

Warm and Wet

and other short but occasionally moist plays

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Introduction

This is a collection of short, mostly comedy plays I wrote for competitions at 'Player Playwrights'—a London based actors and writers' group that provides a critical forum for writing. (For details, search online for the website and Facebook page.)

There are three competitions every year with individual themes, and then a fourth competition—a play-off of all the first and second place winners, to determine which is the best. Most of the plays here came in first or second, and two of the plays included have been judged Best Competition Play of the Year.

The rules were that the play must be longer than 5 minutes and shorter than 10 minutes (a writing discipline challenge), on pain of disqualification. For most of the competitions, a further rule was that there had to be parts for males and females. Each competition consisted of up to 10 plays performed in one evening, script-in-hand with little preparation; so the script had to clearly indicate the writer's intention.

If you are looking for a way to get into script writing, these competitions are great, not to mention fun, and it was how I got started.

These are very short plays indeed. If they were any shorter they probably wouldn't even be plays; yet they are longer, I think, than just sketches, and each one is complete in itself. A number of them might be performed sequentially to create an extended entertainment—a showcase for actors and a set of intriguingly diverse stories for an audience. Certainly they go off in different and I hope unpredictable directions, and it would be challenging to stage them; but with a little imagination, and not being too literal about it, I think perfectly possible. When first performed in competition it was impractical to produce some of the strange props indicated, but the stage directions read aloud was enough to prime the audience's imagination.

A word about swearing: I find the use of indiscriminate bad language, frankly, boring; but there is occasional bad language here, necessary to the characters' ways of expressing themselves. Some of the plays have adult themes.