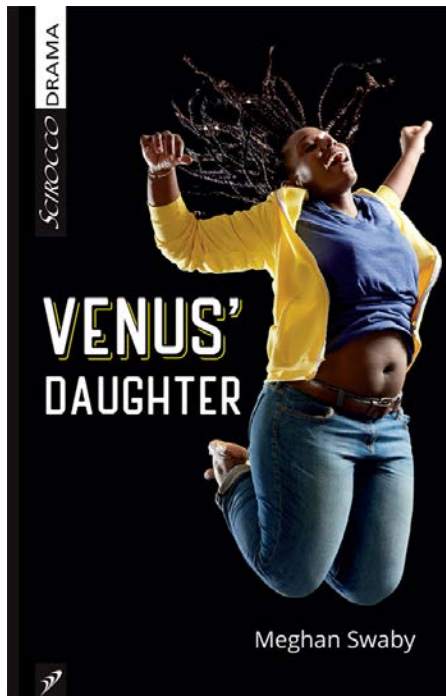




J. GORDON SHILLINGFORD
P U B L I S H I N G I N C

BOOKS THAT ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, AND INSPIRE

ESSENTIAL READING



"If you aren't afraid of a bit of magic, intense and polarized emotions, facing the horrific realities of European colonialism's history and legacy, and witnessing a woman's very personal and loving journey, then...see *Venus' Daughter*." — *Mooney on Theatre*

[Venus' Daughter](#) by [Meghan Swaby](#) is inspired by the life of Sara "Saartjie" Baartman, who was known as "The Hottentot Venus." Baartman was a Khoisan woman taken from South Africa to be displayed on London stages from 1810 to 1815; she was then posthumously displayed at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, France until 2002.

The story follows Denise, a young Black woman guided by an ancestor to begin her journey into self-love. Exploring the intersection of myth, fable, and the reality of how women and their bodies are viewed, *Venus' Daughter* peels back the layers of pop culture's obsession with the Black female form and the silence around the infamous figure, making connections through the centuries.

See More

THE INTERVIEW

Andrew Moodie is an Ottawa-born and raised actor, writer, educator, and director with extensive stage, film, and television credits. His plays include: *Riot* (which won the 1996 Chalmers Canadian Play Award,) *Oui*, *Wilbur County Blues*, *A Common Man's Guide to Loving Women*, *The Lady Smith*, *The Real McCoy*, and *Toronto the Good* (which was nominated for the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play). Andrew also wrote for the acclaimed CBC Radio series *Afghanada*.



Andrew, in plays such as *Riot* and *Toronto the Good*, you combine relatable characters and intriguing situations with serious issues. Would you say that you write “political theatre”? Do you set out with the intent of sparking larger conversations?

Absolutely! I love political theatre. I saw Shaw’s *Major Barbara* on PBS when I was a teenager, and I was blown away with how deftly Shaw dealt with major political issues and made them entertaining! And of course, Shakespeare’s political plays have some very dangerous ideas for his time. How he escaped prison for some of the sly criticisms of King James in the Macduff and Malcolm scene I have no idea. Ben Jonson wasn’t as clever and was thrown into jail for some play called *Isle of Dogs*. And people complain about cancel culture now?

Most of us have heard the expression “the real McCoy,” but few know that it refers to Elijah McCoy, a Black inventor born in Chatham who revolutionized the transportation industry. Your play about McCoy is scheduled for production at the Blyth Festival this summer. What can you tell us about that? Will you be involved in the show?

To be fair, it’s impossible to know exactly where the phrase “the real McCoy” originated, but it made sense to me that we would not know about Elijah as the source of the phrase because of racism. And of course, there are lots of internet trolls who try to diminish his accomplishments. But the play is actually about the nature of entropy. It’s the second law of thermodynamics. It’s very complicated to explain in any way a physicist would be happy with, but for those of us who are not studying quantum physics, think of it as the law of the

universe that says that everything decays. The example that scientists *always* bring up is that a cup of tea never gets hotter sitting on the counter of your kitchen. Everything moves from order to chaos. For me, racism is a kind of chaos. We may never eliminate racism, but we must always fight against it, just as we must always fight against entropy. And I use Elijah's life as a metaphor for entropy. And yes, I will be directing the play at Blyth.

Riot centres around a group of Black roommates in Toronto during the time of the Rodney King verdict and the resulting civil unrest in Los Angeles. Riot was a sensation when it debuted in 1995, and it won the Chalmers Canadian Play Award. Do you think that the play is relevant in today's political landscape? Are there any plans for a new production of it?

Well, funny you should ask. An announcement will be made very soon about *Riot*. Can't tell you anything just yet but watch this space. And yes, *Riot* is still unfortunately relevant. When I wrote the play, it was actually more of a history piece. By the time the play was performed, society had already shifted in so many ways, toward where we are now.

[Read the Full Interview](#)

CLASS NOTES

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



This month we spoke with Andrea Surich about educational programs at the [Confederation Centre](#) in Charlottetown, PEI. Currently General Manager, Theatre at Confederation Centre of the Arts
Andrea has been working in the theatre industry for over 40 years. Recent positions include Technical Director at Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Production Manager at Grand Theatre, London, Ontario and General Manager of Watermark Theatre, PEI.

Andrea, can you tell us about the kinds of programs that the Confederation Centre offers to young people who are actively pursuing or considering a theatre career?

We offer a number of different exciting options for young people, including:

- Stage Management apprenticeships. During the summer, we provide two or three apprenticeship opportunities for theatre students who wish to become professional

stage managers.

- Entry-level production training sessions in stage management, carpentry, scenic art, props building, wardrobe, lighting, sound and video. These are one-week or two-week sessions in length, depending upon the discipline, and they are taught by theatre professionals.
- Co-op placements from local high schools. We welcome students who want to do their co-op placement with the Confederation Centre.
- Actors. Every summer, our amphitheatre programming, funded by Canada Summer Jobs, allows us to have a group of 15- to 30-year-olds participate as performers.
- Design Internship. The successful applicant designs set, costumes and props for our amphitheatre production, with mentorship from a professional designer.

What happens during Arts Discovery Days?

Our staff leads tours of the facility; we offer gallery visits, and we run a hands-on visual art program with education and gallery personnel. We also offer theatre, music, and dance classes.

The Erica Rutherford Memorial Bursary is available to students of the arts. How can interested young people apply?

The application is available to download on the [Confederation Centre](#) website, and for further information, you can contact our Director of Development, Mary-Ellen Davies: mdavies@confederationcentre.com

The Confederation Centre houses both a theatre and an art gallery. What advantages are there to having these two institutions under one roof?

- It's a reminder to all of us that creativity can take many forms.
- Diversity for our patrons.
- Elevates the pride and creativity in the staff.

Cross-pollination...for example, spontaneous ticket sales can come from a gallery visit.

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.

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH



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COMING ATTRACTIONS

• IN THEATRES •

Boom X by Rick Miller

[Grand Theatre](#), London, ON, February 7–25, 2023.

The Herd by Kenneth T. Williams

[Persephone Theatre](#), Saskatoon, SK, February 8–26, 2023.

Beneath Springhill by Beau Dixon

[Theatre Orangeville](#), Orangeville, ON, February 8–26, 2023.

Starwalker by Corey Payette

[Urban Ink](#), Vancouver, BC, February 16–March 5, 2023.

Hurry Hard by Kristen Da Silva

[Western Canada Theatre](#), Kamloops, BC, February 23–March 4, 2023.

The Gig by Mark Crawford

[Theatre Aquarius](#), Hamilton, ON, March 8–25, 2023.

The Bluff by Kristen Da Silva

[Theatre Orangeville](#), Orangeville, ON, March 15–April 2, 2023.

Our Ghosts by Sally Stubbs

[Firehall Theatre](#), Vancouver, BC, March 19–April 2, 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 Curst by Kelley Jo Burke

[Dancing Sky Theatre](#), Meacham, SK, April 28–May 14, 2023.

Where You Are by Kristen Da Silva

[Theatre Northwest](#), Prince George, BC, May 4–24, 2023.

The Birds and the Bees by Mark Crawford

[Globe Theatre](#), Regina, SK, May 4–21, 2023.

Armadillos by Colleen Wagner

[Factory Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, May 27–June 18, 2023.

New Canadian Curling Club by Mark Crawford

[Drayton Festival Theatre](#), Drayton, ON, July 13–July 29, 2023.

The Waltz by Marie Beath Badian

[Blyth Festival](#), Blyth, ON, July 12–July 29, 2023.

New Canadian Curling Club by Mark Crawford

[Huron Country Playhouse](#), Grand Bend, ON, August 3–20, 2023.

Where You Are by Kristen Da Silva

[Lighthouse Festival](#), Port Dover, ON, July 19–August 5, 2023.

Bed and Breakfast by Mark Crawford

[Orillia Opera House](#), Orillia, ON, July 26–August 12, 2023.

Where You Are by Kristen Da Silva

[Lighthouse Festival](#), Port Colbourne, ON, August 9–August 20, 2023.

Where You Are by Kristen Da Silva

[Port Stanley Festival Theatre](#), Port Stanley, ON, August 23–September 9, 2023.

The Real McCoy by Andrew Moodie

[Blyth Festival](#), Blyth, ON, August 24–September 9, 2023.

Bittergirl: The Musical by Annabel Fitzsimmons, Alison Lawrence & Mary Francis Moore

[St. Jacob's Schoolhouse Theatre](#), St. Jacobs, ON, October 4–December 24, 2023.

• ONLINE •

Reckoning by Tara Beagan and Andy Moro, Article 11 Theatre

[Prairie Theatre Exchange](#) digital production, available June 21–25, 2023.

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

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

• ON SCREEN •

With Love and a Major Organ by Julia Lederer.

Starring Anna Maguire, Hamza Haq, and Veena Sood. Premiering at SXSW in Austin, March 10–19; coming to theatres soon!

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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