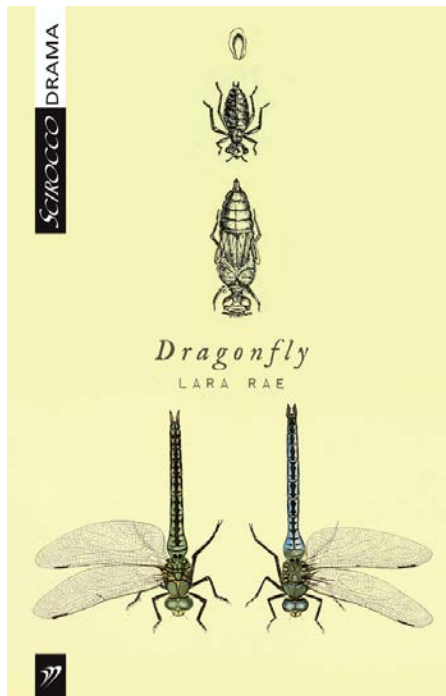




J. GORDON SHILLINGFORD
P U B L I S H I N G I N C

BOOKS THAT ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, AND INSPIRE

ESSENTIAL READING



“It’s a wrenchingly personal, honest and open story, told through exquisitely poetic language... Ultimately, though, *Dragonfly* is about more than just the details of Rae’s life story. It’s about how we construct and perceive gender, and how that can hide a person’s true identity not just from those around them, but even from themselves — and about emerging from that. *Dragonfly* tells that challenging and rarely heard story with elegance.”

—CBC Manitoba

“Funny, gritty, tragic, and crucially, relatable. This is a brave new work.”

—Winnipeg Free Press

This month’s featured title is Lara Rae’s lyrical [Dragonfly](#). In this original and poetic drama, Rae tells the raw and heartfelt story of her half-century-long (and counting) gender odyssey. *Dragonfly* presents us with two actors, one male, one female, who illuminate the inner life of a trans woman, from her Scottish childhood in the 1960s to the present day.

So often, it is the external changes in trans lives that the world is exposed to and confronts. Here, as Lara says, is the “inside voice” of a trans child, ever present, ever demanding to be heard, ever rising upward, to growth, peace, security, and love.

Dragonfly won the 2020 Chris Johnson Award, and it is one of the choices on the recently-released SureFire 2022 list from Playwrights Guild of Canada. An audiobook version of *Dragonfly* will be released soon.

See More

THE INTERVIEW

This month, [Ted Dykstra](#) and [Richard Greenblatt](#) opened in a revival of their smash-hit play, *2 Pianos 4 Hands*. Richard's new book about the play's origins, development, and continued success, [Two of the Best in the Neighbourhood: An Anecdotal History of 2 Pianos 4 Hands](#), is now available from JGS. The book includes many contributions from Ted as well as from others important to the show's journey, and it also contains the full text of the play.



Ted and Richard, *2 Pianos 4 Hands* is arguably the most successful play in Canadian theatre history, with hundreds of productions of the show taking place over the past twenty-six years. This month marks your triumphant return to Toronto's Royal Alex Theatre in a revival that's getting rave reviews. Why do you think this particular play remains so popular with audiences all over the world?

Ted Dykstra: I think it's because people, when they see it, end up wanting very much to talk about themselves—not only “piano” people, people from all walks of life. The story is universally understood, something writers always like to believe is true of their work, but seldom achieve: It's lightning in a bottle...

Richard Greenblatt: Several reasons: For me, it's a reiteration of a long-held belief I try to practice rigorously, which is that specificity is the only way to communicate widely to an audience. Ted and I tried to tell a very specific story based on our experiences growing up as piano nerds, and as soon as we started performing it, people would come up to us and tell us *their* stories, whether it was about music, or a sport, or whatever dream they had in their youth. Most everybody has similar desires, and they plug their experience into our tale, which I think is the definition of successful storytelling. And we were willing and able to combine it with our absurd senses of humour, the pathos in our journeys, as well as playing challenging, beautiful music. So, it's a pretty full evening. The lasting image of celebrating two of the best in the neighbourhood is an inclusive concept, I think. It's both thought-provoking and life-affirming at the same time.

Richard, you chronicled the history of *2P4H* in your new book, *Two of the Best in the Neighbourhood*, which features contributions from Ted (and others who have been a part of the *2P4H* story.) Question for you both: What are some of the things you think young artists could learn from reading about the journey the two of you took with this play?

RG: I try to sum it up at the end of the story. One of the most important things I learned was to retain control of one's artistic and intellectual property. The more successful the show became, the harder it was to fight against "conventional wisdom." But I think there is no one template for success. If you create a work, it is up to you how it continues to be viewed by the public. You might be smart to listen to those with more experience, but you should never relinquish the final power of the nature of your creation. And, theatre is the ultimate collaborative art form. So, respect your collaborators!

TD: I can never presume to know what someone will learn, I think people are snowflakes. I do know that the story of our journey *could* be inspiring to some, especially those who are wishing to follow in our footsteps in some way. I know *Billy Bishop Goes to War* by John Gray with Eric Peterson inspired the hell out of me when I saw it as a teenager. And their success with it was very similar to our journey, success in America, and continuing to perform it decades later.

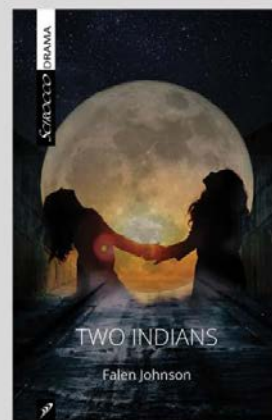
[Read the Full Interview](#)

SCHOOL'S OUT FOR SUMMER

Want to share your story about how you use JGS titles in your classes? Let us know. We'd love to talk to you!

Many of our authors are available for classroom visits, in person or via Zoom. If there's an author you'd like to invite to your class, [contact us](#) for more information.

COMMEMORATING INDIGENOUS HISTORY



[See More](#)

CELEBRATING PRIDE



[See More](#)

COMING ATTRACTIONS

• IN THEATRES •

Where You Are by Kristen Da Silva

[Theatre Ravensburg](#), Ravensburg, Germany, June 2–continuing, 2022.

Sugar Road by Kristen Da Silva

[Lighthouse Festival—Roselawn Theatre](#), Port Colbourne, ON, June 8–19, 2022.

Three Ordinary Men by Steven Elliott Jackson

[Cahoots Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, June 14–26, 2022.

Harlem Duet by Djanet Sears

[Bard on the Beach](#), Vancouver, BC, June 15–July 17, 2022.

Children of Fire by Shahrzad Arshadi and Anna Chatterton

[Nightwood Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, June 27–July 2, 2022.

The Great Shadow by Alex Poch-Goldin

[4th Line Theatre](#), Millbrook, ON, June 28–July 23, 2022.

Beyond the Sea by Kristen Da Silva

[Victoria Playhouse](#), Victoria, PEI, June 30–September 4, 2022.

Stag and Doe by Mark Crawford

[Capitol Theatre](#), Port Hope, ON, July 7–30, 2022.

Sugar Road by Kristen Da Silva

[Upper Canada Playhouse](#), Morrisburg, ON, July 7–31, 2022.

Where You Are (*Dove Ci Sei Tu*) by Kristen Da Silva
[Festival Teatrale di Borgo Verezzi](#), Borgo Verezzi, Italy, August 2–3, 2022.

The Waltz by Marie Beath Badian
[Blyth Festival](#), Blyth, ON, August 11–27, 2022.

Beyond the Sea by Kristen Da Silva
[Festival Players of Prince Edward County](#), Bloomington, ON, August 24–September 4, 2022.

Salt Baby by Falen Johnson
[Theatre Aquarius](#), Hamilton, ON, September 14–October 1, 2022.

The Runner by Christopher Morris
[Magnus Theatre](#), Thunder Bay, ON, September 29–October 15, 2022.

My Sister's Rage by Yolanda Bonnell
[Tarragon Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, October 11–November 6, 2022.

The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale by Haley McGee
[Soulpepper Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, October 18–November 6, 2022.

Serving Elizabeth by Marcia Johnson
[Theatre Aquarius](#), Hamilton, ON, October 19–November 5, 2022.

The Waltz by Marie Beath Badian
[Factory Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, October 22–November 13, 2022.

New by Pamela Sinha
[Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre](#), Winnipeg, MB, November 3–19, 2022.

Jake's Gift by Julia Mackey
[Rose Theatre, Brampton](#), ON November 11–12, 2022.

Let's Run Away by Daniel MacIvor
[Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre](#), Winnipeg, MB, December 1–17, 2022.

The Gig by Mark Crawford
[Theatre Aquarius](#), Hamilton, ON, March 8–25, 2023.

The Birds and the Bees by Mark Crawford
[Persephone Theatre](#), Saskatoon, SK, March 29–April 23, 2023.

New by Pamela Sinha
[Canadian Stage](#), Toronto, ON, April 25–May 14, 2023.

The Birds and the Bees by Mark Crawford
[Globe Theatre](#), Regina, SK, May 4–21, 2023.

• ONLINE •

5 Short Films Inspired by the Five Senses featuring “Taste” by Mark Crawford and Britta Johnson, and “All the Colours” by Marcia Johnson and Danika Loren, [Bad Hats Theatre](#),

Online now.

• ON SCREEN •

The Swearing Jar by Kate Hewlett.

Starring Adelaide Clemens, Douglas Smith, Patrick J. Adams, and Kathleen Turner, [coming Spring 2022](#).

Copyright © 2021 J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

newsletter@jgshillingford.com

Want to change how you receive these emails?

[Unsubscribe from this list.](#)

This email was sent to *IEMAIL*

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

!LIST:ADDRESSLINE!