutes.  
First performed by: Galway Youth Theatre, 2005.

A group of teenagers gather for dinner and a crisis meeting. It is a week since the English leaving cert class destroyed their teacher, Miss Adams, with the casual, razor-edged cruelty of teenagers, and she has not been seen since. As the night wears on, we gradually move closer to the truth of what really happened to Miss Adams. Friendships are severed and formed, tensions erupt into violence, and each character is forced to re-evaluate the place he or she really wants to occupy in the confusing mess that is adulthood.

***The Girl Whose Best Friend Was A Ghost*** by Kate Kalin and Kate McCarthy

A devised play.

Cast Size: Originally performed with a cast of 10. They played numerous characters and everyone involved is on stage all the time, so a larger cast could easily perform it.

Age Range: 10-14

Approx. running Time: 60 minutes.

First Performed by: Physically Phishy Youth Theatre, 2005.

Once upon a time there was a Girl whose best friend was a Ghost. The Ghost caused so many complications in the girl's life until the day the Ghost left. Things get really tough when the Ghost decides even she can't stand our horrid heroine and leaves.

*The Girl Whose Best Friend Was A Ghost* is a whimsical tale of discovery and adventure. The Girl embarks on a journey to find her ghostly friend, finding herself and new friends along the way.

***The Ideal Homes Show***

Devised by Activate Youth Theatre, with Ciarán Fitzpatrick

Cast Size: Variable 10-20

Males: 4+

Females: 6+

Age range: 15-40s

Approx Running Time: 2 hours

Settings: Ireland; Liverpool; non-specific war-torn country; refugee voyage; the stage itself

First performed by: Activate Youth Theatre, February 2007. Directed by Tom Creed

An estate agent leads us on a tour through interweaving stories: a pregnant girl travelling to England for an abortion; the homeless girl she meets; her brother's unrequited love; their mum's mental illness; their father's struggle to keep them together; a family's escape from their homeland; and the tortured boy they leave behind on a bus, strapped to a bomb.

Punctuated by panel discussions, marketing meetings and a lecture on the mating habits of ducks and swans. ***The Ideal Home Show*** asks: What is Home?

**The Terrace** by David Parnell

Commissioned by NAYD for New Stage 2008.

**Cast Size:** 11+. Suitable for large cast owing to chorus

**Males:** 7+

**Females:** 4+

**Age Range:** 12+

**Approx Running Time:** 1hr 10 mins

First Performed at The New Stage Festivals 2008 in Roscommon and Cork

Denis and Jane have been best friends for years. Every Saturday afternoon they head down to watch their local football team together; unfortunately they usually lose but this does not dampen their passion for their team or the warmth of their friendship.

One night, however Jane is chatted up by local hard-man Steve “Mad-Dog” Brennan, which causes her to re-think her place in the scheme of things, and question the nature of her friendship with Denis.

Jason and John are friends and fellow self-confessed computer geeks, who enjoy nothing better than sharing game-cheats with each other. Then along come Caroline and Wendy, two foxy associates of Steve Brennan, and they are thrust into a world of shady dealings involving envelopes of cash and dodgy packages.

Add in a chorus, in the shape of a football crowd, and you have a funny, touching and heart-warming play.

**This Means War** by Max Hafler

[a retelling of Lysistrata, set in a country near you!]

Cast size: 12 f and 7 m [with doubling]

Running time: 1 hr 30minutes.

This updating of Lysistrata, where a band of women led by Nicole take on the government of Monopolis by having a sex strike and taking over government buildings and TV stations, was first performed in the Cuirt Festival 08 by Galway Youth Theatre, directed by Miquel Barcelo and Jonathan Gunning. It follows the classic story of the comedy about a group of women out to stop a war.

It is suitable for 15 plus, and includes songs and choruses, in addition to pacy comic scenes. The characters are colourful and fun to play. The play, although being a comedy, never loses sight of the seriousness of the subject and we are frequently reminded to good effect, what this is really all about. The play involved a devising process in which several of the group’s ideas were incorporated into the piece, and some interesting discussions ensued re community action and members’ experiences.

***Toil and Trouble*** by Ciarán Gray

A lighthearted gently comic piece.

Cast Size: 10-20

Males: 0

Females: 10-20

Age Range: 15-20

Approx. running time: 60-70 minutes.

First performed by: Roscommon Youth Theatre, 2004.

The play takes place in a centre for girls who have been in trouble with the law and who are on short-term remand while they are assessed. A new arrival, Coco arouses interest when people learn that she's into witchcraft - the good kind. Another girl, Carrie is thinking of doing a runner from the place to check up on her boyfriend. The plan is to make her stay and keep her boyfriend faithful with one of Coco's spells. Does it work? You decide.

Any of the unnamed characters can be doubled up or spread out depending on the size of the cast.

***Tumbledowntown*** by performance lab @ Roundabout Youth Theatre

A site-specific devised play.

Cast Size: 13

Males: 4

Females: 9

Age Range: 14+

Approx. Running Time: 50 minutes

First Performed by: Roundabout Youth Theatre, 2005.

*Tumbledowntown* takes place in one of the abandoned flats in Ballymun awaiting demolition. It invites the audience to excavate the past, present, myth, reality, dreams and nightmares embedded within the tower block.

The original production was a site-specific piece, which invited the audience to wander the building, encountering the ghosts of former inhabitants who tell their stories primarily in monologue form.

Exploring themes of love, drug addiction, abandonment, divorce, death and teenage pregnancy, the script comprises 13 monologues.

**Two For Joy** by Raymond Scannell  
Commissioned by NAYD for New Stage 2008

**Cast Size:** 12 approx

**Males:** 4

**Females:** 8

**Age Range:** 14+

**Approx Running Time:** 2 hours with an interval

First Performed at the 2008 New Stage Festivals in Roscommon and Cork

Joanna Foley is dead. That much is certain. Where she is? That's a different story. To piece together the last few moments of her life, her dog Dixie takes Joanna on a journey through the ether. It seems there was a crash. Joanna discovered that as a Southsider she didn't fit in as much as she'd imagined. Moley, the little runt, played along. Together the two of them formed an unlikely pair.

They came up with a scheme to steal a car and fake Joanna's death but then it all goes horribly wrong.

A tense tale of retribution and revving, *Two For Joy* explores the big questions; life, death and belonging.

**Understanding Marcus** by Veronica Coburn  
Commissioned by NAYD for New Stage 2008

**Cast Size:** 9

**Males:** 4

**Females:** 5

**Age Range:** 14+

**Approx Running Time:** 1 hour 20 mins

First Performed at the 2008 New Stage Festivals in Roscommon and Cork

Marcus likes trains. And pens. Pens that click. Ballpoints. Marcus is sixteen and one of the very many young people who exist within the spectrum of autism. The world for him is a confusing place and he has to work very hard to negotiate the realms of normal social behaviour.

Ross and Laura are popular. Bright. Intelligent. They have a large group of friends. An accidental meeting in a Dart station brings Ross and Laura and Marcus together and leads to tragic consequences for all involved. This is a challenging piece of work that asks serious questions about what we understand as 'normal'.

***Unfolding Napkins*** by Irma Grothuis

A full-length topical comedy.

Males: 5  
Females: 7  
Age range: 16 - 23  
Approx. running time: 70 minutes.  
Setting: Stage divided into 3 settings.  
First performed by: Wicklow Youth Theatre.

*Unfolding Napkins* takes place in a large hotel, somewhere in Ireland, which employs lots of young people during the summer season.

As a piece of youth theatre, the action takes place over the course of a wedding day. It is funny and insightful. It would be useful to develop and explore some of the play's scenarios with a youth theatre group.

***Wake Up Sleeping Beauties*** by Deirdre Molloy

A One-Act Comedy.

Cast Size: 6  
Males: 1  
Females: 5  
Age range: 10+  
Approx. running time: 40 minutes.  
Setting: Three performance areas; flexible set.  
First performed by: Dublin Youth Theatre.

*Wake Up Sleeping Beauties* takes characters from popular fairytales (Prince, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, Cinderella and Queen Maebh) and brings them into a world where women hold the power. This play takes a wry look at the treatment of women in fairy-tales and with a heavy dose of tongue-in-cheek dialogue, turns a conventional genre on its head. An extremely funny play, which has worked equally well with teenagers and primary school children.