

Patrick White and Film

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The release in 2011 of Fred Schepisi's film of *The Eye of the Storm* (1973), the first adaptation to the screen of one of Patrick White's novels, was the culmination of many years of planning and fund raising. It also broke a hoodoo that had seemed to afflict anyone who tried to film a White novel, given the large number of unsuccessful attempts over the years. In particular, there was the long-running saga of efforts to film *Voss* (1957), seemingly as doomed to failure as the explorer's own quest. The repeated disappointments turned White against his novel and even made him wary of Richard Meale's opera based on it. On 21 February 1981 he wrote to David Malouf, author of the opera's libretto, 'I suppose deep inside me I feel nobody will do anything with *Voss* in any medium; that will be Leichhardt's revenge for something I should never have done' (Marr Papers). Contrary to his fears, the opera was 'a tremendous success—full houses and enthusiastic audiences,' as he told his English publisher Graham C. Greene, noting that this should help sales of the novel (Marr ed. 610-11). Indeed, from early in his career, White dreamed of his novels being filmed, not just because of the possible boost to sales but because of his love of film.

As David Marr's biography records, White had a longstanding interest in the theatre, writing plays while still at school (58, 61). His love of going to the cinema was just as longstanding though this has received much less attention from critics and biographers. In his autobiography *Flaws in the Glass* (1981), after expressing his gratitude to his mother for introducing him to 'theatre at an early age,' White continues:

My vocation came closest to revealing itself in those visits to the theatre, usually musical comedy, in the early bubblings of sexuality, and expeditions through the streets observing, always observing. I suppose I was happiest visiting elderly literate women, book shops in which the smell of books, the feel of them, the titles I read, intoxicated, and most of all, during the hours I spent at 'the pitchers,' either at the Cross or down George Street. My mother did not approve of the cinema; films, she maintained, hurt her eyes, and picture-theatres she considered common. But she did not object to my going to the pictures and was not unduly censorious of what I saw. Perhaps because she could not take the cinema seriously she did not think her peculiar child could come to serious harm. (244-5)

White's fascination with performance, with sight and sound as well as words, was demonstrably intrinsic to his sense of himself as an artist. And the fact that his mother 'could not take the cinema seriously' may well have increased its attraction and value for him, given their often antagonistic relationship (Marr, 598).

Little, however, has been written about the influence of film on Patrick White's novels and plays. While this is potentially an important new line of inquiry in Patrick White studies, it is not the focus of this paper. Instead, we examine some of the unpublished film scripts found in the Patrick White manuscripts acquired by the National Library of Australia in 2006, reading them in the light of White's ongoing interest in film and with an emphasis on his parodies of Australian films within them. We also provide an overview of White's involvement in earlier attempts to film his novels. In both cases, White's extensive knowledge of films, directors

and actors is apparent as well as his strong opinions about developments in the Australian film industry. The film scripts, in particular those produced in the last decade of his career, also demonstrate White's love of parody and bawdy humour. While these aspects of his writing tended to be suppressed in earlier novels like *The Tree of Man* (1955) and *Voss*, they are much more obvious in his last novel *Memoirs of Many in One* (1986) and his later plays and film scripts. Film, a medium that could not be taken seriously by his mother, seems to have encouraged White to give a freer rein to his playfulness and sense of humour.

As his letters demonstrate, from early in his career White dreamed of his books being filmed, writing to his cousin Peggy Garland on 28 December 1955 about *The Tree of Man*: 'I have a wild dream in which I see it done as I can see it, without regard for expense or public' (Marr ed.101). When visiting New York in 1958 he met the Hollywood actor Zachary Scott, who expressed interest in filming both *The Tree of Man* and *Voss* with his wife, Ruth Ford, playing Laura Trevelyan. White was very pleased with Scott's suggestion that the French director Jean Renoir be approached to work on the project (Marr ed. 147, 149). But as he was to realise, interest was one thing, the actual making of a film another, and in the real rather than dream world it was never going to be possible for either funding or the public to be ignored. He did, however, attempt to maintain some control over the presentation of his work, insisting on having a say in the choice of director when he eventually sold the film rights to *Voss* to entrepreneur Harry Miller in 1968. This, as will be discussed later, was one of the reasons for the failure of attempts to film the novel, since Miller and White could never agree about a suitable director.

Earlier, in refusing Zachary Scott's suggestion that he write the scripts for the proposed films, White claimed 'that is something I would not know how to go about.' In 1963, however, he did try his hand at writing screenplays based on several of his short stories. Indeed, after meeting Barry Humphries for the first time in Melbourne in 1962 he began writing 'Clay' which he intended to turn into a film for Humphries, with Zoe Caldwell, who had recently appeared in *The Ham Funeral*, 'playing his mum, his wife and the character out of a subjective novel he spends most of his life writing. This thing has turned out very peculiar indeed, but I feel it is going to be right' (Marr ed. 214). The story was published with a dedication to Humphries and Caldwell, and knowledge of its origins helps to explain this most surreal of White's stories, one which as David Myers noted, 'offers considerable difficulties to interpreters' (33). Its single narrative perspective and heavy reliance on visual imagery, however, made 'Clay' easier to adapt to film than White's other stories from this period. As White's letter suggests, Clay is the would-be artist trapped in a society that fears and persecutes difference. Unlike White himself, Clay is unable to break away from his mother and her insistence on conformity to society's norms, dutifully attending each day the job she has arranged for him and marrying a woman just like her, something that would have been emphasised in the film version with Caldwell playing both roles. But eventually all the sensuality and individuality that he has repressed begins to surface; Clay grows his hair and spends his nights shut in a room writing his 'subjective novel.' His character Lova becomes more and more real to him, eventually invading his workplace, again an effect that would have worked powerfully on the screen with Caldwell playing Lova as well as Clay's mother and wife. Finally, the only escape for Clay is in death.

The screenplay for 'Clay,' together with others for 'Willy Wagtails by Moonlight' and 'Down at the Dump,' all stories eventually collected in *The Burnt Ones* (1964), are included in the NLA's White manuscripts. They were written in the first half of 1963 while White and his partner Manoly Lascaris were travelling in Greece. White hoped they would make up a

film to be called *Triple Sec*, with the young Bruce Beresford as director. Writing to Geoffrey Dutton on 8 May 1963, White fantasised about Zoe Caldwell snaring a ‘Minnesotan millionaire who will put up the money for an Australian film,’ or of approaching Douglas Fairbanks Jr, via a niece who was working for his company (Marr 416). But these remained dreams; as was to happen so often, the film was never made. ‘Clay,’ as noted above, might have worked better on the screen than the page, especially with the actors White had in mind. ‘Down at the Dump,’ in its contrasting of middle and working class Australians, also had strong visual potential, and White planned an effective opening contrast of shots of the Sarsaparilla dump and cemetery. But the screenplay spells out too much that is more effectively implied in the story through White’s characteristic use of free indirect discourse. The same tendency is even more pronounced in the screenplay for ‘Willy Wagtails by Moonlight.’ As in ‘Down at the Dump’ White’s satiric target in this story is the Australian middle class, as the sexual indiscretions hidden beneath a façade of respectability are revealed. A couple are forced to listen to tape recordings of bird songs after a dinner party but, while their hosts are out of the room, hear instead the husband making love to his secretary. White makes skilful use of a shifting narrative perspective, exploiting to maximum advantage the contrast between each character’s thoughts and what they say. This type of narrative is much more difficult to translate to the screen than the one used in ‘Clay.’ In ‘Willy Wagtails by Moonlight’ White makes the beginning adapter’s mistake of a too literal translation, using voiceovers and flashbacks to illustrate material that works better on the page. As a result, much of the story’s irony is lost, despite the advantage in film of being able to make a suggestive use of music.

White’s letters are full of references to visits to the cinema and the films he and Lascaris saw in Sydney. Initially their main interest was in foreign films and they frequented the Savoy, the cinema that specialised in that area in the 1950s and 60s. After the revival of the Australian film industry in the 1960s and 70s White seems to have tried to see every locally made film but was often disappointed by the results. In particular, he disliked the highly popular adaptations of Australian novels such as Miles Franklin’s *My Brilliant Career*, set in the past and in the bush, feeling that they presented a picture postcard view of Australia and reinforced national stereotypes. On 21 December 1982, for example, in a Christmas letter to his old school friend, the actor Roland Waters, White noted that he had seen ‘two excellent Oz films, *Lonely Hearts* and *Monkey Grip*—a relief after more romances of the outback with nothing in them but photography’ (Marr Papers). Almost three years later he was again writing to Waters about his reaction to another adaptation of an Australian novel, again one with a contemporary and city setting, Peter Carey’s *Bliss*: ‘I finally got to see *Bliss*, which to me is the best Australian film, though I went full of prejudice’ (20 November 1985). Unfortunately, he does not indicate whether the prejudice was based on his dislike of the novel, or something else. As *Bliss* was director Ray Lawrence’s first film, he could hardly have been the reason, though the producer was Anthony Buckley who had also produced Jim Sharman’s film of White’s novella *The Night, the Prowler* in 1978.¹

In the decade before this, White had drawn on his knowledge of the work of international actors and directors during the complex negotiations over the filming of *Voss*. From the beginning there was conflict between Miller’s and White’s very different views of the purpose of the film, with White wanting to make art and Miller money (Marr ed. 340). He put pressure on White to give up his veto on choice of director, suggesting Fred Zimmermann, who had directed a successful adaptation of Jon Cleary’s *The Sundowners* in Australia in 1949 or Tony Richardson who had recently filmed *Ned Kelly*, starring rock singer Mick Jagger. Wary of *Voss* being turned into ‘a boy’s adventure story,’ White proposed the Indian

director Satyajit Ray, who had been suggested by Bruce Beresford. Miller apparently responded: “‘ He hasn’t even a track record! He makes *art* films! Aren’t you interested in money?’” So I had to say—yes, to give away, but that I had enough to be happy on, and all I am really interested in is art’ (Marr ed. 340). By 1970 they had finally agreed on the British director Ken Russell and in midyear John McGrath, a dramatist and director who had collaborated with Russell on earlier projects, came to Australia to scout for locations and prepare to write the script. By the end of 1971, however, Russell had decided he did not want to travel to Australia, and White had also cooled about him directing *Voss* (Marr ed. 386-7).

In 1974, after the award of the Nobel Prize had made White an international celebrity, plans to film *Voss* were again on the boil. The American director Joseph Losey flew to Sydney to meet White; they got on very well and continued to correspond until Losey’s death a decade later. White had hoped that Harold Pinter, who had previously collaborated with Losey, would write the script; he declined so was replaced by another British playwright, David Mercer (Marr, 572). Losey and White also discussed who should be cast as Laura Trevelyan and Voss. White recoiled from the suggestion of American Mia Farrow, favouring instead the English Diana Rigg or Vanessa Redgrave, and was totally dismissive of Canadian actor Donald Sutherland as a candidate for playing Voss. In the letters sent between their meeting and Losey’s death, he and White tossed around other names, though no progress was made on the film. In 1975, Losey suggested Charlotte Rampling, who decades later was to be so memorable as Elizabeth Hunter in *The Eye of the Storm*; White went off to see some of her films but was not convinced. By 1981, another of the leads from *Eye of the Storm*, Judy Davis, was mentioned as a possible Laura, with German actor Maximilian Schell as Voss. But after the Australian Film Commission refused funding for the film in 1977, at least partly because of the involvement of so many non-Australians, Harry Miller lost interest in the project and film rights to the novel eventually came into the hands of Sidney Nolan.²

During the 1970s White was involved in a much more productive collaboration with director Jim Sharman whose highly successful revival of *The Season at Sarsaparilla* (1962) for Sydney’s Old Tote in 1976 inspired White to return to the stage, writing *Big Toys* (1977) for its leading lady Kate Fitzpatrick (Marr 570-1). After White told Sharman that his novella ‘The Night the Prowler’ might make a good film, Sharman asked him to write the screenplay. Sharman managed to raise the necessary funds and *The Night the Prowler* was made in late 1977. Once again, working with Sharman inspired White to produce new work, in this case two original screenplays that were never to be filmed. Scripts for ‘Monkey Puzzle’ and ‘Last Words’ are among the White manuscripts at the NLA. As with his plays written at this time and later, White had lead actors in mind from the beginning. ‘Monkey Puzzle,’ a send-up of the Australian literary scene as well as of Australian films of the period, was, like the earlier ‘Clay,’ designed for Barry Humphries. White’s beloved Lizzie Clark was the prototype for the loyal servant central to ‘Last Words,’ a play designed for Robin Nevin, who took the lead in Sharman’s revival of *A Cheery Soul* that broke box-office records at the Opera House Drama Theatre in early 1979 (Marr 588). Sharman was apparently more enthusiastic about ‘Last Words’ than ‘Monkey Puzzle,’ though from a reading of the two scripts, ‘Monkey Puzzle’ would seem to make better use of the film medium than ‘Last Words,’ a fairly conventional historical saga more suitable for the page than the screen. Perhaps the hostile reception of *The Night, the Prowler* had put Sharman off attempting any more films that mingled the satiric with the serious. Certainly, its failure at the box office meant that he was unable to raise the funding needed to film ‘Last Words’ (Marr 589).

The National Library's catalogue description of 'Monkey Puzzle' notes the link between one of its characters, the archivist Henrietta Birdsell, and Hazel de Berg, whose recorded interviews with many writers and others for the NLA's oral history collection are an invaluable record of the Australian literary scene of the 1970s. White himself refused to be interviewed by her, an indication that we are not to take too seriously the pretensions of the supposed Great Writer, Will Garlick, who does allow his opinions to be recorded for posterity. The presence of the tape recorder—alternative titles for the film were 'Tape Worm' and 'Holy Writ'—provides a rationale for the extensive use of Will's voice, with ironic contrasts between what he says and what would have been seen on screen. Interestingly, Judy Morris's screenplay for *The Eye of the Storm* also finds a way to incorporate voiceover via Sir Basil Hunter's autobiographically-based play.

'Monkey Puzzle' was written while White was completing *The Twyborn Affair* (1979), in which he revisits many of the scenes of his earlier life and earlier fictions, and just before his memoir, *Flaws in the Glass* (1981). Hence it is not surprising to find that the screenplay has some autobiographical elements although it is clear that we are not to take Garlick and his views on writing seriously. Superficially, there is nothing to link Will Garlick and Patrick White apart from their being writers. Will lives in a large house—with a monkey puzzle tree in the garden—together with his wife Lalage Moffat, a highly successful writer of romance fiction. It is her income rather than his which supports the household. The differences in their approaches to writing are signalled early in the screenplay in the descriptions of their two studies. Lalage's is 'incredibly ordered': 'Woodwork and a flat-topped desk painted a duck-egg blue. Paintings of representational subjects by accepted artists of the Sydney charm school.' In contrast, Will's is the cliché great author's workplace: 'Dark, Chaotic, Book-Filled. Leather-Bound Collected Works and worn dictionaries are noticeable. On the desk is a mountain of litter, with only a small space in the middle of which it would be possible to work. In spaces where the Book-Cases allow, there are portraits of Will Garlick at various stages of his life' (4). The portraits are as much a clue to Will's self-absorbed writing as Lalage's pretty but superficial paintings are to hers. As Will recalls his childhood for Henrietta, many familiar White motifs emerge, though often here they are exaggerated in a farcical way. Will's mother wanted a girl and he is dressed as one until he is eight. His father leaves the household after being discovered having sex with the cook; Will shares his mother's bed, and there is even a scene of them sitting on their potties together!

Despite the comic absurdities of many scenes, some of Will's opinions do seem to be ones White would have shared, such as this description of the role of the artist: 'looking . . . pervising . . . But that's the way it is. Some are performers, some the audience, with artists in between—a horrid hybrid—a kind of performing audience' (16). Through Will he is also able to send-up some of the letters he received over the years from both admirers and detractors. After showing Henrietta a letter from a female fan—read as voice-over with 'plummy, consciously "educated" enunciation,' he hands her another. This time the voice is 'male, thin, acidulated':

We have never met, and after wading through two volumes of your never-ending, disjointed, so-called autobiography, I hope we never shall. Facts are facts, after all. At least that's how it strikes this pragmatic Australian. I can only say before signing off that what you have to offer is nothing more than self-indulgent shit.

Your non-admirer,

Damien X. Capricorn.

P.S. That isn't my name, as you might guess. (66-8)

Anyone with a little knowledge of Australian literature, however, can easily identify the target here as novelist Xavier Herbert, best known as the author of *Capricornia* (1938). White's friendship with Herbert soured early in 1979 after Herbert complained to a journalist about White's failings as a letter writer (Marr ed. 516-7). In a scene added to the screenplay at a later stage, White takes further revenge on Herbert by depicting a supposed dinner in his honour held by the Fellowship of Australian Writers at a Chinese restaurant. The feted 'Homespun writer from the North' gets very drunk, Will and his wife turn up late, then Will displays his contempt for such writers' gatherings by farting, and they leave. White also had no time for literary gatherings. When invited to become an Honorary Life Member of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature in 1979, he told then President Mary Lord that 'much as I enjoy conviviality, I suspect that more literature plops from the solitary bottle than out of the convivial flagon' (Marr ed. 520).

Unlike White, however, Will sees art as an act of will rather than intuition. White felt, as he told Craig McGregor in 1969, that '[p]ractically anything I have done of any worth I feel I have done through my intuition, not my mind' (21). Accordingly he has a lot of fun at the expense of Will's pretensions and egotism. In the following passage, Will's voice-over account of his writing process is undermined by the exaggerated visual images described in the script:

WILL'S VOICE

Because art—like life—if you'll allow me to say so—is an act of almost pure—(softly) will.

IN THE SILENT IMAGE WILL LOOKS UP FOR A MOMENT FROM HIS FOOLSCAP AS THOUGH MIGHTILY PLEASED WITH THE EPIGRAM HE HAS JUST COINED. THEN HE CONTINUES WRITING AWAY AS THE MOUNTAIN TORRENT CONTINUES FLOWING.

WILL'S VOICE

. . . and courage . . . the courage not to side-step one's blemishes and vices—all ALL must be shown in what amounts to a gigantic orgasm of honesty

A VIOLENT BOILING OF THE WATERS AS THEY FLOW AROUND AND OVER THE IMAGE OF WILL AT HIS DESK. LUSH FLOWERS, SUCH AS FULL-BLOWN ROSES AND PEONIES ARE CARRIED ONWARD BY THE TORRENT. THEN IT IS AS THOUGH THE CONTENTS OF A GARBAGE BIN HAVE BEEN EMPTIED HIGHER UP: DEAD FLOWERS, THE DUST-BAG FROM A VACUUM CLEANER, PRAWNSHELLS, A CHICKEN'S SKELETON, DISINTEGRATING MULTI-COLOURED TISSUES, PLASTIC CONTAINERS, ROTTEN APPLES, A CAT'S CORPSE.

WILL'S VOICE

. . . the excremental

SHOT OF SEWAGE BOBBING ON THE WATERS.

WILL'S VOICE

. . . as well as the purity of innocence

CUT TO:

WILL AS MUMMY'S LITTLE GIRL-BOY STRAINING ON THE POTTY. (71-2)

Earlier in the screenplay, White had expressed his frustrations over the failure of attempts to film *Voss* and his contempt for the standard Australian historical film of the period by recreating *Voss* as the type of boy's own adventure he feared Harry Miller had wanted. As the romance writer Lalage toys with an idea for her next novel, in her imagination the plumber who is fixing the house guttering becomes a nineteenth-century explorer, while she turns into the Laura figure:

LALAGE'S VOICE

'As he pressed on into the distance, saltbush catching at his frayed—trousers? blisters turning to sores on his lips, the blazing universe splintering around him. . . .'

DISSOLVE TO:

DUSTY, DESERT LANDSCAPE IN WHICH THE PLUMBER HAS BECOME A 19TH CENTURY EXPLORER, GAUNT, STAGGERING, AT THE END OF HIS TETHER.

LALAGE'S VOICE

' . . . he had almost forgotten his objective, of crossing this vast continent, for remembering her voice, her eyes, her cool camellia skin, all the seduction of his sojourn in Sydney'

PLUMBER-EXPLORER CONTINUES STAGGERING ON HIS WAY: PEELING SKIN, SWEAT DRIPPING FROM CREASED EYELIDS. THE FIGURE OF A WOMAN MATERIALISES AHEAD OF HIM, APPEARING TO BECKON HIM ON. IT IS LALAGE MOFFATT SEATED ON A SUPERB BLACK HORSE, SLEEK AND GROOMED. SHE IS RIDING SIDE-SADDLE, WEARING A BLACK HABIT, BLACK SILK HAT, A NET VEIL GATHERED FROM ITS BRIM AND KNOTTED AT THE NAPE OF HER NECK, EMPHASISING HER PROFILE.

PLUMBER-EXPLORER STAGGERS TOWARDS THE VISION, WHICH FLICKERS AND FLUCTUATES LIKE TURNED-ON FLUORESCENT LIGHTING.

EXPLORER'S VOICE

(heavy Germanic accent) I would surely have fallen and gasped my last on sis earth reeling under me, if my Laetitia have not beckoned me on

The explorer follows his vision of the beloved woman only to discover that, on the other side of the hill:

A 19TH CENTURY TRAIN IS HALTED AT THE END OF A RAILWAY LINE. LALAGE-LAETITIA HAS REINED HER HORSE IN GLORIOUS SUNLIGHT BESIDE IT.

EXPLORER-PLUMBER

(arriving, dazzled) Faht is zis?

LALAGE-LAETITIA

The good old South Australian Railways laid it on to carry us back to civilisation, but first we're going to refresh ourselves

A BUTLER AND THREE FOOTMEN DESCEND FROM THE TRAIN CARRYING CHAMPAGNE IN AN ICE BUCKET, PÂTÉ DE FOIE, LOBSTERS, AND A GIGANTIC BOMBE.

THE EXPLORER CANNOT EXPRESS HIMSELF, STAGGERS TO HIS LAETITIA'S SIDE, KISSES THE HEM OF HER SKIRT AS TEARS STREAM DOWN FROM UNDER SALT-ENCRUSTED EYEBROWS. LAETITIA IS SMILING RADIANTLY DOWN FROM UNDER THE BRIM OF HER SILK HAT.

SHOT OF ENGINEDRIVER AND STOKER, A VICTORIAN LAUREL AND HARDY, LOLLING OUT OF THEIR CABIN WITH SENTIMENTAL EXPRESSIONS OF APPROVAL. (40-42)

In a shorter screenplay entitled 'Kidults,' a satiric look at the lives of a young suburban couple, White again creates films within the film, and suggests that their main characters be played by the actors who also play Lance and Lorna Jolley: 'It would cut costs, broaden the Jolleys' fantasy world, and add to the *fun*.' Lance and Lorna go to a Hoyts cinema to see a version of *King Kong*, which is preceded by a trailer for a '19th century Australian soap opera.' Again White gives free rein to his dislike of Australian historical films of the 1970s and 80s in what is clearly a parody of *My Brilliant Career*, though with the happier ending that those financing that film had hoped for:

ON SCREEN YOUNG MAN (FRANK) AND GIRL (MARNIE) FACING EACH OTHER IN A PARLOUR STUFFED WITH PERIOD BRICABRAC. HE IS TERRIBLY HANDSOME, SHE TERRIBLY PRETTY.

MARNIE

I've got to be me—don't you see, Frank?

FRANK

(SAD BUT MANLY)

If that's how you feel, Marnie.

CUT TO:

GIRL SITTING DOWN AT HER DESK, WRITING AND WRITING. CAMERA MOVES TO WINDOW AND SHOT OF FRANK'S LONELY FIGURE RIDING AWAY.

CUT TO:

GIRL WITH FATHER (WRINKLED COCKY FARMER TYPE) ON WORMEATEN VERANDA.

DAD

A writer! It's the scones that count!

MARNIE

(BITTERLY)

Married to the land!

CUT TO:

MARNIE SEATED AT DESK WRITING, SHEETS OF MS FALLING TO CARPET. BRIEF SHOTS OF FIRE, FLOOD, DROUGHTSTRICKEN CATTLE, DROUGHTSTRICKEN SHEEP. APPROPRIATE EPIC MUSIC. (11-12)

But Marnie eventually prefers true love, rejecting a move to Sydney in favour of reunion with Frank, explaining that she will be 'a sort of squatting writer' (14).

From these examples, it can be seen that White's film scripts display his knowledge of as well as his dislike of the prevailing approach and effects found in many of the most popular Australian films made during his lifetime. They also display the strong visual imagination and love of satire and parody seen in his writing from his 1930s review sketches onwards. His love of 'fun' seems however to be more pronounced in the work produced in the last decade of his career when, having won the Nobel Prize for Literature, he no longer had any need to strive for recognition as a writer. While also apparent in his quirky last novel *Memoirs of Many in One* and his late plays, White's love of bawdy, camp humour and his willingness to ridicule himself as well as others are particularly obvious in these unpublished, unfilmed scripts. In 2012, Neil Armfield, director of many of White's plays and a close friend, in a centenary tribute referred to White's tendency in his final years to like to 'let his hair down.' Sometimes, he noted, Jim Sharman had to put it up again, for example changing the title of White's final play from 'The Budgiewank Experiment' to *Shepherd on the Rocks* (28). If Sharman had managed to fund 'Monkey Puzzle,' the film as made might well have been changed and its vulgarity toned down. In these unedited film scripts, however, we do get to see the mature White with his hair down.

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¹ *My Brilliant Career*, directed by Gillian Armstrong, 1979; *Lonely Hearts*, directed by Paul Cox, 1982; *Monkey Grip*, adapted from Helen Garner's novel, directed by Ken Cameron, 1982; *Bliss*, directed by Ray Lawrence, 1985.

² For a more detailed account of the history of attempts to film *Voss* see Robyn Holmes and Vincent Plush. *Patrick White, Voss and the Australian Cultural Landscape*. Canberra, ACT: National Library of Australia and National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, 2012.