



THE PRIVATEERS

SERIES PITCH BIBLE

WRITTEN BY WHITNEY HAMILTON

LOGLINE

Two mature women eluding pirate catchers find exile in New Orleans where they reunite with a powerful African queen who runs a syndicate. Reluctant abolitionists, these privateers and are pressed into service to intercept slave ships and redirect the human cargo to safety. In amusing ways they redefine their love, their purpose, their intimate relationship and their identities in a dangerous and cruel world.

SYNOPSIS

The Privateers takes place after the American and French Revolutions. Ann Fitzpatrick and Charlotte Berry, from Ireland and England respectively, illustrate the rebelliousness of women against the stern patriarchy of the time. Even though it is historical drama, there are elements of comedy woven into the story. Their childhood commonality is crossdressing as boys to either earn, inherit or apprentice for money in a man's world. The third primary character, Arminta, a Yoruban queen betrayed by her brother, abducted from her home country and forced onto a slave ship. All three have an otherworldly quality or ability to them that brings in mythology, spirituality and victory. They are searching for love and freedom from the world's constructs and systems.



SHOW CROSS



MEETS



MEETS



CHARLOTTE BERRY

MAIN CHARACTER

Charlotte is most comfortable in men's clothes and passes as the infamous and dangerous privateer, Charles Berry, working for the English, then the French, then for himself. Growing older and looking to settle down with his/her fortune, Charles wants to build a home and a family albeit an alternative one much like Anne Lister. However, she discovers that her entire existence is an elaborately constructed lie when long buried childhood memories reveal that she is a kidnapped Selkie. Due to her relationship with Ann she begins to learn that her female self is vast, dangerous, mysterious, magical and deeply loving.





ANN FITZPATRICK

MAIN CHARACTER

Ann is a fiery woman enjoying her life to the fullest extent of the law and then some. She is restless and ruthless. Sensual and diabolical, yet loyal. Ann rejects any kind of stable home life looking for adventure, excitement, fortune and ultimately love. As she is reunited with Charlotte, love and amusement blossom and she must question her fervent desire for freedom as she learns that Love sets one free. Ann must elude and evade her psychotic, obsessive ex-husband, James Fitzpatrick who will hunt her to the ends of the earth to possess her. As Ann spends more time with Charlotte she recognizes her own gift as a seer.

ARMINTA

MAIN CHARACTER

Arminta is a Yoruban Queen sold to enslavers in Tenerife. Summoning mystical creatures and manipulating time and space, Arminta is able to elude enslavement and help her people. Arminta and Ann mutually and emotionally rescue each other and Ann discovers Arminta's warrior spirit and the African learns the ways of pirating. When Ann is kidnapped, Arminta unknowingly sails into Saint-Domingue. An intelligent and shrewd business woman she becomes a powerful asset to the city of New Orleans in 1792 with property and businesses. As the pirate, Jean Lafitte brings human cargo into New Orleans, Arminta forces Ann and Charlotte to help her disrupt the human supply chain.





JAMES FITZPATRICK

MAIN CHARACTER

James is Ann's estranged ex-husband, a dangerous nemesis who began as a pirate but was too lazy to do the work of stealing, and left the job to Ann. Settling into married life, James expected Ann to be 'wifely' and domestic.

James is so obsessed with possessing Ann again that he will stop at nothing to capture her. Livid that his wife would desert him for another he realized he could make his fortune by turning in sea scoundrels to the government including Ann.

LISA BABBAGE

SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Lisa is a landed woman of the upper middle class with a rebellious streak bucking the cultural norms by having an affair with Charles and possibly a coterie of others. When she discovers Charles is a she, her interest, empathy and possibly love deepens. Lisa ultimately wants the trappings of social class, tradition and order including children. She is willing to sacrifice herself for 'Charles' even when she knows his true gender. When she realizes Charles may not feel the same depth of love and compassion for her, she finds exile in another country but she cannot forget him (her).





COLLEEN BERRY

SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Colleen is a grifter, liar, manipulator of the highest degree. Widowed young, she discovers a selkie child on the beach and kidnaps the girl holding the skin as ransom for her own gain.

Hoodwinking almost everyone who crosses her path including Charlotte/Charles, she finds the strings she pulls as a puppeteer vanish upon the discovery of Charles' true gender. Her dominoes begin to fall.

THEO McTAGGART

SUPPORTING CHARACTER

Theo is a Scotsman and a Baratarian, a high level buccaneer within Jean Lafitte's syndicate of contraband and thieving. Theo falls for Ann and initiates her into the dark underworld of fencing and human trafficking in the swamps surrounding New Orleans. Impressed by Ann's fierce independence and desire for plunder, Theo finds a partner in everything he loves.

The only thing standing in his way is Charles Berry.

Reminded of his own people's tribal oppression from the British, Theo finds himself surprisingly open to Ann's awakening to abolition.



PILOT

Colleen, a Yorkshire widow, combs the beach for shells with her young son Charles. She spots a child playing among the seals and kidnaps the girl much to her son's warnings that the child is a "Selkie", a seal woman, a mythical, magical, shapeshifting creature. When her son Charles dies suddenly, Colleen dresses the girl as Charles and pretends that her son never died thereby continuing the flow of an allowance by her mother-in-law to educate the boy. Arminta, a powerful and mighty Yoruban queen, is betrayed by her brother and captured along with a good number of her tribe. They are forced onto a slave ship bound for the West Indies. Ann Fitzpatrick, dissatisfied and terribly disappointed with her husband, James, takes up with a small-time pirate, Wyck Blethers, to indulge her passion for love and adventure. When James comes to forcefully collect his wife, Ann publicly 'divorces' him, humiliating his manhood in the public house.

Charlotte passes as Charles Berry, a very successful privateer for England then France and then for himself as a pirate. He is captured as he proposes to his current companion, Lisa Babbage, a landed woman in English society. He reveals his true gender to her as the soldiers march him off to prison. Once in prison and stripped of male attire, Charlotte is put on trial and asks Lisa to find Ann Fitzpatrick as Ann will surely spring her from jail before she is to hang. Charlotte pleads the belly - says she is pregnant and Lisa, who really is with child, swaps places with Charlotte and thereby sets her free. Charlotte, more comfortable as Charles, comes face to face with a seal woman and the memories flood in as Charlotte was once a seal woman but lost her skin. Colleen stole it. Charles tries to reunite with Ann but is interrupted at the very last moment by Ann's vengeful ex husband James, a pirate hunter.

PILOT

However, Charles steals the ship from the English slavers and is planning to sell off the property himself in the West Indies, but they are pursued by the Royal Navy and must go into hiding in the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. Arminta summons up a mythical creature from the waters that takes her people below the sea. She is the only one left and Charles sets her free to forage for herself while he desperately awaits a rendezvous with Ann to help him rescue Lisa from the gallows. Arminta finds Ann and nearly kills her until they both collapse in grief at the loss of their respective people and brethren. Arminta becomes a pirate on Ann's ship. When Ann is captured by her ex-husband and Charles is shot, Arminta's only choice is to sail the ship out to sea.



EPISODE CONCEPTS

EPISODE 1: "ESCAPE AND CAPTURE"

Introduces our protagonists and their mystical connection to another world that may affect the future. It is 'her' story within the framework of history seen through female eyes and undiscovered identities.

EPISODE 2: "SKIN"

Charlotte hunts for her birthright, her skin as Ann and Arminta try and save their own skins from pirate hunters and enslavers. The hunt for true love envelops Charlotte.

EPISODE 3: "REVOLUTION AND BODY SNATCHERS"

Penniless and in exile in New Orleans, Ann and Charlotte work as bellwatchers for the Ursuline convent eventually becoming grave-robbers while Arminta helps the Haitian revolution with her mystical talents.

EPISODE 4: "GRIS GRIS AND SELKIES"

Ann sabotages her relationship with Charlotte as Charlotte discovers a deep relationship with herself. Arminta sells herbs and establishes herself as a sought after root doctor and midwife.

EPISODE 5: "ODD FELLOWS"

Charles stays with a lesbian couple while Ann sows her oats with the Buccaneers. Arminta blackmails Charles into buying property for her and her apothecary. Charles searches for Lisa.

EPISODE 6: "THE ADVERSARY"

Ann contracts smallpox and there is an outbreak in New Orleans. Charles asks Arminta for help to save Ann. Love grows. Arminta resurrects her drowned African people by calling on a mystical force.

EPISODE 7: "CRIES AND WHISPERS"

Charles is Captured by James. Ann is being nursed back to health by an Eastern European "Casket Girl". Rumors abound that the Casket Girls are vampires from the old country. Arminta rescues Henry and protects the Casket girls. Theo dies of Smallpox.

EPISODE 8: "RELUCTANT ABOLITIONISTS"

Arminta's underground syndicate run by the Maroon society clash with the Baratarians and Jean Lafitte's pirates trafficking human cargo. Ann and Charles are pressed into service by Arminta as privateers again.

FUTURE SEASONS

SEASON 1

A dark odyssey about the trials and tribulations of women making their way in a man's world utilizing the power of intuition and self identity to accomplish their desires.

SEASON 2

Two underground syndicates battle for the control of New Orleans through power, manipulation, influence and control as New Orleans is bought by America.

SEASON 3

New Orleans becomes the center of the world as the War of 1812 rages and the issues of equality and abolition become central to everyone's survival. Deals are brokered between world powers.



tone

The series is a mystical odyssey about the plight of women, queer women and people of color making their way in a harsh and unequal world.

Set at the intersection of the mystical natural world and the masculine dominated past, it explores a world in which identity, self-reflection, mysticism and the sacred earth mingles with empathy, humor and compassion to create enduring love.

It will have visual styles of "Barry Lyndon", "Barkskins" and "Vanity Fair"







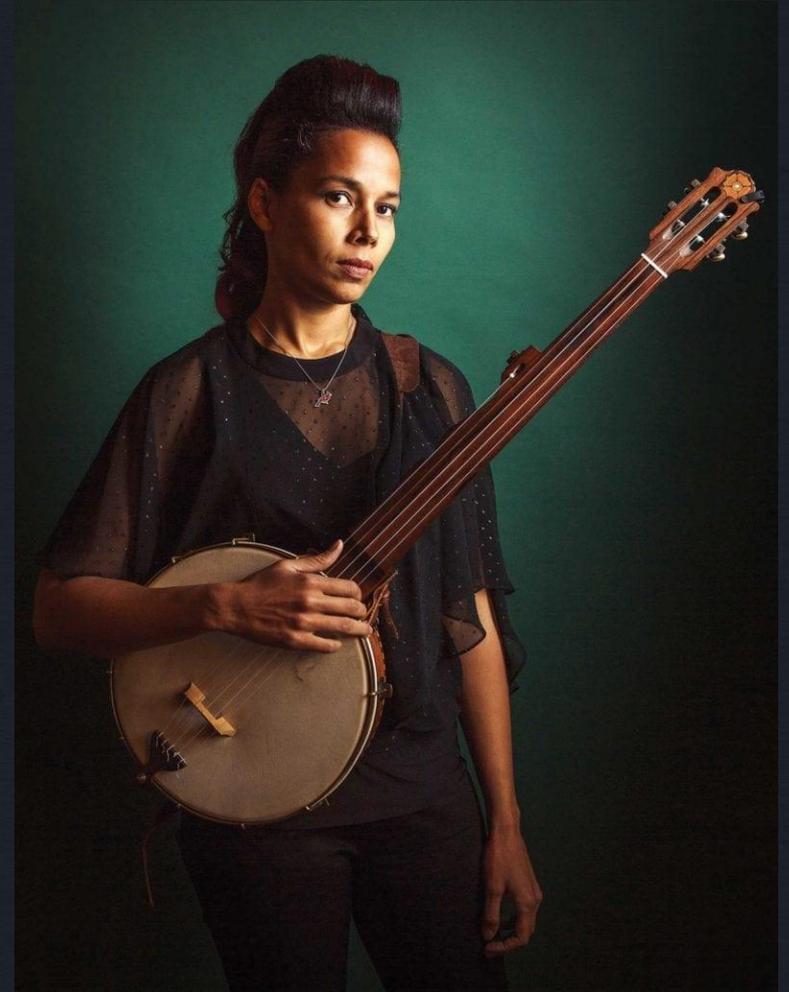


THE WORLD



MUSIC

What sounds would we hear in the middle of Congo Square in New Orleans in 1790? What African songs would we hear chanted and sung? What instruments would we see and hear from that time and place? An early African Banjo? The mixing of music from the Kain-tucks of Appalachia floating goods down the mighty Mississippi River? What indigenous music, songs and sounds would be heard from that place and time in the bayous? What did the creoles listen to? What came over from France and Spain and Portugal and England? The soundscape of this series is integral to the story telling. Sounds from Ireland and Yorkshire, Cornwall and Tenerife. The rich amalgamation of cultures that make up the heart of New Orleans. At times brutal and melancholy and other times celebratory and tribal. I will hire a musicologist and musicians at the top of their field to re-create and create a world of musical sound and celebration.



MUSIC



AFRICAN DIASPORA AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES SCHOLARS

It is imperative that this series work in tandem with a scholar and, perhaps a writer, to ensure the accuracy and perspective of certain characters in this series. I would also include an Indigenous scholar/writer as well to ensure the truth telling based on the perspectives of the Chitimacha, Natchitoches, Atakapa, Houma, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Creek peoples living and moving through the area at the time of this story during European and American Colonization..



TEAM



WHITNEY HAMILTON
CREATOR/ACTOR/WRITER/DIRECTOR

Whitney Hamilton is an award winning writer/director whose debut feature film, MY BROTHER'S WAR premiered at the Methodfest Film Festival, and was nominated for Best Micro Budget Independent film and Best Actress for Whitney. It was released theatrically in L.A. and on video via VanGuard and was picked up by Netflix in 2006. Whitney's second feature, A ROGUE IN LONDINIUM premiered at Lucerne Independent Film Festival in 2011 and New Hope Film Festival 2012 where it won Honorable Mention for Indie Spirit Award and Best Art House Film. Whitney's third feature, UNION, is a sequel to My Brother's War. It premiered at the Sidewalk Film Festival and went on the festival circuit where she won Best Director and Best Artistic Spirit at New Hope FF among many other Best Picture awards. It was picked up for Theatrical distribution by Indican Pictures and streaming by Lionsgate in 2019.

She is also writing a feature horror film called LUPO set in the antebellum South. OLYVE a limited series based on her ancestor who moved from Henrietta, Texas to become a costume designer during the golden age of Hollywood. She has three features and fifteen shorts under her belt. As a writer she has eleven screenplays, two novels and seven full length stage plays.

TEAM



JUDY KRAUSE ACTOR/PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

Judy has worked extensively in New York and Los Angeles, and has earned many awards in film and theater. Most recently, she received Best Supporting Actress nomination for her role in the critically acclaimed “Brooklyn In July” by Delanocelli Productions. Her television credits include guest starring roles on “Everybody Hates Chris”, “Sex and the City” and “Spin City” to name a few. She previously worked with Whitney Hamilton (Bjornquist Films) as an actor/associate producer on Hamilton’s tour de force films “Union” and “A Rogue in Londinium.”

She has also collaborated with such exceptional talents as John Strasberg and Anne Bogart. She is a founding member of Accidental Repertory Theater in NYC.

Judy continues her multifaceted work, both behind and in front of the camera. She was recently inducted into the VITAL Fine Arts Hall of Fame in NY, and served as International Director of Theater Performance for “Breaking Walls” which connects young people internationally to be ambassadors for peace using the arts. She is a graduate of NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

THE PRIVATEERS

For treatments of the 8 episodes

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