
Water Pressure



Characters

AZIZ – a young boy of the present day

MRS AZZOPARDI – his mother

CY O’CONNOR

BRIDGET O’CONNOR – CY O’Connor’s daughter

Six groups of characters, as follows. Have as many as you like in each group. Some named characters belong to each group.

Prospectors

HANNAN

BAYLEY

FORD

PROSPECTOR 1

PROSPECTOR 2

PROSPECTOR 3

WOMAN

Other actors can play men, women, children, shopkeepers and Afghan camel drivers.

Aborigines

ABORIGINE 1

ABORIGINE 2

ABORIGINE 3

Scientists

SCIENTIST 1

SCIENTIST 2

SCIENTIST 3

Politicians

SIR JOHN FORREST

POLITICIAN 1

POLITICIAN 2

POLITICIAN 3

The Public

PUBLIC 1

PUBLIC 2

PUBLIC 3

EDITOR – representing the press

Builders

BUILDER 1

BUILDER 2

BUILDER 3

Setting

The action takes place in a fictional regional museum in the goldfields of Western Australia. The stage is bare except for an antique wooden desk chair for CY O’Connor. It is as if the cast are part of dioramas and other displays, dressed in period costumes and carrying appropriate props—except, of course for Aziz and his mother.

Water Pressure

The WHOLE CAST is onstage, except for AZIZ and his mother, MRS AZZOPARDI. Everyone is dressed in costumes suitable for each character, and stand or sit frozen in groups, as if they are photographs. CY O'CONNOR is sitting at the front on one side. BRIDGET is standing behind him, one hand resting on one of his shoulders. AZIZ and MRS AZZOPARDI enter.

AZIZ Look, Mum! Statues.

MRS AZZOPARDI Yes, dear.

[AZIZ goes to touch one.]

MRS AZZOPARDI Don't touch!

[AZIZ goes over to CY O'CONNOR.]

AZIZ Who's this, Mum?

MRS AZZOPARDI That's CY O'Connor. He lived over 100 years ago.

AZIZ What did he do?

MRS AZZOPARDI Um—he built a pipeline, I think. Come on, darling, the museum will close soon. I want to look at the teapot collection. We'll stop here again on our way out.

AZIZ But Mum—what pipeline? And who's the lady behind him?

[MRS AZZOPARDI leads AZIZ out of the exhibition. BRIDGET turns her head and watches them go. Nobody else moves. BRIDGET steps forward.]

BRIDGET Welcome to the Goldfields Museum. I'm Bridget, Bridget O'Connor. This man, CY O'Connor, was my father.

[BRIDGET walks past the frozen groups, who turn and silently exit as she has walked past them during the next speech.]

BRIDGET We are the shadows of Australia's history. Remembered by some. For a while. We all drift into history—protesters, scientists, politicians, builders and people of all sorts who live and dream and die—drifting into history.