

That

BLOODY WOMAN

*by Luke Di Somma
and Gregory Cooper*

AUDITION PACK

That

BLOODY WOMAN

Presented by Nelson Musical Theatre

RED DOOR THEATRE

26 November - 6 December | 8 performances

WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in auditioning for Nelson Musical Theatre's season of *That Bloody Woman* running from 26 November to 6 December. We are thrilled to bring this powerful show to life and to collaborate with passionate, creative performers on this journey.

This production holds significance for both myself and Assistant Director Lillie Prestidge, having seen it performed in Nelson around ten years ago during the Nelson Arts Festival. It is a story that has remained with us, and we are excited to share it with our community.

Our vision for this production is actor-driven, with a live band integrated fully into the storytelling, rather than hidden away. The stage will be minimal, using essential props only when necessary, allowing the focus to remain on strong performances, vocals, movement, and the powerful narrative crafted in this exceptional New Zealand work. We aim to foster a rehearsal environment that values vulnerability, creativity, and collaboration.

Our rehearsal space will be built on trust, care, and mutual accountability. We want you to feel safe to take risks, speak your truth, and bring your full self into this story. In return, we ask for focus, preparation, and a commitment to the emotional journey we will undertake together.

This audition pack contains all the information you need to prepare, including details about song selections, dialogue excerpts, and performance dates. Please read through it carefully and come prepared. Let's tell a story that will resonate with audiences long after the final note.

SHOW OVERVIEW

That Bloody Woman is a high-energy punk-rock musical that can be performed by a cast of 6 to 12 actors. It tells the story of Kate Sheppard, a pivotal leader in the New Zealand women's suffrage movement, and her fight to secure voting rights for women.

Written by Luke Di Somma and Gregory Cooper, the musical blends historical events with contemporary humour and a rock concert atmosphere, engaging audiences with this critical chapter of New Zealand's history. It contextualises Sheppard's battle within the social and political landscape of late 19th-century New Zealand, including the opposition she faced from figures like Prime Minister Richard Seddon.

Through its rock concert format, live band, and dynamic ensemble, *That Bloody Woman* delivers an engaging and thoughtprovoking theatrical experience while celebrating the determination and legacy of Kate Sheppard.

KEY DATES

9 & 10 August	Auditions
22 September	Rehearsals Commence
23 - 25 November	Tech Week
26-29 November	Performances
3-6 December	Performances

Rehearsals will generally be held three evenings per week, with each session approximately two hours. A detailed rehearsal schedule will be provided following casting and will be shaped around cast availability where possible.

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS

Please prepare the following for your audition:

- A verse and chorus from any song in *That Bloody Woman* that demonstrates your vocal and emotional range
- 16 bars of a contrasting song from any other musical that showcases your vocal strength and range
- a selected dialogue piece from *That Bloody Woman* provided in this audition pack.

During your audition:

- You may be asked to repeat sections of your song with adjustments or redirection.
- If you wish to use a backing track, please email this through to thatbloodywoman@nmt.org.nz before your audition.

CASTING BREAKDOWN

**Kate Sheppard**

Female lead. A rockstar, a leader, and a driving force for change. Requires an outstanding rock/musical theatre voice with a strong belt.

Vocal range: F3 - E5.

Sir John Ballance

Influential political figure who supports woman suffrage.
Open to all genders.
Strong, versatile musical theatre voice.

**Walter Sheppard**

Kate's husband and supporter of her activism.
Strong rock voice with falsetto.
Part of the ensemble.

William Lovell-Smith

A character often portrayed as Kate's close confidant and possible love interest. Strong rock voice with falsetto.
Part of the ensemble.

**Jenny Lovell-Smith**

Key figure within the suffrage movement.
Strong rock/indie/musical theatre voice

CASTING BREAKDOWN



Ada Wells

Prominent suffragette and supporter of Kate.
Strong rock/indie/musical theatre voice

Vicar

Requires excellent comedic timing and a strong, flexible musical theatre voice.
Open to all genders.



Mary Leavitt

Fellow suffragette who works alongside Kate.
Outstanding rock/gospel/musical theatre voice.

Richard 'King Dick' Seddon

Prime Minister and Kate's main antagonist.
Requires an incredible rock/soul bari-tenor who can groove and rap,
with a physically commanding stage presence.



Sir John Hall

Influential supporter of women's suffrage.
Open to all genders.
Strong, versatile musical theatre voice.

AUDITION DIALOGUE PIECES

1/ Kate Sheppard

So how do you like it so far? Are you having a good time? Phew. What about you? *(To the man in the front)* It's very brave of you to come to a show about a feminist and sit in the front row. Was that your choice? It's all about choice for us feminists. We love it, can't get enough of being able to choose. Any feminists in tonight? Anyone a bit confused about what the word means? Well, let's ask a few questions and see if we can figure it out. So, put your hand up if you believe everyone should be able to choose to have an education? Put your hand up if you believe everyone should be able to choose what happens to their own bodies? Put your hand up if you believe everyone should be able to choose to be safe in their own home? Fabulous. Now put your hand up if you've put your hand up three times. Guess what? You're a feminist.

Ladies and feminists, our story starts in Christchurch, 1871, a town of rough roads and one or two substantial buildings, pretty much like it is now. You see when you decide to be a colonist you make a deal. Men make a deal to build. Women make a deal to breed. But before you start your shift on the reproduction line you need a man, and not just any man, you need a husband.

2/ Walter Sheppard

(getting more excited as the line progresses)

The double entry system requires two accounting entries to record each financial transaction. They may occur in asset, liability, income, expense or capital accounts. Recording of a debit amount to one or more accounts and an equal credit amount to one or more accounts results in total debits being equal to total credits for all accounts in the general ledger! *(he climaxes.)* Was it good for you?

WALTER falls asleep before KATE has a chance to answer.

3/ Richard 'King Dick' Seddon

Yep. Kiwis don't want some ideological intellectual spouting big words at them, telling them what to do. They wanted a leader like me, a good down-to-earth sort of bloke who's not afraid to kid around and have a bit of fun.

Until the support given is far less languid than is now the case, female voting rights can hardly be expected to become law. It is not customary to give valued privileges to people who do not hold out their hands for them. Women will have to give some sign of a wish for the franchise before they get it. At present they are so entirely quiescent in this part of the world that it is generally and easily assumed that they have no such wish for change.

AUDITION DIALOGUE PIECES

4/ Kate/Hall/Balance/Dick

KATE: Every working girl needs a John and lucky for me I found two. Red Door Theatre, meet Sir John Hall, Independent Member of Parliament for Selwyn.

One of the MEN becomes SIR JOHN HALL.

HALL: Hellooo Selwyn! Are you ready to vote!

KATE: And this is Sir John Ballance, Independent Member of Parliament for Whanganui.

One of the MEN becomes JOHN BALLANCE

BALLANCE: (*Pronouncing it incorrectly as was the norm not so long ago.*) Wanganui.

KATE: Not anymore honey... and soon to be founder and leader of the Liberal Party. I needed these two on side to get started so I...

DICK: Fucked them. You lot would do anything to get your way.

KATE: Mothers and whores, all we're good for? Fair enough. Let's do this number a little differently.

5/ Kate/Jennie/Ada

KATE: Ladies. It seems we're languid.

JENNIE: Having or showing a disinclination for physical exertion or effort.

KATE: And quiescent.

ADA: In a state or period of inactivity or dormancy.

KATE: Maybe cos we're knackered.

JENNIE: Extremely tired, worn out and damaged by abuse or overuse.

KATE: By the patriarchy.

ADA: A system of society when men hold the power and women are denied it.

KATE: We've been excluded.

JENNIE: Denied access to a place, to a group or to a privilege.

KATE: Denied power.

ADA: The ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way.

KATE: Men colluded.

JENNIE: Came to a secret understanding or agreement to conspire.

KATE: To keep us at bay.

6/ Kate/Dick

KATE: Women's suffrage won't be a goer, no franchise for Aotearoa.

DICK: (*mangling the pronunciation*) Aotearoa.

KATE: Hard to believe we lost to a rhyme like that, but we did.

DICK: Twice.

KATE: We got nearly 20,000 signatures on the second petition, but it still wasn't enough.

AUDITION DIALOGUE PIECES

6/ Kate/Dick continued

DICK: Gave you a good excuse to hang out with your favourite Willy.

KATE: What's William got to do with it?

DICK: Very convenient, every time you needed petitions he was around to print them.

KATE: The WCTU were broke and he was happy to lend a hand

DICK: I bet he was.

KATE: What do you want to hear Dick? That he bent me over his press, had his way with me? Sorry to disappoint you. Didn't happen. *(To audience)* Wouldn't have minded if it had though.

7/ Kate/Walter

KATE: Thank you boys, that was very... theatrical. The truth wasn't quite so dramatic. Walter decided he wanted to go back to England and asked if I wanted to go with him knowing I'd say no...

WALTER: Will you come with me?

KATE: *(to WALTER)* No. *(to audience)* So, he said goodbye...

WALTER: Goodbye Kate.

KATE: I said goodbye... *(to WALTER)* Goodbye Walter. *(to audience)* And he left. For good.

THANK YOU

Thank you for your interest in *That Bloody Woman* and for taking the time to prepare for your audition.

We appreciate your commitment to the arts and your willingness to bring your creativity, energy, and courage into this production. We look forward to meeting you and seeing what you will bring to the room as we work together to share this important story with our community.

See you at auditions!

Ngā mihi nui,
The Nelson Musical Theatre Committee
Hugh Neill (Director)
Lillie Prestidge (Assistant Director)
Chris Lukies (Musical Director)

REGISTER NOW

