

INSIGHT FOR PLAYWRIGHTS

VOLUME 13 • ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2005

IN THIS ISSUE

Sandra's Column...

- page 1

Theatres Seeking New Works

- page 2

Contests

- page 7

Plays In Sight

- page 15

Subscriber Spotlight ...

SANDRA HOSKING

This article copyright 2005 by Sandra Hosking. Used by permission.

Playwright: Alan David Perkins

Hometown: Quincy, Mass.

Education: B.S. in music education, University of Alabama, 1984

Web site: www.alandavidperkins.com

Selected Titles: *Nobody Knows I'm a Dog, Standard Deviation, F2F, In God's Country, Dullsville, Spring is for the Birds*

Honors: The Open Book/Doubleday's Stage & Screen Book Club's Fourth National Readers Theatre Competition, Joyce Dutka Arts Foundation 2002 Playwrights' Award, 1998 David James Ellis Memorial Award

Playwright Alan David Perkins, 43, credits the PC revolution for his becoming a writer.

"I have lousy penmanship but I've always been a very fluid typist, so it was buying my first PC that prompted me to start writing," Perkins says. "Since I was new to New York at the time, I saw a LOT of theater. One day my brother suggested I write a play, which I did. And then another one, and another one and another one."

After writing two plays, Perkins entered the playwriting group at HB Playwrights Foundation & Theatre, also called HB Studio, in New York where he studied with Richard "Dick" Longchamps.

"Dick was great for me in that he knew what each student needed. He knew that I could hear the things that did or didn't work," Perkins says. "After a scene would be read, he'd glare at me and say, 'Well?' I always knew the answer -- it worked or didn't and why. He was very supportive of each individual voice and was never critical of content, which I respected. Dick, and the class, helped me to find my real voice as a playwright."

Since then, Perkins' plays have been produced across the U.S. and worldwide.

In February, Beari Productions in Middle Village, N.Y., will premiere his new play *When Hell Freezes Over*. The full-length comedy, in which Hell indeed freezes over, initially was developed at HB and Developmental Stages in 1990-91. It has been a finalist in several competitions; however, no theater selected it for production until now.

"This is one of the earliest plays where I found my 'voice,'" Perkins wrote on his Web site. "The play is not about Hell freezing over, but about people who have to deal with it ... I look back at this play as being kind of talky -- lots of wordplay. It's definitely an early work, but still lots of fun."

Perkins, who now resides in Queens, N.Y., markets his plays through submissions and his Web site.

"A long time ago I would blitz theater companies with E-mail solicitations. With patience, many of those solicitations did pay off," he says. "Now, my own Web site has paid off in that scripts are requested directly without any solicitations."

As a matter of fact, since I've been posting information on my school plays, I can barely keep up with the demand! (If there are any publishers reading this, I've been filling approximately 5 requests per week for the past six or seven years!) But, I haven't given up sending plays out. Since all my attempts to get a literary agent seem to fail, I rely on listings of competitions and festivals posted in the Dramatists Guild newsletters and *InSight*."

He fears the market for new plays is constricting, though. "As the need to have shows make money [mounts], it seems to me the only shows that can survive are revivals and star vehicles," Perkins says. "Every now and then something new will surface, which should always be celebrated ... Good work is being written every day, and much of it deserves its day on the stage, but the business end of it can squash these works before they even see life."

Perkins gives credit to the off-off Broadway scene and amateur theater groups for being the emerging playwright's last hope. "Amateur theaters can do great work and I have a great admiration and respect for them. I believe it's through these venues that audiences can be built and cultivated," he says.

Tips

Don't expect your new play to go straight to Broadway. "It's a long, long road that I haven't even reached the end of yet. That inexperience can frequently wind up on the page, resulting in work that is not at all pleasing to the producer."

Learn all aspects of the theater. "I recommend learning other aspects of theater, particularly stage managing or producing. If you think as a producer, you can look at your own work and ask yourself 'Would I produce this?' If the answer is 'no,' then you need to learn what would make it a 'yes.'"

Self produce. "If it's a piece you truly believe in, find a way to mount it yourself."

I just wrote my first play. What should I do? "Write your second, then your third, then go back and rewrite the first. Also, be sure you're telling a story, and make it interesting. Don't write anything you wouldn't want to see yourself."

Sandra Hosking's plays have been produced in New York City, Los Angeles, Canada, and elsewhere. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild of America. For comments or story ideas, contact sandykayz@cs.com.

| |
|---|
| <p>Insight for Playwrights, 11309 E. Petra Ave., Mesa, AZ 85212-1981 201-430-4517 - Editor, Subscriptions 480-380-6249 - Payments, Passwords, Publishing, Web site <i>This issue copyright 2005 by Insight for Playwrights except where otherwise noted.</i></p> |
|---|

THEATRES SEEKING NEW WORKS

Attic Theatre Ensemble

INSIGHT DEC 2005

Note: One-Act plays only accepted through Marathon – see website. Must be previously unproduced for consideration. Previously produced Full-length plays will be considered.

| | | | |
|------------------|--|---------------------|-----------------|
| Type of Work | one-act plays, full-length plays | | |
| Approach | query w/ synopsis, query w/ synopsis and sample dialogue | | |
| Plays/Season | 5-6 | Perform New Plays | Yes |
| New Plays/Season | At least one | Previously Produced | Yes |
| Venue | 99 seats or less | Deadline | One-Acts: 12/31 |
| Avg Ticket Price | \$15-25 | Best Time | Anytime |