

Things I Know To Be True

Production & Audition Information Pack

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Centre Stage Taupo's Things I Know To Be True audition pack. Thank you for taking the time to read this information and for considering being a part of this show. Please read all information carefully, particularly regarding rehearsals, show dates and character descriptions.

All roles available are limited to age 16 and above.

Audition Dates: November 27 & 28, 2021

Location: Centre Stage, Matai Street

Production dates: 30th March to the 9th April 2022.

Interested people are invited to attend a full read through of the play on Sat Nov 27 at 12:30pm. This will be followed by individual auditions slots Saturday afternoon and all-day Sunday. You can book a slot for an individual audition on the registration form on our website.

THE PLAY

"Things I Know to be True" is an award-winning Australian play set in a working-class outer suburb of Adelaide although it could be any suburb of any city in Australia or New Zealand.

It follows the lives of the Price family over a year, charting their dreams and loves. Over the course of the play each of the four Price children hit a point of emotional rupture with their parents and the direction of everyone's lives are questioned. Each one comes to find the things they know to be true.

Written By: Andrew Bovell

Directed By: Nigel Vanner

Produced By: Centre Stage Taupo Inc

THE CHARACTERS

Bob

Early 60's, has taken early redundancy from his job in a car assembly plant and is now looking for some meaning to his life.

Fran

Late 50's, a senior nurse, she has been the dominant force in the family and is having trouble coming to terms with the fact that her family is making their own decisions.

Pip

Mid 30's, the eldest child, works for the Education Department, she has a fraught relationship with her mother and is in an unfulfilling marriage.

Mark

Early 30's, an IT specialist, he has made some life changing decisions about his sexuality but is struggling with his parents' reaction.

Ben

Late 20's, works in financial services and wants to move above his working-class background, so makes some poor decisions.

Rosie

19, who doesn't know who she is or what she wants to be after returning from a disastrous OE experience.

Audition pieces for each character are included below.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals will commence on 16th of January 2022 and run through to performance. Usually rehearsal will be 2 hours (though closer to the season longer rehearsals will be required). At this stage rehearsals are intended for Tues, Thurs and Sunday but may change depending on the availability of the cast.

When you audition, please be aware that you will be required to attend all rehearsals unless otherwise advised. If you will be away or have commitments that will impact on the rehearsal schedule, please let the Director Nigel Vanner or the Production Manager Kylie Dumble know.

If you are, or intend to be, in any other show during the rehearsal and production time of this show please advise the audition panel.

If you are cast, you are required to become a financial member of Centre Stage Taupo Inc.
Membership fees are as follows

Adult \$45

Family \$65

Student \$30

Single Parent Family \$55

Senior \$30

**Please direct any further inquiries to the Director, Nigel Vanner at ndvanner@gmail.com
or the Production Manager, Kylie Dumble at thingsiknowtobetrue@centrestagetaupo.co.nz**

Rosie Audition Piece

ACT ONE

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BERLIN

ROSIE: Berlin. A winter coat. A travel bag. A red nose. And a broken heart.

I'm standing on the platform at the train station. It's cold. The train is late and my socks are wet. I'm not quite sure how I got here or where I'm meant to go next.

I met him four nights ago and he was the most beautiful boy I had ever seen. His name was Emmanuel, of course, and he came from Madrid.

I'd been travelling by myself for three months. The great European adventure. London. Dublin. Paris. Prague. Then Berlin. I'd been saving for a year. Cafe work, bar work, babysitting. Mum and Dad said don't go by yourself. It's too dangerous. Go on a tour or at least with some girlfriends.

I'll meet people. I told them. I'll be fine. But meeting people is harder than you think. I mean I did, meet people, at hostels and stuff but mainly other Australians. And it was fun for a night or two. But the boys just wanted to have sex and I guess that's alright but if I wanted sex with an Australian boy I would have stayed in Hallett Cove.

So I go to the churches and the museums and the galleries and I walk through the cobbled streets and I sit in cafes trying to look mysterious and everything is so beautiful. Everything is what I was expecting it to be. And yet somehow I want it to be more.

I Skype home twice a week and tell Mum and Dad what an amazing place Europe is. They've never been. I tell them I'm having the best time because I can't bear the thought of them being disappointed for me. And when I Skype my brother Mark, I pretend the camera on my iPad is broken because he knows me and he will see it in my face. He'll see that it's all a mess and he'll tell me to come home but I can't go home, not yet, I mean then, I couldn't go home then because it would be such a ... defeat.

I don't know what it's meant to be. I don't know what I'm meant to do. I keep wondering when it will start. Life. When will life start?

And then there he is. At a club in Mitte. Dancing. With his shirt off. And I think, wow, that guy can really dance. That guy is like ...

fire. And then he looks over at me. Me? And I am gone. I pretend not to be. I try to be cool. To make it seem like I'm not interested. But I am so interested. And we dance until the sun comes up. And as we come out of the club into the light, I think this is it. This is life. I am living.

I walk through the streets of Berlin. I feel small. I feel like I'm twelve years old, I feel ridiculous. I want to cry but I won't. Well I do, a bit. But not as much as I want to. I want my dad. I want my mum. I want my brothers and my sister. I want to hear them laugh and argue and fight and tease me. But I can't think of them much because if I do my chest will explode. I feel like I'm going to literally fall to pieces. That my arms are going to drop off and then my legs and my head. And so to stop myself coming apart I make a list of all the things I know ... I mean actually know for certain to be true, and the really frightening thing is ... it's a very short list.

I don't know much at all.

But I know that at twenty-five Windarie Avenue, Hallett Cove, things are the same as when I left and they always will be.

And I know that I have to go home.



Pip Audition Piece

ACT ONE

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AUTUMN

PIP

It's early in the morning. The light is still new. Leaves drift from trees. Fallen rose petals form a carpet of bruised colour across the lawn.

PIP is sitting in the garden.

PIP: This garden is the world. Everything that matters happened here.

I kissed my first boy in that shed. I was nine. He was my cousin, Tom. Down from Port Augusta. I don't know if it counts if it was your cousin. But it was a kiss, nonetheless. He kissed me and then he put his hand down my pants. I don't know what he expected but I think he got a shock because he pulled it straight back out again. But I liked it. I got so excited that I bit his face. He started to cry and ran to his mother and I was sent to my room. And I don't know if it was because I bit him or because I liked having his hand down my pants. Somehow, I think Mum knew. I think she knew exactly why a girl bites a boy in the face. But then she always knew the things you didn't want her to know.

She caught us, me and Penny McCrea and Stella Bouzakis, with a bottle of sweet wine. We were in Year Nine and we snuck off from school at lunchtime. Penny had stolen it from her parents' drinks cabinet. We came back here and made a party of it, smoking those long coloured cocktail cigarettes as well. Thinking we were totally it. And suddenly Mum's standing at the back door. She was meant to be at work. She never came home for lunch. Never. But that day, when we're wagging school and drinking sweet wine in the backyard, she decides to come home. Stella got such a scare she started to vomit. Mum stuck her face in the compost pit and said, 'Vomit there, you silly girl'. I was grounded for the rest of Year Nine and never drank sweet wine again.

This garden is the world.

Family cricket and totem tennis tournaments. Hey Presto and cartwheels across the lawn. Fashion parades and sleepovers. Sunday barbecues. Eighteenth birthday parties. Twenty-firsts. Engagements. And even a wedding. Mine. It all happened here and more.

Once I saw her, Mum, bawling her eyes out and banging her head against the trunk of that tree. I was twelve. I had never seen her cry. Not once. Not even when her own mother died. And everything I thought was certain about the world changed. I went back inside and turned the television on. I was scared. What makes a woman cry like that? A mother. My mother. I didn't understand and I didn't have the courage to ask her. Now that I am a woman, married with children of my own, I don't need to, I know exactly why a woman bashes her head against the trunk of a tree.

Fran & Bob Audition Pieces

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THINGS I KNOW TO BE TRUE

FRAN: But if we can put this right.

BOB: There's only one way to do that and that's to let the boy face the consequences of what he's done.

FRAN: You're going to ruin his life.

BOB: He did that with the first dollar he took that wasn't his. You let something ugly in, son. Envy. No. You're going to take responsibility for what you've done even if it means jail.

BEN: Fuck that!

BOB: No, fuck you! Fuck you! Fuck you! For bringing this into our home. The opportunities you've been given. To finish school. To go to university. What I could have done with an opportunity like that. But you! You get a degree in accountancy so that you can steal from people. So no! Fuck you!

FRAN goes into the garden.

BEN: Dad, I'm scared.

BOB: You should be. Now give me your keys ... Do I have to take them off you?

BEN hands BOB his keys.

Right ... you'll sleep here tonight.

BOB heads outside.

BEN: Dad?

BOB: [*looking back*] I've got nothing for you, Ben. No words to reassure you. No hug to make you feel better. What I had, I've already given. And you never wanted it anyway.

He moves outside to join FRAN. A moment.

So, he's not the only one who's been doing some skimming, then.

FRAN: It was mine. My wage. I earned it.

BOB: Right. It's just that every pay packet I ever earned went straight into a bank account with both our names on it. There was never a mine. Just ours.

FRAN: It was my 'get out' money, Bob. I saw it happen to my mother. Stuck in a miserable marriage with a man she didn't love because she couldn't afford to leave. It wasn't going to happen to me. So, I put a little away. Every pay. Until I had enough to buy some shares.

BOB: Shares!

FRAN: Mining. Iron ore. The price goes through the roof and suddenly I'm a wealthy woman. I start to get nervous. I read the papers. I can see what's coming so I sell. And then the price goes down. I played it well.

BOB: Right.

FRAN: I'm not justifying it ... I don't have to.

BOB: No. But a man wouldn't mind an explanation why he wasn't let in on it.

FRAN: I told you ... I had to know I could go if I ever needed to.

BOB: Did you ... ever need to?

Her silence is the answer.

What stopped you?

FRAN: The children. I stayed because of the kids.

BOB: And me? Where was I in this picture?

FRAN: You can't love someone for thirty years straight. You fall out of love. Or there's no time for love. Or love is not the point. Getting by is the point. Raising children is the point. I'll stop if you don't want to hear this.

BOB: No ... I want to know.

FRAN: You fall out of love. You just do. And you think about, maybe, something else. Another life. But it passes. If you wait long enough, one day you realise that the man you did love is still there, still sitting across the table from you, still sleeping on the other side of the bed. And you settle for that.

BOB: You settled for me.

FRAN: I'm being honest, Bob.

BOB: Was there ever someone else?

FRAN: Don't ask me that.

BOB: Was there?

FRAN: I don't want to hurt you.

BOB: Was there?

FRAN: There was someone who wanted me.

BOB: And?

FRAN: I said no.

BOB: Did you love him?

FRAN: For a moment.

BOB: Who was he?

FRAN: Does that matter?

BOB: I'm not sure.

FRAN: He was a patient. Long-term. I cared for him. We had some time, you know, to get to know one another ... He liked Leonard Cohen.

A moment.

I chose you. You and the kids. And what we had.

BOB: And regretted it ever since.

FRAN: No.

BOB: Yeah. You punished me, Fran. You punished us. Pip especially. With your fury. With your screaming out at the unfairness of it all. Married ... with four kids. One you weren't expecting. An accident. You thought you were done. You had other plans. That was about the time, wasn't it? When some other bloke wanted you? Funny what a husband will do to make sure his wife stays.

FRAN: You knew?

BOB: A man's not blind to his wife's unhappiness.

FRAN: So you thought a kid would fix it?

BOB: The kid happened ... and I'm glad of it. Unless ...

FRAN: Don't.

BOB: You're going to break my heart if you tell me that girl is not mine.

FRAN: You're Rosie's father.

BOB: I'm the man who brought her up, I know that much.

She could hurt him with a lie or save him with the truth. Or is it the other way around?

FRAN: I never slept with him. I could have. He wanted me. I lay with him a few times. Late at night. Held him. Let him hold me. That was enough. And more than I was getting from you at the time. He asked me to go away with him. Me? Never had a man ask me such a thing. I thought about it. For a moment. A day. A week. And then I said no.

BOB: And settled for me.

FRAN: That's about it, yeah.

BOB: You're too hard, Fran ... You want to learn how to give a man a way back.

Beat.

FRAN: I won't stand by and watch Ben go to jail. Not if I can help it. You need to know that.

BOB: It's your money, so do what you want with it. But what you give to Ben you have to give to the other three. I won't have one child favoured financially.

FRAN: It won't leave much over for you and me.

BOB: You and me?

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Mark Audition Piece

Beat.

I don't know what I'm doing. I mean, look at all this stuff. These shirts and jeans and ties and jocks. My razor and deodorant. This all belongs to somebody else now. And my watch. Rosie, Mum and Dad gave it to me for my twenty-first. It means something. I don't know what to do with all the things that mattered to me.

ROSIE: Let me wear it.

She holds out her arm. He places it on her wrist.

Hold up your arm.

MARK holds up his arm. ROSIE takes off her watch, and places it around his wrist.

What's her name?

MARK: Mia.

Transition. MARK picks up the suitcase.

I hear the sound of the horn and I know that it's time to go. I wish it was a taxi and that the goodbyes were over, but Dad has insisted

on taking me to the airport. Rosie comes too, of course. She's at the wheel. Dad is in the front passenger seat. So I sit in the back, which makes me feel like a child again, which I resent a little. Dad wants Rosie to take the coast road. She insists on taking the expressway. There is a kind of useless argument. A standoff, that you would only tolerate with members of your own family. Rosie wins. She can be surprisingly stubborn. So we take the expressway only to discover that there are roadworks in progress so it takes longer than usual and Dad gets this 'I told you so' look on his face. And Rosie is reduced to a silent kind of rage. And I'm sitting in the back seat looking out the window thinking just how ugly the road to the airport is.

Mum is not with us. She's at work. We have hardly spoken. Our farewell was brief and hard. We both tried to outdo each other with an 'I Am Still Angry With You' face. But she won. She always wins that game. But I felt the strength in her final quick embrace before she turned away and I thought it's going to be okay with her. That one day she will soften. One day she may even want to get to know ... her.

I want them to drop me at the airport and keep going. I want this goodbye to be over. I beg Rosie with my eyes. She gets it but airport farewells are still a big deal for Dad and he insists on coming inside and walking me to the gate. There is mayhem at security as he sets off the alarms. How a man can have so many pieces of metal about his person is a mystery to me, but given that my time as a man is finite it's not a mystery I need to give much further thought to.

At the gate I tell Dad that I will come home soon to visit. And he tells me that he'll come to see me in Sydney as soon as I have settled in. Both of us know that neither of these things will happen but pretending they will seems to make the parting easier. I linger in his embrace knowing that it will be the last time I will be held by him, as a man, and then he does something that takes my breath away. He kisses me on the lips. And it almost does me in. It is so intimate. And I have never loved him more.

And I look back from the gate and he has broken. He is weeping. Rosie is holding him. She has him. I have to look away. I have to look ahead. I have to keep walking. My father's grief is a price I am prepared to pay.

The plane turns down the runway, increases its speed, lifts off the ground and as it makes its ascent I look down upon the city where

I grew up, and steel myself against memories, against history and against the man I was. By the time I land in Sydney, Mark Price will just be someone I used to know.

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Ben Audition Piece

BEN: In the chaos of our home, in the kitchen when we were cleaning up after dinner, as arguments were being had about who did what to whom, and arrangements were being made about who had to be where when, basketball, netball, football, soccer, drama, piano, and who would take them, Mum or Dad or the bus, and in the middle of the arguments about who would do what in the clean-up, the washing, the drying, the putting away, and the wiping down the surfaces and who does more and who does nothing and who always goes to the toilet when the sweeping up needs to be done. (It was me.) In the midst of all this a song would come on the radio and Dad would stop and reach for her. And she would resist, she would push him off ... 'I'm too busy', 'I don't have the time', 'My feet are too sore', but it was just part of their play, part of the game because she loved it when he took her, she loved it when they danced. And we, we kids, we groaned and stuck our fingers down our throats and pretended that we weren't interested, in their dancing, in their love, in the secrets that only they shared.

*HOME**That night.*

BEN: Where's Mum and Dad?

ROSIE: Out.

BEN: Where?

ROSIE: It's their anniversary.

BEN: I need to see them.

ROSIE: Ben, what's wrong?

BEN: Did you hear a car?

ROSIE: I don't think so.

BEN: Maybe it's them.

ROSIE: I didn't hear anything.

BEN: I want Mum.

ROSIE: Are you on something?

BEN: No.

ROSIE: Are you?

BEN: No.

ROSIE: Don't come here if you're on something. It's their anniversary.

It's not fair.

BEN: I'm not on anything.

ROSIE: You're sweating, Ben.

BEN: I've been running.

ROSIE: Running? Where?

BEN: Running and running.

ROSIE: Where?

BEN: I'm so tired, Rosie.

ROSIE: Okay.

BEN: I've been running.

ROSIE: I know.

BEN: Was that a car?

ROSIE: No.

BEN: I need Mum.

ROSIE: They're out.

BEN: Can you phone them?

ROSIE: You want a cup of tea?

BEN: I've been running, Rosie.

ROSIE: Something to eat?

BEN: I've been running.

ROSIE: You're home. You're here. You don't have to run anymore.

BEN: You don't understand. This is what I've been running from. I've been running. And running. And look where I end up. I'm so angry.

ROSIE: Don't be.

BEN: I could fuckin'—

ROSIE: Don't.

BEN: I could fuckin' hit something.

ROSIE: Don't.

BEN: I'm frightened, Rosie.

ROSIE: So am I.