

# A Place to Hang Your hat

SCREENPLAY

*Titles***1. Ext. street. day.**

Subtitle: 1964

*'Undecided,' (Errol Garner) plays through the credits (scene 1).*

*A double-decker bus stops on a busy street, next to a sign that reads 'Kings Cross.' A young woman, Isadora, 20, jumps lightly onto the sidewalk, ignoring the hand of the conductor. She swings a small suitcase under her arm and walks lightly and confidently through the crowd on a street lined with shops and cafes, past a wall graffitied with 'Australia, land of men without women.' She seems to know exactly where she is going.*

*Isadora pauses in front of a small wrought-iron gate and peers up at a white wooden house with peeling paint and an overgrown, untamed garden. Camera pans to a small sign hanging in the window that reads 'Lodgings - apply within.' She leans down swiftly and unlatches the gate and darts up the steps (Follow shot). The screen door is open, and from within we hear a tinny radio with sports commentary. She walks in.*

**2. Int. boarding house. day**

*We see a shabby lounge room-cum-reception. A man in his early sixties is sitting behind a desk reading the paper, listening to a small portable radio sitting on the desk. A cup of coffee sits next to the radio. Isadora pauses hesitantly and then walks up to the desk.*

*Cut-shots during dialogue between characters.*

*Isadora*        Hullo, I was just, uh...

*Her voice is drowned out by the noise of the radio.*

*George*        *Looks at her questioningly and turns down the radio.*

*Isadora*        *Tries again.*

I'd like to enquire after some lodgings.

*George*        *Bluntly recites*

Three shillings a night or ten a week.

*Isadora*        Do you have anything cheaper than that?

*She smiles, looking a little embarrassed.*

It's just that I...

*George*        *Interrupts*

Three shillings a night. I don't take anything less.

*Isadora*        Right. Of course. That'll be fine.

*George*        *CU of George's hands opening up a registration book covered with coffee stains and reaching for a pen. Camera cuts to his face.*

Can I have your name, please?

*Isadora*        Isadora Roberts.

*CU of George's hand as he enters her name. Cut to George's face.*

*George*      And how long will you be requiring a room for?

*Isadora*      *Hesitates.*

I'm not sure yet.

*George*      *Dismissively*

That's fine.

*He stands up and moves out from behind the desk. He picks up Isadora's small suitcase and (follow shot) proceeds up the dark narrow stairway, calling over his shoulder as he walks.*

The rooms are a bit old, I'm afraid. But they're nice enough.

*He pauses on the landing and looks at Isadora for approval.*

*Isadora*      *CU of Isadora's face as she hesitates. Her reply is not very convincing.*

I think it a charming house.

*George*      *Surveys the walls and skirting boards, which look sadly neglected (low-angle shot, which we see from the POV of George). Camera cuts to George's face. He seems to become quite distracted, hardly noticing Isadora's presence. His voice becomes gentler.*

It used to be. It dies a little more each year.

*He is abruptly broken from the spell and turns to an open door by the stairwell.*

Well this is your room.

*It is a rather shabby room, containing a wooden bed with an old patchwork quilt, wardrobe and dresser. CU of George's face as he frowns at the sight of the room.*

As I said, not fancy.

*Isadora*      *Steps over the threshold and surveys the room.*

*MS of Isadora from George's POV as she absentmindedly fishes in the small string bag strung around her wrist and uncovers a packet of cigarettes. She takes out a cigarette and lifts it to her mouth and resumes fishing in her bag for matches.*

*Camera cuts to George's disapproving face then back to Isadora.*

*George*      If you must smoke, I'd prefer you do it outside.

*Isadora*      *Turns her head, unlit cigarette in her mouth, with one hand still submerged somewhere in her bag. She pauses and, freeing her hand, removes the cigarette.*

Of course.

*George*      Well I'll leave you to it.

*Gestures*

Bathroom's just down the hall.

*Isadora*      *Glances after his retreating figure (follow shot) then, putting her small bag and cigarettes on the bed, walks over to look out the low, wide window.*

**3. Int. bathroom. early evening**

*Back-lighting to create heavy, defined silhouette of Isadora, sitting in a deep clawfoot bathtub with her legs lifted, scrubbing with soap. Her silhouette stretches and recedes along the tiled wall.*

*Isadora*      *Singing tunelessly to herself*  
 The way you wear your...*hat!*  
 The way you sip your tea.  
 The way your smile beaaamms...

*The way you look at me.*  
*She fades into a hum and rises, and we see her figure as she wraps herself in a large, fringed towel. She pauses in front of the cabinet mirror, which is cracked, and stares critically at her fragmented reflection.*

*She steps across the tiles and opens the door.*

**4. Int. hallway. evening.**

*In the hallway, Isadora runs into a young man, 25, walking in the corridor (eye-level shot).*

*Cut-shots during dialogue between characters.*

*Isadora*      *Makes a noise of surprise.*

*Good Lord!*

*Josef*        *Startled*

*Hello.*

*Isadora*      *Isadora regains her composure.*  
Sorry...I didn't think anyone was around. Otherwise I would've...  
*She gestures to her towel and trails off.*

*Josef*      *Grins light-heartedly*  
No need. We don't stand on ceremony here. My name's Josef. I'm a  
friend of George.

*Isadora*      *CU of Isadora as she stares blankly.*  
George?

*Josef*      *Amused*  
The proprietor.

*Isadora*      Ah...of course. George.  
  
*Camera zooms into Josef's barely perceptible smile.*

*Josef*      And you are?

*Isadora*      Isadora.

*Josef*      Pretty name.

*Isadora*      Thanks.

*Josef*           Where are you from, Isadora?

*Freeze frame on Isadora.*

*(v/o)* And what are you doing in a place like this? Of course that's what I wanted to ask her.

*Unfreeze frame.*

*Isadora*       Mareeba. It's in Queensland.

*Josef*           Is that right?

*Tilt shot, from Josef's POV of Isadora's towel, then cut back to CU of his face, evidently quite amused.*

Well I'll uh, let you get dressed. Pleasure to meet you and all that.

*Isadora watches Josef (Follow shot) as he walks down the hallway.*

*Her curiosity aroused, she creeps silently after him to get a final look from the top of the stairs (High-angle shot from Isadora's POV).*

**5. Int. lounge / reception. evening**

*MS of George, seated at the reception desk, absorbed in paperwork.*

*Josef enters from the stairway and leans over the reception desk.*



*Cut-shots during dialogue between characters.*

*Josef*            *Reproachfully*  
You didn't tell me you had a guest.

*George*           *Vaguely, still absorbed in paperwork*  
Mmm?

*Josef*            *She's quite a pretty little thing.*

*George*           *Looks up knowingly, with a smile.*  
Go on. Go home.

*Josef*            *Grins and starts heading out the door*

*George*           *Calls after him*  
Practise your music!

**6. Ext/Int. street/club. evening.**

*'Nevertheless,' (Frank Sinatra) plays throughout the scene.*

*Josef is walking down the street (LS) towards the camera, hands digging deep into the pockets of his light jacket. It is starting to rain.*

*Josef glances up at the sky as he turns the corner and stops in front of an old, narrow building. He pulls a key from his pocket and unlocks the door. Inside it is dark. Josef fumbles for a light switch and illuminates a small, basement-style room.*

*The camera pans to reveal chairs on top of round wooden tables , a bar and a stage at the far end.*

*The walls are bare, except for a couple of sets of parallel brackets, between which some black and white photographs of jazz musicians are fixed.*

*Josef heads over to the bar and pulls out a bottle from underneath the counter to pour himself a drink.*

*MS of Josef as he pulls a chair down with a practised hand, holding his drink in one hand. He sits down, leaning back in his chair and lights a cigarette. This is obviously a stable, comfortable routine.*

*Fade out.*

*Josef (v/o)*

This is my club. Club boheme. It belonged to my father during the War, and it was a place to dream. A dark and lonely club of men and women, each possessed of the need to seize the day or contrive the future or regret the past. I used to sit in this club when I was a kid, and consider the possibilities of life and music, while practising as many hours as I could stay awake.

## **7. Int. kitchen. morning**

*It is a lazy Sunday morning. Eye-level shot of Isadora and George in a sunny, little kitchen, seated at a wooden table propped up against the window. An old wooden ladder, suspended above the sink provides*

*hanging space for various cooking utensils. Isadora is drinking coffee and George is eating toast and reading the newspaper. Josef enters from the hallway.*

*Cut-shots during dialogue between characters.*

*Josef*      *Glances quickly at Isadora before directing his greeting chiefly at George*  
*Good morning.*

*George*      *Doesn't look up from his paper.*  
*Hullo Joe.*  
*Noting drily*  
*Not like you to grace us with your presence so early in the morning.*  
*He grimaces at Isadora.*  
*Miss Isadora, I expect you've met Josef already.*

*Isadora*      *Well yes I have, actually.*

*George*      *Dryly*  
*I rather thought so.*  
*He pulls himself up from the table and takes a plate and cup across to the sink.*  
*Well I've got some work to do.*  
*He glances pointedly at Josef as he walks out of the room.*

*Josef takes the opportunity to sit down at the table.*

*Josef*      *Leans across earnestly.*

Listen, Isadora, I own a jazz club. Club boheme. It's not far from here.  
You should stop by sometime.

*Isadora*      *CU of Isadora looking down , with a hint of a smile.*

Is it fun?

*Josef*      *Grins suggestively*

It certainly can be.

*Isadora*      I'll think about it.

*Josef*      Good.

*Freeze frame on Josef.*

*Isadora*      (v/o) He was looking at me the way a lot of 'em do. Like he could see  
something that I couldn't.

*She concedes*

I didn't mind it, really.

*Unfreeze frame.*

*Josef*      *Rises from the table.*

Well, bye.

*Isadora*            Bye.

*Isadora watches Josef leave, a smile playing across her lips.*

**9.    Int. lounge room / reception. early evening.**

*George is sitting in an armchair in the lounge room, reading the paper. Low-angle shot from George's POV as he looks up to see Isadora bounding lightly down the stairs. When she reaches the bottom she leans over the railing.*

*Cut-shots during dialogue between characters.*

*Isadora*            George, I don't s'pose you have a phonograph?

*George pauses and frowns. It takes him a moment to respond.*

*George*            There's one in the basement. You're welcome to use it. You can take it upstairs if you like.

*Isadora*            Grins

Thanks.

**10.   Int. bedroom. evening**

*CU of a '78 spinning on its turntable, making the scratchy sound of an old recording. Bessie Smith's 'Young Woman's Blues' blasts out.*

**11. Int. lounge room/reception. evening**

*George looks up from his reading, flinching at the volume of the music and the throaty lyrics of the song. He can't help smiling. He likes Isadora, despite himself.*

*He puts his head down and resumes reading.*

**12. Int/Ext. bedroom/street. evening**

*Isadora slips into a black evening dress, pulling the straps up around her bare shoulders. She puts on red lipstick and pulls her hair into a small knot.*

*Isadora*      *Sings along loudly and tunelessly to the recording, dancing spontaneously*

No time to marry, no time to settle down  
 I'm a young woman, and ain't done runnin' around  
 Some people call me a hobo, some call me a bum,  
 nobody knows my name, nobody knows what I've done.  
 I'm as good as any woman in your town.

*The door to the boarding house slams and Isadora flits down the front steps, out the gate and onto the street. The music continues, as part of the background. Isadora walks nonchalantly down the street, (tracking Shot) moving to her own seductive rhythm. Young and old men alike turn to stare at her as she passes. At the finish of the song ('See that lonesome road, Lord, you know it's gotta end, and I'm*

*a good woman, and I can get plenty of men' ), Isadora walks tentatively into Club boheme.*

**13. Int. club boheme. evening**

*'Kings Cross Mambo' (Don Burrows) plays throughout the scene. Eye-level shot from Isadora's POV of the club, which is packed, standing room only. There are people drinking, talking and dancing below the stage to a small jazz orchestra. The air is thick with cigarette smoke.*

*The camera follows Isadora (High-angle shot) as she pushes through the crowd and finds a seat at the bar.*

*Camera cuts to eye-level. Cut-shots during dialogue.*

*Bartender*      What can I get you, Miss?

*Isadora*        A beer, thanks.

*Fast cut to bartender.*

*Bartender*      Beer?

*Isadora*        Yes thanks.

*Bartender*      Lady what I *think* you be wanting is a shandy.

*CU of Isadora. She looks surprised then annoyed.*

*Isadora* Sir, I am no lady. I'll have a beer.

*Bartender* Submits unwillingly

Certainly, Ma'am.

*Facing the bar, Isadora takes a sip and turns around, finding herself face to face with Josef, who has a saxophone slung around his neck.*

*The two-shot captures the profile of each character within the frame.*

*Isadora* Hello.

*Josef* Hello

*Pauses*

What do you think?

*Isadora* I love it. It's perfect.

*She gestures to the saxophone around his neck.*

I didn't know you played.

*Josef* Grins and shrugs

Always have.

*He glances behind him at the stage.*

Listen, we're about to start up again, but stick around.

*He glances at her beer, and a smile passes momentarily across his*



*lips. He nods in the bartender's direction.*

Charles'll keep your glass full.

*Follow-shot from Isadora's POV, watching Josef push his way back through the crowd to the stage.*

*Isadora*      *Raises her glass to the bartender and grins cheekily.*

**14. Int. club boheme. evening.**

*LS of jazz orchestra on stage. Camera zooms into Josef, who is taking his seat next to a trombonist. Camera zooms out to Ricky May and Bob Barnard, who front the orchestra. They begin playing 'Just a Couple of Dudes.'*

*From his place on the stage, we see Josef watching something intently. Camera cuts to a young man leading Isadora onto the dance floor. There is a short blues piano interlude in this piece (refer to accompanying recording), during which the camera focuses on Isadora, dancing seductively. Camera cuts back to Josef, who is still gazing intently, obviously watching Isadora dance. He tries to ignore her and turns his attention to the music.*

**15. Int. kitchen. evening**

*High-angle, LS of George seated at the table, smoking and cleaning his collection of '78s.*

*George (v/o)* 1927 was the year I got hip to jazz. Crawled straight out of Harlem.  
Man, what a sound. And it never left me: Bechet, damn he knew how to *play*.

It seems like a lifetime since I stopped playing.

**16. Int. club boheme / flat. evening.**

*LS of the jazz orchestra, who are finished for the night and starting to pack up. Head-on shot of Josef, who jumps off the stage and makes his way to Isadora.*

*Cut-shots during dialogue of characters.*

*Josef* We're closing up for the night.  
*He hesitates and looks away.*  
Of course...if you still fancy a drink or somethin'...I live just upstairs...

*Isadora* *Boldly*  
Alright.

*Josef* *Nods, almost in disbelief.*  
Alright.

**17. Int. stairs. evening**

*High-angle shot, from Isadora's POV as she looks down at her feet and the figure of Josef ahead of her on the stairs. A cat streaks past her feet.*

*Isadora*        *Screams in surprise.*

*Camera cuts to Josef, who turns around.*

*Josef*         *Are you alright?*

*Isadora*        *Yes...it was just a cat, that's all.*

*'I'm Confessin' (Lester Young) begins to play.*

*Reaching the top of the stairs, Josef opens the door, and the room is in darkness.*

*Sound bridge.*

**18. Int. flat. evening.**

*Soft lighting. The song continues throughout the scene.*

*Eye-level shot as Josef switches on the light and illuminates an open-plan room, worn but comfortable with a couch covered by a colourful throw-rug and a small kitchen attached.*

*Head-on shot of Isadora as she steps in, a smile settling over her face.*

*Cut-shots between dialogue of characters*

*Isadora*        *Do you live here alone?*

*Josef*         *Shakes his head and hangs up her coat.*

I share it with Louis, who I believe you just met on the landing, and a strange disarray of post-bohemians, who either arrive after the club closes or simply decide they don't want to leave.

*Grins*

It's worse than a hotel. More like a train station, really.

*Isadora* I can think of nothing I should like more.

*Josef* *Laughs and walks over to the kitchen, gesturing for Isadora to make herself comfortable. She sits on a stool at the counter.*

I don't mind it, but Louis is rather territorial.

Coffee?

*Isadora* Yes thanks.

*Josef clatters around in the small kitchen, putting the kettle on and getting cups ready.*

*Josef* It was never intentional that I should keep a cat. Louis was a stray tom who just started turning up at the club each night.

*Isadora* To listen to the music, I presume.

*Josef* Well yes, and it was inconceivable that I should throw out a compatriot.

*Isadora*      *Laughs.*

*Josef*            He's quite fierce, and very proud, and I certainly wouldn't be so presumptuous as to call him *my* cat. He's his own master. But he's quite a good tenant, and we share a silent, very masculine relationship.

*He gives her a cup of coffee and leans against a kitchen cabinet with his own cup.*

*Isadora*            So how did you come to know George?

*Josef*              He was a friend of my father. They played together during the forties.

*Isadora*            Is that your father in those photographs?  
*She leans forward, trying to see some black and white photographs of a man playing saxophone.*

*Josef*              *Nods.*

*Isadora*            What's his name?

*Josef*              Friedrich.

*Isadora*            *CU of Isadora as she looks up in surprise.*  
Is that...?

- Josef*            *Shortly*  
German. My family name was Schultz. But Dad changed it to  
Shoots during the War.
- Isadora*            Did you mind?
- Josef*            *Sharply*  
Mind? No. I'm Australian.
- Isadora*            *hastily seeks to change subject*  
What attracted you to jazz?
- Josef*            Ah, well, she had a great sense of rhythm, y'know? Style, too. She also  
had a tastier collection of records than I did, which at the time was  
handy. And man, she knew how to swing.  
*Laughs*  
I have an underlying suspicion it might also have something to do with  
escapism.
- Isadora*            An escape from what?
- Josef*            *Laughs and speaks frankly, truthfully.*  
Total feelings of inadequacy, which seem to be related to the fact that  
I'm twenty-five years old and have accomplished very little...my  
parents are both dead, and...

*In an attempt to be light-hearted*

I make *terrible* coffee.

*Isadora* I quite like your coffee.

*Josef* *Smiles and lights a cigarette. He takes a long drag.*

So how long have you been footloose?

*Isadora* Since I was about eighteen.

*Josef* How do you survive? Or do you have a rich Daddy somewhere who looks after you?

*Isadora* Unfortunately not. When faced with a financial crisis I am forced to go home for a few months. Work on the farm.

*Josef* And what are your intentions?

*Isadora* I have no intentions. Only...

*Hesitates*

I don't suppose you've heard of Chateaubriand?

*Josef* *Shakes his head.*

*Isadora* He was a traveller and photographer. Very French. People criticised his work, called it the diary of a man who tired of everything in no time, and was motivated only by a mania to be on the move...

*Josef* Which bears no resemblance to yourself, I'm sure.

*Isadora* *Ignores him and continues*

...Of course he tried to defend himself - at first along the typical lines of going on a pilgrimage, doing it for love and all the rest. A lot of foolish nonsense, really. Well one day, he was compelled to tell the truth, and he said 'I was looking for *images*, nothing else.'

*Pauses*

I greatly admire him. I wouldn't mind...seeing something myself.

*Josef* What is it you'd like to see?

*Isadora* Everything.

*wryly*

I have a dreadful passion for life, which I'm sure is going to get the better of me. I suppose that's why I'm here.

*Josef* I was wondering that.



*Isadora* I don't mind telling you I wonder myself. But what would I do if I were to settle somewhere?

*Muses*

Become ordinary and humdrum, I suppose, no different to anyone else.

No. No, wouldn't suit me at all. I have a *great* detest for the mundane.

There's...*nothing* worse.

*Josef* *Laughs and escapes, follow shot of Josef taking his cup over to the sink.*

*Isadora* *CU of her face in surprise.*

What? Why do you laugh at me?

*Josef* In a couple of years you'll have abandoned all your romantic notions...and you'll settle for far less than you ever believed you could. Marry a nice man who works the nine-till-five drudge in a bank, have three or four kids...live in the suburbs, probably.

*Isadora* *She has been challenged, and replies indignantly.*

You can be sure I won't!

*Josef* You're young, and very stupid.

*Pauses.*

Don't change.

*Reaction shot of Isadora, shocked by Josef's forthright behaviour. She gets up abruptly.*

*Isadora* I should go.

*Josef* *Mockingly*

Yes, you should. It's not at all proper for a young lady to be up this late at night, alone with a strange young man.

*Isadora* *Smiles knowingly*

Goodnight.

*Sound bridge: Mel Torme's 'You're getting to be a habit with me.'*

**19. Ext. street. evening.**

*The song continues as Isadora walks down the street, still in her evening dress. She breaks into a smile at the memory of the night.*

*Isadora (v/o)*

And that's how it began, dancing in and out of madness or love, whichever word you prefer to use.

*Intercut.*

**20. Int. flat. evening.**

*The song continues while we see a MS of Josef playing his saxophone (mute). He pauses in his playing and rests his saxophone against his stomach. He smiles, trying to comprehend what has happened that night.*

*Dissolve.*

**21. Int. kitchen. morning.**

*Isadora enters the kitchen, where George is already sitting at the table.*

*Cut-shots between dialogue of characters.*

*George* Mornin’

*Isadora* Good morning.

*She sits down and pours herself a cup of coffee.*

*George* *Opens the newspaper, pretending to read but actually stealing a glance at Isadora.*

Did you enjoy boheme last night, Miss Isadora?

*Isadora* *Looks up and smiles.*

It was lovely.

*George* It was originally owned by Joe's father, you know. We played together, although that's going back a long way now. He was a splendid bugger. Lonely in the way most of us were or are. Emigrated here in '27. Trouble was, once he came here, he bloody well didn't want to be German anymore. And the war didn't help that. But of course you can't get away from your roots.

*He grins and starts laughing.*

He had the most imitated accent in the Cross: *Tell you vot, baby, ze band voss svingkink und groovink.*

*Isadora* *Smiles then grows serious.*

When did he die?

*George* *Pauses*

In a moment of suspension.

*He smiles sadly.*

He would've liked that turn of phrase. Died in '49.

*Isadora* Have you lived here all your life?

*George* *Nods.*

*Isadora* I grew up on a cattle station in Northern Queensland.

*George* Why did you leave?

*Isadora* If I stayed I would've had to marry.

*George* Oh? And that's distasteful to you, is it?

*Isadora leans forward earnestly in an attempt to explain. Two-shot indicates the intimacy of their conversation.*

*Isadora* Well a girl needn't marry now. She can do...just as she likes. And she certainly doesn't want to be entrapped by the stupid sex into matrimony.

*George* *Tries to conceal a laugh*

No...of course not. In fact, you've probably come to the right place. The Cross is filled with Libertarian politics at the moment. A load of rubbish, if you ask me. Free love is free. Men don't have to pay for it. They don't have to take a girl out, or tell her that she's beautiful. 'Cos she ain't. Not when she's attainable, anyway. Take my word for it, Miss Isadora, the only place you're going to find freedom is *within* marriage.

## **22. Int. Club boheme. evening**

*It is Sunday night and the club is closed. George is seated on a stool at the bar, his back facing the camera, while Josef stands behind the counter, polishing glasses. George is sifting through a pile of new records. He picks up a black and white avant-garde cover.*

*Cut-shot between dialogue of characters.*

*CU of the record cover as George reads the title*

*George*            Spiritual Unity: Albert Ayler.

*Josef*             He's part of the new thing, y'know?

*Pauses*

It's hard to get used to, everything changing the way it does. I don't know if I dig this free stuff.

*George*            *Shrugs*

People are always reaching.

*He pours himself another drink.*

*Fade.*

**23. Int. bedroom. evening.**

*Eye-level shot of Isadora sitting on her bed cross-legged, mending a cardigan. We hear a door slam downstairs and someone shouting. Isadora gets up and walks quickly to the door. She walks down the dark hallway to the top of the stairs. Submerged in shadow, she walks down the first few steps and crouches down to peer through the railings. We see a high-angle shot from Isadora's POV of George, intoxicated and aggravated. He is shouting incomprehensibly. Josef is with him, trying to placate him.*

*Camera cuts to eye-level shot of George and Josef.*

*Josef*             Let's get you to bed.

*George*            *Mutters something and pulls away from his grasp.*

**24.    Int. stairs. evening.**

*CU of Isadora, crouched on the stairwell, gripping the rails tightly and peering through the gap. She is beginning to comprehend that George is unhappy.*

**25.    Int. Lounge room/reception. evening.**

*Eye-level shot of Josef, who finally succeeds in manoeuvring George towards a bedroom door and leads him to the bed, where he promptly falls face down asleep. Josef looks worn out as he leaves the room. He closes the door softly and leans against the frame, sliding onto the floor into a sitting position.*

**26.    Int. stairs. evening.**

*Side lighting to create heavy, definite shadow.*

*'Round Midnight' (Sonny Rollins) plays throughout the scene.*

*Isadora cautiously stands up and, still concealed in shadow, quietly makes her way downstairs. She hovers at the foot of the stairs. Cut to Josef (reaction shot). He looks up at her figure silently.*

*Cut-shot between dialogue of characters.*

*Isadora*            *Is he in a very bad way?*

*Josef*                *No. Just needs to sleep it off.*

*He hesitates.*

Did he wake you?

*Isadora*      *She shakes her head and starts playing with the top of the banister, nervously.*

Don't s'pose I can tempt you with a drink?

*(Adds quickly as an afterthought)* Non-alcoholic of course.

*Josef*        *He smiles weakly.*

I'm exhausted. I think I'll just go home.

*Isadora*      *She nods, and watches him leave (Follow shot).*

*Fade.*

**27. Int. kitchen. morning.**

*High-angle shot of Isadora seated at the small kitchen table. reading the paper. She glances up as George enters, looking haggard.*

*Cut-shots between dialogue of characters.*

*George*        Good morning.

*Isadora*      Morning. How're you feeling?

*Eye-level shot of George, leaning on the table for support as he sits down.*



*George*        *Seen better days.*

*Isadora*       *Coffee?*

*George*        *Emphatically*  
*Yes.*

*Isadora*       *Pours him a cup.*

*George*        *Takes a sip and then leans back in his chair.*  
*How on earth did I get home last night?*

*MCU of Isadora, fiddling with her cup.*

*Isadora*       *Oh...I, ahm, think Josef brought you home.*

*George*        *Nods*  
*He's a good kid.*  
*George gives a cigaretty cough.*  
*He likes you, too.*

*Isadora*       *Her lips part in shock. She knows, of course, but does not expect*  
*George to be so forthright. She looks down and then quickly picks up*  
*her cup, stands abruptly and walks over to the sink.*

*We see Isadora from the POV of George, as the camera focuses on the back of her figure.*

*George* I don't blame you, if you leave.

*He pauses.*

Nothin' here for any of us.

*Isadora* *Turns around passionately, the cup clenched tightly in her hand.*

Then why stay?

*George* *Looks irritated.*

You must understand...at my age one has no desire to see new things.

I live with my memories.

*He pauses for a few moments, before continuing*

And when all is said, here's as good as any place to hang your hat.

*Reaction shot of Isadora. Something has stirred within her. CU of her face as 'These Foolish Things' (Chet Baker) begins to play.*

*Sound bridge.*

**28. Ext. street. early evening.**

*The song continues. Isadora is walking down the street, deep in thought.*

**29. Int. bedroom. early evening.**

*Mix through to Isadora in her room as she pulls a small suitcase from the top of the wardrobe and lays it open on her bed. She seems unsure of what to do.*

**30. Int. stairs / bedroom. early evening.**

*Low-angle shot of Josef viewed through the railings of the staircase as he ascends at a rapid pace, whistling. He walks quickly along the landing (Head-on shot), and knocks on Isadora's door.*

**31. Int. bedroom. early evening.**

*CU of Isadora, who starts at the sound of the knock.*

*Isadora*

Just a second!

*She quickly shoves the suitcase under her bed and composes herself before opening the door to a cheery Josef.*

*Cut-shots between dialogue of characters.*

*Josef*

Hello.

*Isadora*

*Warily*

Hello.

*Josef*

Can I come in?

*Isadora*

Uh...no. Best not, I think.

- Josef*            *He frowns.*  
Is everything alright?
- Isadora*        *She is clearly distressed.*  
Fine.
- Josef*            Do you mind me asking...why I can't come in?
- Isadora*        Because if you did, I might have to tell you I was  
leaving. And I'd feel as if I have to explain myself. To you. And I  
don't; I'm not beholden to anyone.
- Josef*            *(Reaction shot) Josef has not moved past the first sentence of her  
explanation.*  
You're leaving?
- Isadora*        Yes.
- Josef*            *He simply can't fathom the reasons behind such a decision.*  
Why?
- Isadora*        *Turns away and then turns back in anger.*  
You take over my space! You command it. You give me no room to  
move! And what am I to do? Am I to let you? I *won't* be  
oppressed.

*Josef*            *Stares in shock at Isadora's sudden outburst.*

*Right.*

*He turns and walks down the hallway.*

**32. Int. bedroom. evening.**

*Isadora is sitting on the floor, propped up against the bed, smoking, staring blankly ahead. The suitcase lies untouched on the bed.*

**33. Int. Stairs / basement. evening**

*George is walking down the steps and into the basement, a chaotic, junk-filled room. He moves to a corner and removes a bedsheet, revealing a double bass that obviously hasn't been used in a long time. He reaches out and gently touches its neck and plucks a string, which emits a deep resonant sound. He starts running his fingers up and down the strings and plays a slow, gentle tune ('Autumn Leaves,' Joseph Kosma), his eyes closed.*

**34. Int. club boheme. evening.**

*Josef is leaning over the bar, pouring himself a drink.*

*Isadora*            *Can I have a drink?*

*Camera zooms out at eye level, deep focus, to reveal Isadora framed in the doorway.*

*Josef*            *Quickly regains his composure and turns to face her.*  
Sure.

*Isadora walks over to the bar and seats herself on a stool. Josef begins mixing her a drink while Isadora stares moodily into the mirror behind the bar.*

*Cut-shots between dialogue of characters.*

*Isadora*            Living the way I do, I have no-one to please or suffer except myself. I am, I admit, a bad case. I become restless after a month in a single place, unbearable after two. When you're travelling, you get into a sort of rhythm. You don't want to stop, in case you lose the momentum. Living in the city I can feel it. This place has a real rhythm, a real groove. It's everywhere; makes its way down into your belly. The pace is what keeps people alive, 'cos if they stop they start to wonder just what the hell they're doing. And maybe that's why I don't want to stop. Maybe if I stop I won't be any different.

*Isadora looks at Josef. She is really opening up.*

So I keep moving, looking for something that's going to take me outside the boundary, outside the frame.

*Josef*            It's going on fifteen years since I last ventured out of the cross. You think time's gonna stop, and it doesn't; whole lifetimes are lost in a moment. I forget things now. The only thing that's clear in my mind is the funeral, when us kids sat in the church pew, while the

Priest stood out the front, saying what a real shame it was. *(He smiles wryly)*  
Bit ironic, really, Dad being advocate of the devil's music an' all that.  
But Dad was full of ironies. And it didn't matter, in the end.  
That Priest knew of no comfort to offer the rest of us who were left  
behind; nothing useful or true to say.  
*Josef grins at Isadora wryly.*  
Why's the world like it is, kiddo?  
*He looks down sadly.*  
Well, let's drink.

*Isadora She raises her glass and smiles*

*Josef* As Edward Fitzgerald said, Drink! For you know not whence you came  
nor why.  
*His voice drops, and the two are enclosed in a two-shot.*  
Drink! For you know not why you go nor where.  
  
*Nina Simone's 'Aint Got No / I got Life,' begins to play.*  
  
*Sound bridge.*

**35. Ext. street. day.**

*The song continues throughout the scene.*  
*Low-angle, head-on shot of Isadora, who appears at the door of the  
boarding house, suitcase in hand. She walks quickly down the front*

*steps, descending to eye-level. At the gate she glances behind her and from her POV we see the boarding house. She glances only for a moment before moving forward, down the bustling morning street (head-on shot).*

*Isadora holds her head high, exuding self-confidence, and a hint of a smile plays across her lips as she looks forward.*

*The frame freezes on Isadora in motion.*



# Reflection Statement

In undertaking this majorwork my intention was to explore a significant era and subculture in Australian social history, viz the Sydney “Push.” This decision required extensive literary investigation into the historical period and its key figures, including Anarchist poet Harry Hooton and Libertarian Professor John Anderson, who were responsible for developing the philosophical, political and social underpinnings of the movement.

The Sydney “Push” was a bohemian enclave that developed around Kings Cross between the wars. It was a ‘city within the city,’ a refuge for the free-thinking and free-loving in the 1950s and early 1960s. This movement embraced and propagated social change in Australia, and its members flouted conventional standards of behaviour and dismissed prevailing social mores.

This scene is also generally regarded as a landmark in the development of Australian jazz. Jazz seemed to be part and parcel of the city, sounding the dreamscape of the metropolis and reflecting the colour and pulse of life and relations in the Cross. The jazz clubs that developed in this precinct, notably *El Rocco* and *Club 44* have taken on a quasi-mystical significance in Australian jazz history, hosting some of the most influential musicians of the period, including the phenomenal Mike Nock, Errol Buddle, Don Burrows, and Bob Barnard, (some of whose work features on the soundtrack attached).

The original proprietor of *Club 44* was Hans Liepolt, a notorious German immigrant who became the basis for the character of Friedrich Schultz, Josef’s father.

The decision to write a screenplay was intended to develop my own skills within the medium, as I hope to work within the industry in the future. Through independent

investigation and the assistance of an Australian filmmaker, I was able to gain an understanding of the various facets of film theory and the conventions of the medium, including materials, techniques, and processes involved in the creation of a script.

The film medium provided me with a means of communication that moved away from the purely textual, and, in so doing, allowed me to experiment with the various ways meaning is shaped and constructed through sound, image, dialogue and visual sequences.

*A Place to Hang Your Hat* targets an Australian audience, and was written with the intention of being screened at a film festival, as artistic integrity takes precedence over commercial and popular interests, limiting widespread acceptance and assimilation into mainstream popular culture.

The purpose of the script is firstly, to entertain, through its romantic conception of an idealised 'golden age' in Australian social history, and suspend audience disbelief through music, setting, characters and the romantic undertones of the story. However the script also has a didactic role, as it seeks to accurately convey the values of this period, and capture the changing nature of Australian society.

The central character, Isadora, is loosely based on Henry James's portrayal of Isabel Archer in *Portrait of a Lady*, which was studied in conjunction with the Extension 1 course. Isadora is vaguely ambitious, dissatisfied, and yearning to escape from some intangible prison to - she knows not what.

Isadora's attitudes towards the social role permitted women reflect the rise of a feminist consciousness within Australian society: the decades of the 60s and 70s brought significant changes for women. The "Push" in particular assumed a certain equality between the sexes, and women's horizons were extended beyond being locked up in a

suburb, married with children. Isadora's rejection of marriage and her attempts to transgress the limits impinged upon her by society are fuelled by her desire to move "outside the boundary, outside the frame."

Josef's father arrived in Australia with the flow of post-WWI Northern European immigration, which generated one of the greatest challenges to perceptions of Australian identity. Assimilation was the dominant philosophy and expectation of migrant settlement in the post-war period, and both Friedrich and Josef move away from their roots and conform to Australian cultural norms, developing a fiercely Australian identity.

The necessity to change the family name from Schultz to Shoots to escape persecution is derived from my own family's experience during WWII.

In addition, *A place to hang your hat* explores the concept of *movement*, paying homage to Bruce Chatwin in its exploration of roots and rootlessness, possession and renunciation and freedom and oppression.

The conception of this idea initially stemmed from my own restlessness; returning from a journey late one night on a railway platform I found myself talking to a lonely man who carried his life with him in a backpack.

"Don't you travel?" he asked me.

I replied that, unfortunately, I did not often get the chance.

He shook his head at me.

"If I could live again," he told me, "I'd never have a home. Now that I know what to do."

I hastily transcribed this short conversation onto the back cover of my journal, along with a question that suddenly sprung to mind:

*What motivates people to reach for the unknown?*

I was prompted to further investigate this idea, and became influenced by Bruce Chatwin's *Anatomy of Restlessness* and the work of Li Po, a Chinese poet of the T'ang dynasty, both of whom express the satisfaction to be found in perpetual movement.

The heroine of the script, Isadora, imbibes this spirit, and is a foil for Josef, creating a dynamic tension between those who move and those who 'dig in.' Language features develop the conflict between ideals and values, and the characters engage in verbal challenges and repartee. The voice-over technique allows the responder to gain direct insight into characters' consciousness, and is an effective plot development technique given the time parameters of the medium.

Throughout the script there are also constant allusions to music, establishing the symbolic role of jazz as a force for movement through dance and rhythm. The music takes on a diegetic role, revealing insights into the characters and the values of the period. Isadora's recording of Bessie Smith's '*Young Woman's Blues*,' for example, signifies Isadora's own rejection of marriage and embrace of the sexual liberation of women which, in turn, signifies an opposition to the dominant culture.

The jazz soundtrack adds further historical authenticity, as the majority of music is selected from Australian musicians who played in Kings Cross during the early 60s, such as Don Burrows' '*Kings Cross Mambo*,' which captures the drive of the Australian jazz club atmosphere. The accompanying recording of the soundtrack is included as the music plays such a significant role in the development of the plot.

Visual techniques, such as quality and direction of lighting also support the ideas contained within the script. Back-lighting in scene 3 is a manipulation of movement, creating a dramatic, distorted silhouette that "stretches and recedes" across the backdrop, distancing Isadora from the responder and enhancing her enigmatic character.

Camera angles (eye-level, head-on, follow shot, high/low angle), movement (tilt, track, pan), distance (CU, MCU, MS, LS) and type of shot (POV, reaction, two-shot) are also deliberate choices in the construction of the screenplay.

A cut-shot technique is frequently used to convey dialogue between characters, and intimacy is often conveyed through the framing of the shot. Techniques such as close-ups (CU) are included to elicit emotional response from the responder.

I also employed various transition techniques to contribute to the continuity of the plot and suggest the passing of time: dissolve, fade out, mix, and intercut (to suggest simultaneous action).

The freeze frame on Isadora *in motion*, in scene 34 becomes a final realisation of the concept of movement within the script, and a tribute to Isadora's itinerant spirit.

During the process of composition I worked with storyboards to break the narrative down into manageable sequences and develop and refine my ideas. The structure which seemed to best support the story was linear, as the plot develops chronologically.

When it came to formatting the script I used the preferred method of Richard Curtis (author of 'Four Weddings and a Funeral' and 'Notting Hill'), as I had obtained copies of his work during my independent investigation. In scenes 6 and 19 I reverted to a split-page format as it was the most effective method of conveying simultaneous visual and audio elements.

In deciding on a title for my composition I settled on *A Place to Hang Your Hat*, as it seemed to embody all the major ideas at play within my script. It was at this point that I discovered that the concept of movement and the conflict between roots and

rootlessness, possession and renunciation and freedom and oppression had become fully realised and empowered within my majorwork through the final triumph of Isadora's itinerancy and independence.

The final product is the result of a year-long process of independent investigation and sustained composition, during which I have planned and developed an original screenplay.

I hope it is the first of many.