

Theatre is easy

How to Find a Husband in 37 Years or Longer

Written and Performed by JJ Pyle; Directed by Mark Cirnigliaro

Produced by Solo Heroes

Part of 59E59 Theatres' 2023 [East to Edinburgh Festival](#)

Off Broadway, Solo Show

Ran Through 7.20.23

59E59, 59 East 59th Street

by [Emily Cordes](#) on 7.22.23

Bottom Line: A wry and heartfelt solo show about the relationships that shape our lives.

Whether or not we have found lasting love, our romantic histories hold deep significance in the larger scope of our lives, especially when certain relationships are inherently linked to particular times, places, or circumstances we have encountered. JJ Pyle's clever one-woman show *How to Find a Husband in 37 Years or Longer* frames personal narrative through this concept, as an unexpected trip home leads to deeper consideration of the relationship that shaped, and continue to impact, her life today.

Pyle begins her tale in late 2019, when a sudden change of travel plans inspired her to create the show we now witness. En route to a friend's destination wedding, a string of canceled flights and last-minute twists found Pyle instead spending the holidays in her rural Indiana hometown, and stuck on a long car ride with her estranged father. As the two road-trip to visit Pyle's sister, her father's musings on his multiple failed marriages (and recent marijuana conviction) lead Pyle to reflect on her own checkered relationship history and the lessons she learned from each partner and experience.

With a narrative style somewhere between TED Talk, stand-up routine, and memory play, Pyle takes us through each chapter of her adult life and the outlandish, ill-fated, or complex relationships that colored it. Beginning in her senior year of high school, Pyle's thrilling (and slightly scandalous) romance with a freshman turned sour when her graduation and his wandering eye turned their age gap into a fateful rift. Moving to Los Angeles after college, Pyle juggled waitressing gigs, bit-part TV roles, and disastrous flings with co-stars and tennis instructors.

Relocating to New York, Pyle found fresh hope in a promising relationship with her co-worker, only to find her dreams of long-term happiness thwarted as disenchantment and irreconcilable differences pushed the pair apart. Drawing parallels between her experiences, her father's tumultuous history, and her struggle to connect with him as much as with the other men in her life, Pyle presses onward, determined to find love and meaning amidst the challenges she faces.

Non-linear in structure, *How to Find a Husband* jumps between its central car-ride narrative, reenacted memories, and Pyle's direct-address commentary on her experiences or insights into the show's developmental process. While these frequent tonal shifts can sometimes read as unfocused, Pyle's humor, insight, and honesty keep us steadily engaged and grounded in the show's broader themes. Her relationship horror stories are as relatable as they are funny,

and we share in her gallows-humor moments of dissecting break-up emails, cyber-stalking past loves, or stifling exasperation with ignorant relatives, demanding customers, or clueless paramours. Likewise, her sly impressions, particularly those of her blue-collar, larger-than-life father, carry with them a clear affection for those she portrays- and, beneath any hurt or frustration, a deeper respect for the love they shared and the ways in which they shaped her life, art, and worldview.

Even as she frames her story as a cautionary tale (complete with a running list of types “not to date”), Pyle’s message is one of hope, and her resilience and faith in love shine through any cynical veneer. As she concludes in the piece’s last moments, each fraught relationship contributed to the show’s, and her own, evolution; as such, nothing in our lives is ever lost or wasted.

(How to Find a Husband in 37 Years or Longer played at 59E59 Theatres, 59 East 59th Street, from July 11-20, 2023. Performances were July 11,13,18, and 20 at 8:30. The run time was 60 minutes with no intermission. Tickets were \$15.)

How to Find a Husband in 37 Years or Longer is written and performed by JJ Pyle. Directed by Mark Cirnigliaro. Voice Coached by Jane Guyer Fujita. Projection Design by Alessandra Cronin. Stage Manager is Sloane Fischer. Produced by Solo Heroes as part of 59E59 Theaters’ 2023 East to Edinburgh Festival.