

Allan Baker

Bio

After retiring and after a decade as a gay rights activist in Texas, Allan began writing in 2004. He has since written fourteen plays, all but one with gay characters and themes. Eleven of these plays have been on stage, in a total of twenty-five productions and eight staged readings, from coast to coast in the US and from Guam to Canada, internationally.

His first play was ***All the Saints***, a full-length, modern re-telling of Dumas' *Lady of the Camellias* and Verdi's *La Traviata*, with gay characters. This play was given a well-received staged reading at Zach Scott Theatre Center in Austin in January 2008.

Allan's first one act play, ***Five Minutes***, set in the World Trade Center on 9/11, was named "Best of the Fest" for the FronteraFest short fringe festival at Hyde Park Theatre in Austin in 2006 and was selected for the Emerging Artists Theatre's Fall Festival of Short Plays in New York City in November 2006. Nominated by Emerging Artists as part of a nation-wide competition, ***Five Minutes*** was again produced in New York City as part of the Samuel French, Inc. Festival of Off Off-Broadway One Act Plays in June 2007.

Allan's ten minute play, ***...last and always***, based on the final scene of ***Five Minutes***, was produced by NativeAliens Theatre Collective for New York City's Pride Celebration in June, 2009. In February, 2011, this play was again produced in New York City, by Turtle Shell Productions. It was also produced by Blue Slipper Theatre, in Livingston, MT (2012); Buffalo United Artists Theatre in Buffalo, NY (2012); Santa Cruz Actor's Theatre, in Santa Cruz, CA (2014) and West Coast Players, Clearwater, FL (2014). In November, 2013, this play was produced by the theatre department of the University of Guam as part of their student directed Short Play Festival. In 2006, this play was a finalist in the annual 10 minute play competition at the Magnolia Arts Center in Greenville, NC. In 2008 "***...last and always***" was a finalist for the Fall Festival of Ten Minute Plays produced by the San Luis Obispo Little Theatre in San Luis Obispo, CA. In 2012 this play was a finalist for the annual National Award for Short Playwriting of the City Theatre of Miami, FL. In February, 2020 this play was produced by the Raven Players at the Raven Theatre in Healdsburg, CA as part of their festival of short plays. In May, 2020 it will be produced by the Tree City Playhouse in Sylvania, Ohio as one of three winners of their annual ten minute play competition.

In 2008 and 2009 Allan wrote a trio of one act plays focusing on critical moments in the relationships of three gay couples: ***Click***, ***A Midsummer Night's Conversation*** and ***A Midwinter Night's Conversation***. He also wrote ***Voices***, a one act involving the conversation across four generations of five members of a family, all residents of a cemetery in rural Texas.

In April, 2010, four of Allan's one act plays (***Click***, ***Voices***, ***Five Minutes*** and ***A Midsummer Night's Conversation***) were produced together as ***Connect: Four Short Plays*** for three weeks at the Off Center theatre in Austin. In June, 2010 ***Connect*** was given an encore performance at the Rollins Theatre of the Long Center in Austin as part of Austin's Pride 2010 celebration.

In September, 2011, ***Click*** and ***A Midsummer Night's Conversation*** were produced at the Kalita Humphreys Theatre by Uptown Players as part of the Dallas Pride Performing Arts Festival. In July, 2012 ***Click*** was produced by The Eclectic Company Theatre of Los Angeles, CA as part of their 9th annual "Hurricane Season New Play Festival & Playwriting Competition". The script for ***Click*** tied for first place among the nine plays selected to be produced. In April, 2018 ***Click*** was produced by the Department of Music and Theatre of Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa as part of their annual student-directed short play festival.

Allan's short play, ***Beauty***, is about a magnificent work of art and an even more extraordinary woman. In February 2012 this play was premiered by Valley Repertory Company of Enfield, CT as part of their third LabWorks New Play Contest. In July, 2012 ***Beauty*** was produced by Salem Theatre Company of Salem, MA as part of their annual "Moments of Play" festival. Of 850 plays submitted to this well-regarded festival, ten were selected for production.

On June 26th, 2014 a staged reading of ***Click*** and ***A Midsummer Night's Conversation*** was presented by The Desert Rose Playhouse at the Tolerance Education Center in Rancho Mirage, CA as part of the Palm Springs area's celebration of Pride Month.

Allan's full length play, ***Dex & Abby***, is a sweet, funny and moving play about a gay couple and their two dogs...the dogs to be played by human actors. In March, 2013, two very well received, fully staged readings of this play were given at Salvage Vanguard Theatre, in Austin. In November, 2017 it was listed as a "Second Rounder" in the Austin Film Festival's Playwriting Competition. From May 16th to June 1st, 2019, ***Dex & Abby*** was produced by the Ground Floor Theatre in Austin. In 2020 this play was produced by Pride Films and Plays at the Broadway Theatre of the Pride Arts Center in Chicago and ran from Feb. 20th to March, 29th.

Allan's full length play, ***Eskandar***, was inspired by Bizet's *Carmen* and the *Shahnameh* of the 10th Century Persian poet, Firdowsi, and is set in today's Afghanistan. Joe, an Afghan-American who has returned to Afghanistan as part of a covert operation, falls in love with Eskandar, the wild "kept boy" of an Afghan warlord. They develop a relationship which ends in tragedy. In 2014 this play was a finalist in the annual Arch and Bruce Brown Foundation Competition for plays with GLBT historical themes. In 2015 ***Eskandar*** was one of only three plays chosen from among 71 submitted by playwrights across Texas, to be given two staged readings by Wordsmyth Theatre Company at Stages Repertory Theatre as part of the Texas Playwright's Festival in Houston.

In September, 2015, *A Midwinter Night's Conversation* was produced at the Registry Theatre in Kitchener, Ontario by Modus Vivendi Theatre Company as part of their annual festival of LGBT theatre. This was Allan's first international production.

In 2013 Allan wrote his most recent full-length play, *Dare*. *In a nursing home, a gay man reflects on a life that has spanned the most tumultuous years of gay history and explains his decision to complete the "dramatic arc" of his "character" in the play that is his life.* A staged reading of this play was presented on Feb. 25, 2015 at Ground Floor Theatre in Austin. This play is one of two winners of the 2017 Mario-Fratti-Fred Newman Political Play Contest, sponsored by the Castillo Theatre in New York City. Held bi-annually, the contest received 300 submissions in the 2017 round. A staged reading of *Dare* was given at the Castillo Theatre in New York City on August 7, 2017, as part of the award presentation. *Dare* was the concluding production in the 2017-2018 season of The Desert Rose Playhouse in Palm Springs. Acclaimed by critics and audiences, *Dare* ran from April 20th to May 13th, 2018.

Allan's most recent plays are *In a Box*, *Modesto* and *Missing*. *In a Box* is an 8-minute play, in the manner of a Greek chorus, explaining the implications of certain principles of quantum physics. *Modesto* is a half hour one act, based on *Dare*, with rather different characters and set after the presidential election of 2016. *Missing* is a one act set in Vietnam in January, 1971 and September, 1996. Searching for information on Americans missing in action from the Vietnam war, a US consulate official hears the story of two such men from a Buddhist priest. The story is sad, enlightening, comforting...and one out of an important and very ancient legend.

Allan's short dog lover's monologue, *Saturday, Duboce Park*, won the "Original Monologue Contest" sponsored by Talking Horse Productions in Columbia, MO. Thirty-six monologues were streamed on the company's Facebook page in September, 2020 and viewers voted on their favorite.

Allan is a member of the Dramatist's Guild of America.

4711 Spicewood Springs Rd., #159
Austin, TX 78759
arbaustx@aol.com
512-318-9848 (mobile)
abbyproductions.com

New Play Exchange profile: <https://newplayexchange.org/users/3417/allan-baker>