

BANUTA RUBESS

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A Canadian Rhodes Scholar with a doctorate in history, I write and direct theatre, opera, radio and film.

WRITER – THEATRE

Libretto, FRUITS OF THE EARTH, with composer Nic Gotham, producer Latvian Concert Direction, to be performed by the Latvian Radio Choir and the Riga Saxophone Quartet, March 2003.

Libretto, OH PILOT, an airport opera, with composer Nic Gotham, producer Tapestry New Opera Works. In-house workshops in Riga, Latvia, 1998; public workshop during the World Stage Festival, Toronto, Canada, 2000.

FROTH, a spectacle of shopping and hysteria, produced in a store by Froth Productions, 1996.

HEAD IN A BAG, a political comedy. Directed by myself. Produced by Theatre Passe Muraille, 1992. Published by Exile Editions, 1996.

HORROR HIGH, a multi-media teen drama about suicide. Directed by myself at Factory Theatre for Theatre Direct, Toronto, 1989. Nominated for a Dora Award, Outstanding Production in Children's Theatre.

BOOM, BABY, BOOM!, a jazz play about beatniks and ethnics in 1959 Toronto. Directed by myself at the Du Maurier World Stage Festival, Toronto, 1988. Nominated for a Dora, Outstanding Production, Small Theatres. I was also the producer, with Claire Hopkinson and Nic Gotham. Music by Nic Gotham. Published by Canadian Theatre Review and Exile Editions, 1996.

BONNIE AND CLYDE ARE DEAD, a comedy based on work supplied by Dean Gilmour and Michelle Smith, produced by Theatre Smith-Gilmour, Poor Alex, Toronto, 1989; LSPU hall, St. John's, 1990.

THIN ICE, a teen drama about sex, co-written with Beverley Cooper. Produced by Theatre Direct 1986-1989, and over the years, directed by Maureen White, Andrey Tarasiuk, and myself. Winner of the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Theatre for Young Audiences and the Chalmers Children's Play Award, 1987. National tour, including Edmonton Fringe Festival. Also produced by Magnus Theatre, Thunder Bay; Quest Theatre, Calgary; Geordie Productions, Montreal; Green Thumb, Vancouver; The Solo Company, St. John's. Published by Playwrights' Canada.

POPE JOAN, a comedy about the legendary female Pope. Directed by Cynthia Grant. Produced by Nightwood Theatre, The Poor Alex, Toronto, 1984; Concordia University, Montreal. Nominated for a Chalmers Canadian Play Award. Published by Borealis Press.

SMOKE DAMAGE: A STORY OF THE WITCH HUNTS, written in collaboration with the cast. Directed by Cynthia Grant. Produced by Nightwood Theatre, St. Paul's Church, Toronto, 1983; University of Guelph. Published by Playwrights' Union of Canada, and Exile Editions.

Playwright-in-residence for University of Western Ontario, London; Great Canadian Theatre Company, Ottawa; Theatre Columbus, Theatre Direct, Mixed Company, and Nightwood Theatre, Toronto.

Plays in Latvian

TANGO LUGANO, an operatic musical, music by Dace Aperans. Directed by myself at Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec, 1987; Bathurst Street Theatre, Toronto; SUNY Purchase, New York, 1988; tour to the Daile (Art) Theatre of Latvia, Riga, 1989. Published in the literary magazine Avots, and broadcast repeatedly on Latvian television.

VARONDARBI (HEROICA), a fantastical musical, directed by myself at Place des Arts, Montreal, 1979; Ryerson Theatre, Toronto; Fashion Institute Theatre, New York, 1980. Music by Dace Aperans.

ESSAYS , ARTICLES AND TRANSLATIONS

Since 1999, a biweekly opinion column on cultural and political themes, as well as feature articles, for the national newspaper Diena, Latvia.

A profile of photographer Vid Ingelevics for the art magazine Studija, 2002.

Articles on Pauls Bankovskis and Nora Ikstena for literary quarterly Latvian Literature.

“Kicking with Poetry,” an article on the politics of two female playwrights, Aspazija and Mara Zalite, for a collection of essays on East European drama.

Translations of poems by Aleksandrs Caks, excerpts from novels by Nora Ikstena and Pauls Bankovskis, 2002.

Other translations of Latvian poetry and prose, published in anthologies as well as in Agni Review, Boston.

Articles published in Theatrum, Canadian Theatre Review, Broadside, Fireweed.

FILM + TV

Writer, TO HELL WITH WAGNER, a mysterious romance, a feature-length screenplay developed for STUDIO F.O.R.M.A., Riga, 2001.

Story editor, GOOD HANDS, a feature-length film produced by STUDIO F.O.R.M.A., Riga, director Peter Simm, 2001.

Researcher, BALTIC FIRE, a sixty minute documentary, broadcast on TV Ontario in the series FROM THE HEART, 1993.

Writer, ROMANCE IS GOOD TODAY, a ninety minute drama for television, producer Calico Pix, 1993. Based on my award-winning play THIN ICE, written with B. Cooper.

Writer, SAMSARA, half-hour drama, with C. Roberts, produced by Horsy Productions, 1991.

Writer, CLOSE YOUR EYES AND THINK OF ENGLAND, a short drama, written with M. White and A. MacDonald, produced and directed by Janis Lundman and Back Alley Productions, 1986.

RADIO

Writer/producer, OH PILOT, a half hour drama, Studio '96, CBC.

Director, NIGREDO HOTEL, an opera, CBC Radio, Saturday Afternoon at the Opera.

Creator/writer/dramaturge/producer, ADVENTURE STORIES FOR (BIG) GIRLS, eight half hour dramas, Studio 92-93, CBC. I commissioned six writers, including Linda Griffiths and Carol Bolt, and wrote two scripts myself -- NO: HERE COMES ULRIKE MEINHOF, and OBLIVION: THE STORY OF ISABELLE EBERHARDT. Published by Blizzard Press

DIRECTOR - THEATRE

POSSIBLE WORLDS, by John Mighton, the New Riga Theatre, 2003.

FRUITS OF THE EARTH, works for choir, electronic music and saxophone quartet, Latvian National Opera, 2003.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND, by Oscar Wilde, Liepaja Theatre, 2002.

OPERA TO GO, four new mini-operas, Tapestry New Opera Works, a showcase production for Opera America, Toronto, 2002.

TOP GIRLS, by Caryl Churchill, the New Riga Theatre, 2001.

THE BIRDS' OPERA, a children's opera based on Dr. Dolittle, written by Mara Zalite and Janis Lusens, the Latvian National Opera, 2001.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE, by C.W. Gluck, the Latvian National Opera, 2000.

RONDO, an environmental adaptation of Schnitzler's LA RONDE, the New Riga Theatre, 2000.

WEDDING DAY AT THE CROMAGNONS' by Wajdi Mouawad, Great Canadian Theatre Company, Ottawa; Theatre Passe Muraille, Toronto, 1996.

THE STILLBORN LOVER by Timothy Findley, produced by Theatre Passe Muraille, 1995. Nominated for six Dora awards, including Outstanding Production and Outstanding Direction.

STILL by Leah Cherniak and Martha Ross, Theatre Columbus at Theatre Passe Muraille, 1994.

Director/dramaturge, NIGREDO HOTEL, a chamber opera by Nic Gotham and Ann-Marie MacDonald, produced by Tapestry Music Theatre and Tarragon Theatre, Toronto, 1992. Tour to Great Britain, 1993. Tour of Victoria, Vancouver, Toronto, 1995. Nominated for eight Dora Mavor Moore Awards.

THE AVENGING WOMAN, by Aspazija, a collaboration with Neil Bartlett of GLORIA theatre company, England, at the Kabata theatre in Riga, Latvia. Bi-lingual performances at the Berkeley Stage, Toronto, 1991. Latvian Critics' Award for Best Production.

MEME, a noopera (sic) by David Mott and bp nichol, produced by The Music Gallery, Toronto, recorded for CBC's TWO NEW HOURS, 1991.

Director/dramaturge, GOODNIGHT, DESDEMONA by Ann-Marie MacDonald, Nightwood Theatre, Toronto, 1988. Tour 1990 of the Great Canadian Theatre Company,

Ottawa; Vancouver East Cultural Centre, Vancouver; Northern Light Theatre, Edmonton; Canadian Stage Company, Toronto.

1995-1998 Artistic Co-Director, FROTH Productions, a company devoted to theatre involving the human body, the body politic and live music.

1992-1996 Associate Artist, Theatre Passe Muraille, Toronto

As Associate, I was equally responsible with the Artistic Producer for all artistic decisions made at the theatre. I was involved in programming the season, dramaturgy, fundraising, publicity, liaison with the Board and the theatre community, and general ideamongering.

Since 1984 , director/dramaturge of workshops for: Soulpepper, The Music Gallery, Nightwood Theatre, Crow's Theatre, Theatre Columbus, Theatre Direct, Theatre Passe Muraille, Tapestry Music Theatre, Toronto; Great Canadian Theatre Company, Ottawa; Playwrights' Workshop, Montreal.

COLLECTIVE CREATIONS

Within a collective, I work as a writer, director, producer and performer.

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF LOLITA, a multi-media comedy. Created by The Humbert Humbert Project (Project) in a co-production with Nightwood Theatre at Theatre Passe Muraille, 1987.

THIS IS FOR YOU, ANNA, a spectacle of revenge. Created by The Anna Project in 1983 and performed until 1986 at: the Du Maurier World Stage and Theatre Passe Muraille, Toronto; Great Canadian Theatre Company, Ottawa; tour of England; tours of Ontario law schools, women's shelters and a women's prison. . Nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore Award; published by Canadian Theatre Review.

Co-founder (with Neil Bartlett) of THE 1982 THEATRE COMPANY, an international ensemble. Toured Europe and North America with collectively devised productions of Aspazija, Brecht and Fo, 1982-84.

Member of A COMPANY, experimental English ensemble. Performances in Oxford, Stratford and Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 1978-1981.

EDUCATION -- ACADEMIC

D.Phil. in Modern History, St. Antony's College, University of Oxford, England, 1982.

B.A. (Hons.), First Class, History and Drama, Queen's University, Kingston, 1977.
Ontario Rhodes Scholar, 1978.

EDUCATION -- OTHER

Extended Voice with Richard Armstrong, Toronto, 1992.

Screenwriting seminar with Robert McKee, Montreal, 1990.

Video production workshop with Myke Dyer, Trinity Square Video, 1990.

Creativity and camera workshop with Peter Mettler, Cineworks, Vancouver, 1986.

International Theatre Congress workshops with Joseph Chaikin, Wolfgang Kolneder, Steven Kent, Michele George, Yoshi Oida, Victoria Santa Cruz, Oleg Tabakov, 1983.

OTHER

Creator of promotional events; communications consultant to corporate leaders.

Lectures and seminars at universities in Canada, USA, Latvia, England.

Toronto Arts Council Board of Directors 1989-93; Theatre Committee 1988-93.

Nightwood Theatre Board of Directors 1986-88.

Languages: English/German/French/Latvian/minimal Russian.