

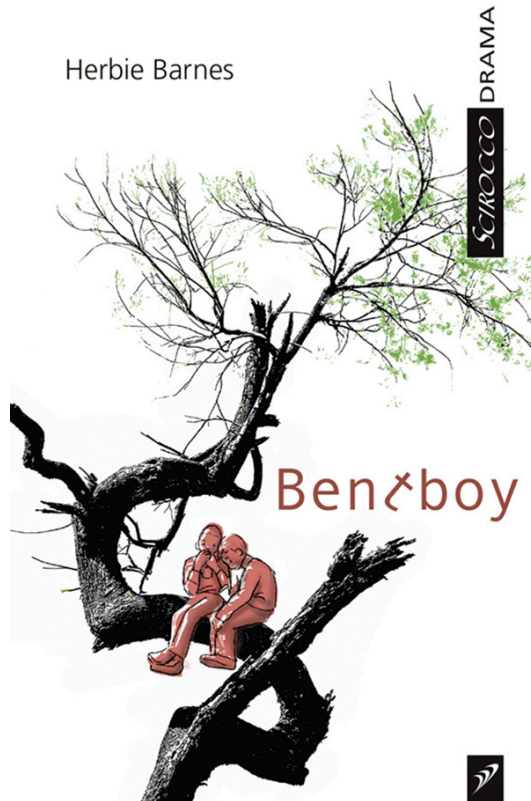


**J. GORDON SHILLINGFORD**  
P U B L I S H I N G I N C

BOOKS THAT ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, AND INSPIRE

## ESSENTIAL READING

Herbie Barnes



“The simple story—about empathy, understanding and seeing things through others’ eyes—has an archetypal quality about it, and Barnes mixes up his serious message with plenty of humour...The message the characters impart about using intelligence instead of anger and violence to deal with the unknown is one people of all ages could take to heart.”

—*NOW Magazine*

“Through *Bentboy*, Barnes offers us a story of hope in the face of monumental enemies. We can use some hope these days.”

—*Prairie Books NOW*

“Each pathway is created by the single steps of many who go before...” Deep in a forest, in another time, begins the story of a child called *Bentboy*. Hunched and hobbled by his curved back, Bentboy is cast aside by his village—until one day, when he is chosen by an elder to embark on a quest to save the village from grave danger. And so begins his epic

adventure, and a tale both treacherous and tender. Along the way, Bentboy encounters an uninvited companion, and the two are plunged into a world that comes to life in perilous and astonishing ways. Each on their own path, it will become a journey that transforms them both. Playwright [Herbie Barnes](#) has written a tale for all ages that is both timeless and timely.

[See More](#)

## THE INTERVIEW

[Talía Pura](#) is a filmmaker, playwright, actor, dancer, director and educator whose books include [Stages: Creative Ideas for Teaching Drama](#), and [Cues: Theatre Training & Projects from Classroom to Stage](#). Pura has created ten short films and over twenty plays, taught drama at the University of Winnipeg and coordinated programs for the Arts and Cultural Industries Association of Manitoba. She conducts drama workshops internationally, and has been to South Africa, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Brazil. Talía lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



***Talía, you have a fascinating and eclectic career! Can you tell us a little bit about the various “hats” you wear?***

Some of the hats I wear have very deep roots, and others I tried on and found that they fit later in life. I started designing and sewing my own clothes at the age of thirteen, so creating costumes for the stage and films came very naturally. I was always a dancer, but aerial silks didn't exist until I was middle-aged. They have offered me some amazing performance opportunities and I never plan to stop climbing. In terms of theatre and film, I started out as an actor. Creating my own projects and educating others flowed from there. My playwriting career began while teaching high school drama. I couldn't find the scripts I

needed, so I wrote them, beginning with a stage adaptation of *Dracula* with twenty-two speaking roles. Directing also began while teaching. I love everything that I do and feel so privileged that I can wear all of my hats at different times for various projects.

***JGS has published two of your excellent books on teaching theatre, *Stages and Cues*, both of which offer tips and drama exercises for educators and theatre professionals alike. Why did you decide to write these books?***

These books came out of a desire to give my pre-service teachers, the students I taught at the University of Winnipeg, something tangible to take into the classroom. Students in my second year of teaching asked for it. I was thrilled that Gordon agreed to publish it. It was a way of giving all teachers just what they needed, all in one place.

***How do *Stages and Cues* differ from one another?***

The first one, *Stages*, I see as a recipe book, something to open and immediately find something with which to engage a class of students, even if none of them have drama experience. It's all the tools that beginning actors need to develop and every student needs to become a more self-aware person. *Cues* is a follow-up, advancing their skills more specifically for the stage, and guiding them through projects that can become performance pieces, as well as giving them ways of approaching scripted works.

***You're also an acclaimed playwright, and many of your plays are solo shows that you perform. What is it about the solo show format that you like? Do you have any advice for people who want to write their own solo show?***

The first thing I like about solo shows is their portability. I can work on them independently, without considering other people's schedules. There is also something magical about connecting with an audience on your own, relying only on yourself. As much as I love collaboration and the interaction of dialogue, I come back to solo performances often, mounting a new one almost every year. Many times, my audiences have assumed that my solo shows are autobiographical, but in fact, only one is, and it was far from my first one. I love creating characters, getting into their heads and setting them loose. However, one could start with some aspect of their own life story, perhaps recounting some aspects of their childhood. Everyone's childhood is unique and can make for a compelling narrative. Think about the experiences that shaped you. Try recounting them in the present tense. Experiment with also becoming the other characters who played a part in the narrative. It might be an interesting place to start. I have sometimes done that, but used the experiences of someone else's life, to present women who were famous in their time, but audiences may not know much about, like Mata Hari, Harriet Bosse, Bette Davis and Marlene Dietrich.

***Click on the link below to read more of our conversation with Talia.***

# BEHIND THE SCENES



This month, JGS talks with Cheryl Hoover, stage manager extraordinaire, who recently retired as Director of Production at the Citadel Theatre, where she managed approximately one hundred employees, technicians, and craftspeople to build and run a season of between eleven and fifteen shows. Cheryl has twice been awarded the Sterling Award for Individual Achievement in Production. In 2014, she received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Regina's Theatre Department, and in 2017, she was honoured with the Margaret Mooney Award for Outstanding Achievement in Administration.

***Cheryl, you've had an epic career as a stage manager, and you just recently retired from Edmonton's Citadel Theatre. Can you tell us about some of the places you've worked and some of the stages you've managed?***

I've spent a lot of my career at the Citadel Theatre, which has actually three different theatres within the Citadel venue, which is pretty cool, but I have worked across Canada from Newfoundland to Vancouver. I've been up to Dawson City. I've been at the National Arts Center in Ottawa. I've worked in Toronto, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. I've worked in pretty much every province except, I think, P.E.I., so I've been pretty lucky in that way. I spent about ten years of my career living out of a suitcase, just traveling sort of from job to job. I settled in Edmonton, and that's when I started as resident stage manager at the Phoenix Theatre. And then from there I went to the Citadel, which is a large regional theatre. So, when I was ready to not live out of a suitcase that became my place to be.

***I think most of our readers will have a pretty good idea of what a stage manager does. But if you had to define a stage manager's role in a sentence or two, what would you say?***

There are two important “halves” to being a stage manager. One is the rehearsal organizational skill, and that involves being the director's right arm in terms of keeping track of everything that's required by the actors, the designers, the technicians, etc. to make the director's vision come together. And then there's the second part of it, which I would equate to being an air traffic controller, where you are overseeing the actual performances and directing all of the technical aspects, making sure the actors are doing their job correctly, making sure the stage crew is running cues when they're supposed to happen, that kind of thing. So to me, those two make up the perfect stage manager.

***Can you tell us a little bit about your work at the Citadel?***

I first started as a stage manager at The Citadel in 1995, which seems like a long time ago. From there, about seventeen years ago, I got promoted to Director of Production. So, I went from being a stage manager to hiring stage management and designers and overseeing all the technical elements of all the shows that the Citadel put on their stages.

***When you were hiring stage managers, what sorts of skills or personality traits did you look for?***

I looked for people who, number one, were people persons, because communication is such an important part of stage management. And people who are organized. But I also want them to have a well-rounded background. I find that stage managers who have worked in other aspects of theatre—in props building, or in costumes, or lighting, or whatever—have an expanded viewpoint of everything that it takes to put shows together. Whereas, if you're hiring someone who has only been a stage manager, yes, they know what the other elements are, but to have actually worked in other areas just makes the communication that much better. They're just better team players.

***Click on the link below to read the rest of our chat with Cheryl, including strange gigs, backstage mishaps, and advice for budding stage managers.***

[Read the Full Interview](#)

**BACK TO SCHOOL**



See More

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

### • IN THEATRES •

***The Big Easy: Music of New Orleans*** by Beau Dixon, Frank O'Connor and Kanika Ambrose

[Soulpepper Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, August 1–18, 2024.

***Salesman in China*** by Leanna Brodie and Jovanni Sy

[Stratford Festival](#), Stratford, ON, August 3–October 26.

***Get That Hope*** by Andrea Scott

[Stratford Festival](#), Stratford, ON, July 21–September 28, 2024.

***Jim Watts, Girl Reporter*** by Beverley Cooper

[4<sup>th</sup> Line Theatre](#), Millbrook, ON, July 30–August 24, 2024.

***The Trials of Maggie Pollock*** by Beverley Cooper

[Blyth Festival](#), Blyth, ON, July 31–August 29, 2024.

***The Diviners*** by Vern Thiessen with Yvette Nolan

[Stratford Festival](#), Stratford, ON, August 7–October 2, 2024.

***Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz*** by Alison Lawrence

[Blyth Festival](#), Blyth, ON, August 14–September 7, 2024.

***The Melville Boys*** by Norm Foster

[Foster Festival](#), St. Catharines, ON, August 15–25, 2024.

***Lakefront*** by Norm Foster

[Lighthouse Festival](#), Port Dover, August 21–September 7, 2024.

***With Love and a Major Organ*** by Julia Lederer

[Here for Now Theatre](#), Stratford, ON, August 21–September 7, 2024.

***Lakefront*** by Norm Foster

[Lighthouse Festival](#), Port Colborne, September 11–September 22, 2024.

***1939*** by Jani Lauzon and Kaitlyn Riordan

[Canadian Stage](#), Toronto, ON, September 15–October 6, 2024.

***Bed and Breakfast*** by Mark Crawford

[Prairie Theatre Exchange](#), Winnipeg, MB, September 24–October 6, 2024.

***The Anger in Ernest and Ernestine*** by Robert Morgan, Martha Ross, and Leah Cherniak

[Great Canadian Theatre Company](#), Ottawa, ON, September 24–October 6, 2024.

***Vitals*** by Rosamund Small

[New Stages](#), Peterborough, ON, September 27–28, 2024.

***Interior Design*** by Rosa Laborde

[Tarragon Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, October 15–November 10, 2024.

***1939*** by Jani Lauzon and Kaitlyn Riordan

[Belfry Theatre](#), Victoria, BC, October 29–November 24, 2024.

***Jake's Gift*** by Julia Mackey

[Lunchbox Theatre](#), Calgary, AB, October 29–November 17, 2024.

***The Recipe*** by Armin Wiebe

[Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre](#), Winnipeg, MB, November 6–23, 2024.

***A Christmas Carol*** by David van Belle

[Citadel Theatre](#), Edmonton, AB, November 23–December 24, 2024.

***A Christmas Carol*** by Geoffrey Simon Brown

[Theatre Calgary](#), November 29–December 29, 2024.

***Controlled Damage*** by Andrea Scott

[Neptune Theatre](#), Halifax, NS, January 14–February 2, 2025.

***For Both Resting and Breeding*** by Adam Meisner

[Talk Is Free Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, January 15–31, 2025.

***Perfect on Paper*** by Marcia Johnson

[Talk Is Free Theatre](#), Barrie, ON, January 30–February 8, 2025.

***The Secret to Good Tea*** by Rosanna Deerchild

[Grand Theatre](#), London, ON, February 18–March 8, 2025.

***The New Canadian Curling Club*** by Mark Crawford

[Neptune Theatre](#), Halifax, NS, February 25–March 23, 2025.

***Bed and Breakfast*** by Mark Crawford

[Theatre Orangeville](#), Orangeville, ON, March 13–30, 2025.

***Casey and Diana*** by Nick Green

[Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre](#), Winnipeg, MB, March 19–April 12, 2025.

***Feast*** by Guillermo Verdecchia

[Tarragon Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, April 1–27, 2025.

***Casey and Diana*** by Nick Green

[Neptune Theatre](#), Halifax, NS, April 22–May 18, 2025.

***Casey and Diana*** by Nick Green

[Arts Club Theatre](#), Vancouver, BC, April 24–May 25, 2025.

***The Runner*** by Christopher Morris

[Harold Green Jewish Theatre](#), North York, ON, April 26–May 4, 2025.

***I'm in Love with Your Sister*** by Norm Foster

[Theatre Orangeville](#), Orangeville, ON, May 1–18, 2025.

***After the Rain*** by Rose Napoli and Suzy Wilde

[Tarragon Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, May 27–June 22, 2025.

***Reading: Serving Elizabeth*** by Marcia Johnson

[New Stages](#), Peterborough, ON, June 14, 2025.

• ONLINE •

***A Time to Dream***, a documentary about the extraordinary women of the CASA project.

[Playwrights Guild of Canada](#) production, available online now.

***Inose/Field Trip***, a sound walk created by Yolanda Bonnell in partnership with Dr. Jesse Popp that encourages participants to connect with the natural world.



[Common Boots Theatre](#). (A video ASL version of *Inose/Field Trip* is now available.)

**Buffy**, a five-part podcast about Buffy Sainte-Marie by Falen Johnson.

[CBC Listen](#). All episodes online now.

• ON SCREEN •

**[Les Filles du Roi](#)** by Corey Payette and Julie McIsaac

Premiered at the Rhode Island International Film Festival, with screenings at the Vancouver International Film Festival, the Hamilton Film Festival, the St. Louis International Film Festival, the Orlando Film Festival, and others.

**[With Love and a Major Organ](#)** by Julia Lederer

Starring Anna Maguire, Hamza Haq, and Veena Sood. Finalist for the Grand Jury Prize, 2023 Nashville Film Festival, winner Best Feature Film, Reelworld Film Festival, winner, Best Feature, Canadian Film Festival.

**[The Swearing Jar](#)** by Kate Hewlett

Starring Adelaide Clemens, Douglas Smith, Patrick J. Adams, and Kathleen Turner. Now available to buy or rent on various streaming services including Apple TV and Digital TIFF Bell Lightbox.

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