



ONE SHEET – I Don't Belong Here: Stories & Songs Remembered

Written by and featuring Joëlle Rabu and Kelly Wyatt
Directed by Kymme Patrick Music Director/Arranger Nico Rhodes

The choice for the title was based on the most heard sentence in dementia residences "I don't belong here".

"I Don't Belong Here – Stories and Songs Remembered" is a poignant and powerfully human stage production that explores life inside a dementia care facility through a minimalist theatrical lens, adaptable to both small and larger stages. Told through a carefully composed sequence of 15 vignettes and supported by song, the production brings to life 22 distinct characters: memory-care residents navigating shifting realities and blurred recollections; visiting family members grappling with guilt, grief, and the complex emotions of anticipated loss; and compassionate care aides who bear daily witness to the slow unraveling of memory, working to preserve dignity, spark laughter, and nurture connection. This intimate three-person ensemble piece balances emotional gravity with flashes of absurdity and unexpected levity, illuminating the often surreal and surprisingly tender moments that surface at the edge of forgetting.

But don't let the subject matter fool you - this is not a bleak tale. The script deftly weaves vulnerability with humor, sorrow with song, and reflection with resilience, ultimately offering a deeply affirming meditation on love, loss, and the enduring power of human connection.

The Music: The bold and aching melodies of the late Harry Nilsson provide a haunting backdrop for this performance exposé which delves into the lonely existence of fading memories, puzzling uncertainty, and at times, droll perceptions of people whose lives once reflected brilliance, talent, and vitality. Harry Nilsson is still considered the most underrated singer-songwriter of the post-war era. His knowledge of the form and structure of almost every genre of popular music was encyclopaedic as were his intense observations on the absurdities, fragilities, and wonders of life. The choice to feature his beautiful, uncluttered music was clear: it transcends generations and styles and candidly resonates with everyday life.

Inside the Making of the Play: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILqe69n3Y6k>
Clips from the premiere: <https://youtu.be/0yP9L7YBJxA>

Archival Video of The Play is available upon request.

Data shows global dementia cases are set to triple, with 153 million living with dementia by 2050

The Performers: Joëlle's chameleon-like portrayals of a dozen of the 22 different characters, combined with her compelling vocal interpretations are buoyed by co-author Kelly Wyatt's colourful supporting characters and harmonious vocals, as the script carefully weaves the essential threads of constant, compassion, care, and connections. The scenes are supported by the brilliance of music director/pianist/supporting actor Nico Rhodes, whose insightful musical arrangements render homage to Nilsson's timeless songs.

Ultimately, the play invites audiences to re-evaluate their perceptions of memory loss and mental health, and to reflect on the profound importance of empathy and compassion in the care of others - whether family, community, or ourselves. While often associated with aging, Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia are increasingly affecting younger people, reminding us that these stories are not just about the elderly - they are about all of us.

**Reviews from the premiere of the play: I Don't Belong Here
at the Evergreen Cultural Centre, Coquitlam, B.C. (Nov.2025)**

- What an amazing play. So many different emotions, enhanced by the music and lyrics of Harry Nilsson – brilliant!! Each character is brought to life through honest and endearing performances by Joelle Rabu, supported by the amazing Kelly Wyatt and Nico Rhodes. The acting and singing in this play is so on the mark. I see this play going far!! Don't miss it!!
- The play was both heartwarming and thought provoking. The authentic storytelling through rich characters was buoyed by beautiful musical arrangements and voices. Joelle Rabu's transformation into each character kept the audience on edge, ready to be moved to tears, laugh out loud or pause in reflection of personal connections to the disease, dementia. The follow-up question period allowed many to process their feelings and continue the conversation.
- It was so well done. A difficult topic brought to life by very talented actors and musician. Their voices, their taking on multiple characters, the balance of humour and sadness. It was just amazing.
- We are seniors, and our family has (unfortunately, like most families) been touched by Alzheimer's and Dementia. We did not think this topic was one we would choose to spend a rainy afternoon with, and we almost did not attend the performance. We now know we would have missed the best performance we have seen all year! Joelle Rabu was AMAZING in how she convincingly portrayed 12 different characters. She effortlessly metamorphosized from one character into another. Although I was moved to tears at some points, I was NOT depressed (as I expected to be).
- I Don't Belong Here is my favourite so far. Almost skipped it due to the sensitive (to me) subject but am so glad I went. Great storyline. Great acting. Great overall performance!!!
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