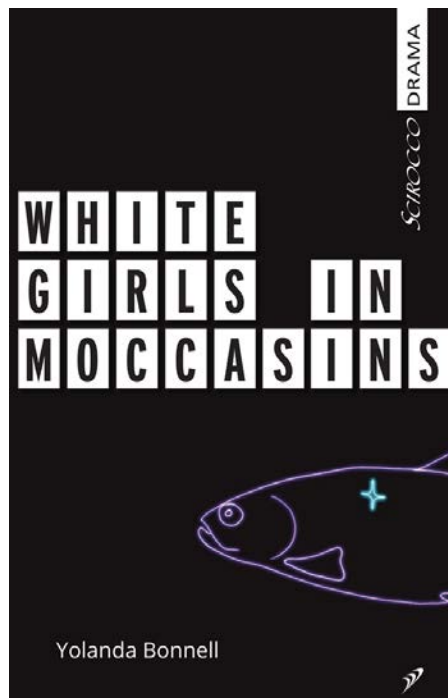




J. GORDON SHILLINGFORD
P U B L I S H I N G I N C

BOOKS THAT ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, AND INSPIRE

ESSENTIAL READING



"Yolanda Bonnell's play about a woman trying to reclaim her cultural roots is one of the stand-out shows of this or any other season."

—*NOW Magazine*

"Bonnell's storytelling feels audacious in the best ways: She shows stories that most First Nation, Metis and Inuit people experience in one way or another but don't often speak publicly about...Bonnell shows what a road map to loving oneself without judgment might look like."

—*The Globe and Mail*

Something is missing from Miskozi's life...so she goes on a search for herself and her culture, accompanied by her inner white girl, Waabishkizi, and guided by Ziibi, a manifestation of an ancestral river. Miskozi begins the journey back before she was even born, right at the seeds of colonization when her ancestors were forced to hide their culture anywhere they could. Burying their language. Their teachings. Their bundles. Their moccasins.

[White Girls in Moccasins](#) by award-winning playwright [Yolanda Bonnell](#) is a hilarious and poignant reclamation story that world-hops between dreams, memories, and a surreal game show. Along the way, Miskozi is forced to grapple with her own truth, while existing in a society steeped in white supremacy.

See More

THE INTERVIEW

[Lara Rae](#) is a writer and stand-up comedian.

Her play [Dragonfly](#) won the 2020 Chris Johnson Award. Lara is one of the co-developers of the internationally acclaimed television comedy Little Mosque on the Prairie and the creator of the radio series Monsoon House starring Russell Peters. Lara was the first trans woman to host the CBC flagship news program The Current.

Lara's food project, Pantry, feeds people in Winnipeg's West Broadway neighbourhood.



As we celebrate Pride Month, could you share some of your thoughts about the representation of trans people in popular culture? Why is it important for plays like *Dragonfly* to be performed?

We are still obsessed with tragedy and sadness. We have to show victory too. We are still often literally sacrificed in the plot (we die) in order to make a cis person a better human. This should not be our role or our job. We just need to be regular folks. It's why I do background work in Hollywood films that shoot here. To see me at a table drinking coffee and it be normal is just as important as the big stories and biopics.

***Dragonfly* is the story of a trans woman's journey, related by two characters named "They" and "Them." Can you tell us about these characters and about why you decided to tell the story using two voices?**

Part of it was practical. I wrote an early version for Sarah but did not want to write a 70-minute one-person show. There are far too many one-person shows in theatre. I like dialogue and drama. Also, it was a way to show two aspects of a person without saying this is the boy and this is the girl. In another production the male-appearing and female-appearing actors (both were non-binary) reversed the roles Sarah and Eric played in the original. To hear a male-appearing actor do the rape scene as opposed to the female-appearing was definitely a different experience. Many tone shifts occur depending on the actors and their actual or perceived genders.

Although *Dragonfly* deals at times with difficult subject matter such as substance abuse and sexual violence, the dialogue is very poetic. Did you begin with the idea of using blank verse, or was that something that developed as you began working on the play?

Once we came up with the idea this would not be two characters as much as aspects of the “inside voice” of a trans woman (this was a little bit of an inside joke as I famously have no inside voice) then the poetical or what I call hyper-realistic way of speaking came out. I also love music but have no coordination and rhythm in my body—but in my mind I can quickly get into a musical flow with my writing. I am one of those people who find it near to impossible to visualize anything. I am a totally verbal person and spoke, read and wrote early.

Lara, as the long-time artistic director of the Winnipeg Comedy Festival and a frequent participant on CBC Radio’s *The Debaters*, you are very well known for your work as a comedian. You also wrote for the sitcom *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, and although *Dragonfly* is a drama, there are many funny moments in the play. Where does your sense of humour come from?

It’s a trope but it is always a way for weird, queer or odd kids to fit in when they have shortcomings in other playground emotional currency. Literally, the more acid wit is from my mom and the cornier but more humane side is my dad. Not entirely but to some degree. My sister is very funny too and my daughter is a wit.

[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're shining the spotlight on the Scirocco High School Playwriting Program, an initiative that J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing is very proud to support. The program, which has now been running for more than twenty years, was the brainchild of our founder, Gord Shillingford, and Rory Runnells at the [Manitoba Association of Playwrights](#). The program continues today under the direction of current MAP Executive Director (and award-winning Scirocco playwright) Brian Drader.

Every year, students from Grades 10 through 12 are encouraged to submit plays to MAP. Plays are then adjudicated, and playwrights are chosen to participate in the program. The focus of the program is dramaturgy, so professional dramaturges work with students as they shape and polish their plays. In the spring, at the end of the process, students' plays are showcased at a public reading.

The 2023 Scirocco Drama Manitoba High School Playwrights Program readings took place on May 28 at Manitoba Theatre for Young People, featuring the following playwrights and plays: Cyan Gargol, *Hallway Silence*, William Green, *It Was Paradise*, Ethan Pereira, *Linguini's Plight*, and Janessa Pottinger, *Marcel*.

This year, the plays were read by student actors from the Manitoba Theatre for Young People Theatre School and Native Youth Theatre, who were joined by professional actors Jessica McGlynn, Joshua Ranville, and Madyson Richard.

Thanks to Brian Drader and the Manitoba Association for Playwrights for making the program happen. Thanks also to all of the playwrights, dramaturges, directors, actors, and audience members who made this year's program such a success!

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.

JUNE IS INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH



[See More](#)

CELEBRATING PRIDE MONTH



[See More](#)

IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to our Scirocco Drama playwrights who were nominated for Toronto's Dora Mavor Moore Awards, including:

Haley McGee, whose play *The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale* is nominated in the Independent Theatre Division for Outstanding New Play and Outstanding Production, and also picked up a nomination for Haley herself for Best Performance by an Individual.

Beau Dixon, who is nominated for Outstanding New Musical as well as Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role in the Musical Theatre Division.

Rose Napoli, who is nominated for Outstanding New Musical for RETOLD in the Musical Theatre Division.

Kanika Ambrose, whose play *our place*, an upcoming Fall title, is nominated in the General Theatre Division for Outstanding Production and Outstanding New Play, and also received nominations for both lead actresses.

Catherine Banks, whose play *Bone Cage* received a nomination for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in the Independent Theatre Division.

Marjorie Chan, who was nominated for Outstanding Direction in the Independent Theatre Division for *The Chinese Lady*.

IN MEMORIAM



We at J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing are saddened by the death of renowned director, playwright, and performer [Daniel Brooks](#). Daniel was a brilliant theatrical innovator, a cherished collaborator, and a mentor for many in Toronto's theatre community.

Daniel was the first recipient of the prestigious Siminovitch Prize and was also awarded several Dora Mavor Moore Awards, the Chalmers Award, the Pauline McGibbon Award, the Edinburgh Fringe First Award, and the Capital Critics Circle Award. JGS is proud to have published four of Daniel's plays: *Insomnia* (with Guillermo Verdecchia), *Monster* (with Daniel MacIvor), *Bigger Than Jesus* (with Rick Miller), and *Other People*, Daniel's 2022 solo show about coming to terms with mortality.

Our condolences to Daniel's family and his many friends and colleagues. He made an indelible mark on Canadian theatre, and he will be remembered.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

• IN THEATRES •

Armadillos by Colleen Wagner
[Factory Theatre](#), Toronto, ON, June 3–24, 2023.

Dragon's Tale by Mark Brownell and Chan Ka Nin
[Tapestry Opera](#), Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, ON, June 15–18, 2023.

Bed and Breakfast by Mark Crawford
[Lighthouse Festival Theatre](#), Port Dover June 28–July 15, 2023.

New Canadian Curling Club by Mark Crawford
[Drayton Festival Theatre](#), Drayton, ON, July 13–July 29, 2023.

Prairie Nurse by Marie Beath Badian
[Capitol Theatre](#), Port Hope, ON, July 14–30, 2023.

Adrenaline by Ahmad Meree

[National Arts Centre](#), Ottawa, ON, July 18–23, 2023.

Bed and Breakfast by Mark Crawford

[Lighthouse Festival Theatre](#), Port Colbourne, ON, July 19–July 30, 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 11, 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 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.

The Waltz by Marie Beath Badian

[Great Canadian Theatre Company](#), Ottawa, ON, February 13–25, 2024.

• 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 •

With Love and a Major Organ by Julia Lederer.

Starring Anna Maguire, Hamza Haq, and Veena Sood. Premiered at SXSW in Austin; 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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