

**www.starrs.com.au**

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# Starrs Productions

## Australians at War



### 1) WORLD WAR I – “HAY BEFORE THE MOWER”

*“The dead close around our trenches were in their thousands, acres and acres simply covered with them, they were mainly Turks, who had charged so bravely and were simply mown down like hay before the mower”. Donkin, D 16/5/15*

‘Hay before the Mower’ is a drama-documentary that pays tribute to the men and women who served Australia during World War I. The script is a rich selection of anecdotes, letters, poems, songs and other such ANZAC reminiscences.

Two professional actors employ characterization, caricature, irreverent humour and song and dance to portray varied reflections about: the recruitment drive; training in Egypt; the Gallipoli campaign; the battlefields of France; the home front; Billy Hughes and conscription; nurse’s stories and the journey home.

### 2) VIETNAM – LOSS OF INNOCENCE

**Loss of Innocence** is a drama-documentary that focuses on the true stories of veterans. Two actors employ monologue, poetry, song and dialogue to portray a range of people and events that include:

A fresh-off-the-plane female journalist who experiences a Viet Cong attack, an infantry soldier who trips a claymore mine, a showgirl who walks alone onto an off-limits beach, an Aboriginal soldier returning home, a couple dealing with post- traumatic stress and families living with the impact of Agent Orange.

Performed with humour and pathos - Loss of Innocence - is an insightful journey into the experiences and consequences of the Vietnam War.

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## **Feedback for Australians at War**

### **1) DEPT. OF EDUCATION PUBLICATION**

“A drama-documentary where two actors incorporate a gamut of emotional images of many people and events surrounding Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War. Excellent characterisation, subtle mood, sound effects and minimal sets present the horror, the humour and the human turmoil of War; the killing fields; the show girls; the chopper rides; the rapes; the heroes; the coming home. The majority of the dialogue is taken from autobiographies...and personal accounts. An excellent performance for students of Drama and History.”

### **2) COMMENTS FROM SCHOOLS**

“What a wonderful and informative performance we had the pleasure of viewing... totally engaged by the Drama-documentary and the actors were quite superb in bringing to life the stories. A unique experience for students and staff. Thank you to all involved.”

- Penrhos College, WA

“Staff were extremely impressed with the performance. It raised many important issues and performers interacted well with students.”

- Caroline Chisholm HS, ACT

“They really are very, very good. The kids enjoyed their enthusiasm and the show itself, and were very interested in the selection process of material for the script. We’ll certainly have them back.”

- Kambala Girls’ HS, NSW

“The two performers were superb. I have nothing but the highest praise. I was riveted.”

- Pembroke School, SA

**SUITABILITY: WW1 - 7 – 12. Vietnam: 9-12 DURATION: 60 MINUTES + QUESTION TIME**

**COST PER STUDENT: \$6.60 (\$6 + 60 cents GST)**

**MINIMUM PER SESSION: \$660 (\$600 + \$60 GST IF 100 STUDENTS OR LESS)**

**TEACHER NOTES PROVIDED**