

Regional News

Connecting Wellington

Naked at My Age *by Madelaine Empson*

For Charla Hathaway, becoming a sex worker at 55 had never been on the cards. Now going on 70, her journey has encompassed difficult choices, risk, lust, and healing, ultimately leading to “a grandma’s surprising sexual renaissance”.

Today, the clinical sexologist, certified sexological bodyworker, surrogate partner therapist, author, and playwright is passionate about normalising sex work and continuing to expand the definition of sex.

“Sex work is work and deserves the same rights, protections, and safety as other jobs”, Hathaway tells me, adding that it is both adult and consensual and needs to not only be decriminalised and made safer, but respected for its value to the community.

“Sex often gets better as we age; men naturally desire more intimacy and women stop apologising

for the kind of loving they want – and start asking for it! The sexual terrain can grow richer. Our skin, our largest organ, is the only sense that grows more acute with age – vision and hearing can diminish – yet touch grows in sensitivity, translucency, and preciousness.”

Hathaway will perform her solo show *Naked at My Age* at The Fringe Bar on the 26th of March at 2pm, with an optional demo on touch to follow at 3pm.

Naked at My Age took out the Grow Award at Portland’s Fertile Ground Festival in 2020, and the accolades just keep coming. In fact, while we were chatting over email, Charla even won Weekly Spirit of the Fringe at the Adelaide Fringe Festival! She was honoured to receive the award, saying “the time is here to love and accept ourselves even greater.”

