

# Allan Baker

A University of Texas graduate and long time resident of Austin, Allan has long been an advocate for the LGBT community of Texas. He served as chair of the Austin Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus for ten years and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of Equality Texas...the state's only state-wide GLBT political and community-building organization...for eleven years. Retiring after a career in environmental health in 2002, Allan focused on political activism, serving also as treasurer of the Texas Equity PAC, a state-wide political action committee committed to electing gay-friendly legislators in Texas. In 2002 he received the Human Rights Campaign Political Activism Award at Austin's HRC black tie event.

Allan began writing in 2004. He has since written thirteen plays, all but one with gay characters and themes. All of these plays have been onstage. in a total of twenty-two productions and seven staged readings, from coast to coast to Guam, and 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 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 9<sup>th</sup> annual "Hurricane Season New Play Festival & Playwriting Competition". The script for ***Click*** tied for first place among the nine plays selected to be produced.

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, 10 were selected for production.

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, 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.

Allan's full length play, ***Eskandar***, was inspired by Bizet's *Carmen* and the *Shahnameh* of the 10<sup>th</sup> 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.

Allan's most recent full length play is ***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. In 2017 it won the Mario Fratti-Fred Newman Political Play Contest, sponsored by the Castillo Theatre in New York City and was given a very well-received staged reading at the theatre in August. "Dare" is the concluding production of the 2017-2018 season for The Desert Rose Playhouse, in Palm Springs, CA and will run from April 20<sup>th</sup> to May 13<sup>th</sup>.

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