

Wren Brian

Playwright – Producer

If any of this pitch seems interesting, please reach out, love talking theatre and connecting with fellow theatre creators.

Wren Brian is a highly creative playwright who writes a variety of thought provoking and engaging plays including (but not limited to):

- **dramatic plays within a fictional world**
- **imaginative work for young audiences**
- **delivering on specific commissioned work**

All of which can be played by actors of any gender, ancestry, ability, and/or age.

These plays often explore complicity, monstrosity, accountability, and the effects of systems on individuals.

Fictional World Work

Wren is dedicated to creating characters that can be played by actors of any gender, ancestry, ability, and/or age. By writing characters like this she hopes to contribute to equity in the industry while exploring themes and questions important to a wide range of humanity. Since 2009 Wren has been consistently researching atrocities (particularly the

Holocaust) both in academic settings and on her own time. This varied and in-depth research influences most of her plays as she firmly believes the more we understand how atrocities happen from all angles, the more likely we are to prevent them (for a partial list of sources that have been of influence over the years, click [here!](#)).

In order to explore these issues while writing character who can be played by a wide range of actors Wren has created an alternate world with its own intricate history and timeline which, depending on the choices of the artistic team, does not include the same oppressions as our world. However, in this world nothing happens which hasn't happened in some capacity in our world. This allows her plays to be specific, but allows artistic collaborators to use their imaginations and explore complex issues without being constrained by our world's history.

Select Fictional World Projects

Bystander (2 actors)

Premiered by Gwaandak Theatre in October 2018. Revised version ready for second production.

In a militarized country still in the throes of war, a brash officer carrying a secret message asks to stay the night at a fearful citizen's house. Despite their differences the two find solace from their loneliness over drinks. Small talk turns to joking and banter as they talk of happier times, partake in drunken philosophy, and play a drinking game. However, their bond becomes dangerous as the details about the message and what they have done during the war become clear, forcing them to confront their own morality. Eventually both must decide if they can go on as they have been or if they need to change in order to do what is right. If there is such a thing.

The Weaver (1 actor)

Ready for workshop and/or premiere production

A hardworking weaver barely making ends meet by mass producing boring carpets has their usual routine interrupted by a visitor. Excited by the possibility of gaining a commission to make an intricate knotted carpet again, the Weaver is welcoming & amiable. Unfortunately, the visitor is not really there for a knotted carpet and is instead determined to unravel the weaver's world.

The Investigator

Premiering this spring with Yukon Digital Theatre Collective. Available for festival bookings.

The Investigator is an interactive audiovisual digital experience adapted from a one-person unproduced play called *The Weaver*. Set out of time and place, a hardworking weaver barely making ends meet by mass producing boring carpets has their usual routine interrupted by a visitor. Excited by the possibility of gaining a commission to make an intricate carpet again, the Weaver is welcoming and amiable. Unfortunately, the visitor is an investigator there to unravel the truth behind the mundane carpets. In this digital presentation the audience plays the Investigator and makes several decisions that influence the experience. It is hosted on a website for audience members to experience individually with customization options for text only, audio only, a mixture, or both audio & text. The exploration of complicity, capitalism, and willful ignorance is particularly important right now as we negotiate this complicated world where we are all part of harmful systems and industries.

Meltdown (minimum 5 actors)

Currently revising. Ready for further development opportunities later in 2023.

In an upper middleclass villa in the country a couple hosts a party. Military Commander Harlow wanted a demure work dinner with only colleagues, but Adi has turned it into a lavish party combining colleagues with elite relatives and acquaintances. Never mind there's a bit of a war going on, tonight is all about enjoying life, having fun, and letting loose. Harlow and the fellow commanders are thwarted in discussing business, even when a very late messenger arrives and is reluctantly pulled into the party. However, after dinner it all begins to unravel with feuding spouses, the dramatic end to a torrid love triangle, and a fugitive discovered hiding in the house. Can the party continue? What will be the last straw for the typically unflappable Adi? Will Harlow ever hear the mysterious message?

Meltdown is a two-act comedy-drama which can be seen as a combination of the film *Gosford Park* and Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest* (with a dash of the stage musical *Cabaret* – the tone, not the music). The first 75% is comedy, but in the last 25% things get deadly serious. While still being a comedy the play ultimately explores complicity, economic privilege, and willful ignorance. The play contains 24 characters, but is designed in such a way that a cast of 5 could do it.

Theatre for Young Audiences

Thanks to the Manitoba Theatre for Young People Creators Unit which ran 2016 to 2021 under the direction of Rick Chafe and Andraea Sartison, Wren learned a lot about theatre for young audience and began developing work her own work for this demographic. At the same time from 2017 to 2020 Wren was a storyteller at the Manitoba Museum and wrote original fairy tales for these sleepover events. Wren approaches these plays and stories by thinking of what lessons she wishes she'd learned earlier in life and what types of stories she craved to see as a child.

Select TYA Projects

Billie and the Moon (4 actors)

Production Ready

A ten-year-old child named Billie has been brought to summer camp for the first time, and it is not going well. It is noisy, it is busy, it is chaotic, and you can NEVER be alone. Not even to go pee. Feeling out of place and overwhelmed Billie retreats to the lakeshore one evening and speaks to the Moon, who answers back! Billie and the Moon connect over their love of nature, fun facts, and spaceships. Fed up with the chaos of camp Billie decides to build a spaceship to go visit the Moon. But all does not go as expected as Billie's mandated buddy Sam catches on to the plan, forcing Billie to question everything. Is the Moon really speaking? Is Billie a weird, loner, loser? Is needing to be alone sometimes okay?

Micah the Monster Slayer

Concept

In most ways Micah is a totally normal 8-year-old. Micah likes cartoons, playing games, crafts at school, totally normal stuff – except – Micah slays monsters too! Micah has the power to see the little monsters all around us and slay them to make the world a better place. But one day Micah sees a monster that seems too big to slay. Where did this big monster come from? How can Micah stop its reign of terror? Is there anyone who can help? This play is envisioned to include several actors sharing the lines and using their bodies as well as puppets to create the monsters and characters.

Commissioned Work

Beginning in late 2020 Wren got the opportunity to work on two commissions, both completed in 2021. Wren enjoyed the challenge of writing to specific themes and issues, while still making sure the work could be performed by a wide range of actors.

Situation

40 minute play commissioned by Gwaandak Theatre Society in partnership with the Yukon Human Rights Commission for Know More! A Free Virtual Conference on the topic of addressing workplace sexual harassment with dramaturgy by Yvette Nolan. This play is a complicated and nuanced look into the situations of several people who are dealing with workplace sexual harassment, but do not realize it. What is at first annoying, awkward and weird slowly grows into being detrimental to the employees' health, but they don't know what to do. On top of that, their employers aren't sure what to do either. When do you take further steps? What do those look like? How do you make it stop?

When

One of 50 short five-minute plays commissioned from around the world by *The Arctic Cycle's Climate Change Theatre Action 2021*. From September to December 2021 companies, collectives, community organizations or individuals could present one or more of the plays to foster conversation and action about climate change. During this time *When* was presented about 19 times in 6 different countries: Austria, Canada (4 provinces/territories), Italy, Serbia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (6 states).

The play was written for two voices or more (unlimited). While there were several inspirations for this piece, a primary one was from time working on *Map of the Land, Map of the Stars* produced by the Yukon theatre company Gwaandak Theatre, co-created by Chris Clarke, Geneviève Doyon, Patti Flather, Andrameda Hunter, Leonard Linklater, Yvette Nolan, Michelle Olson, Aimée Dawn Robinson. After living down south in a city for several years, getting the chance to come back to the territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation & Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and work on this wonderful project from 2016 to 2018 allowed Wren to process how growing up in the north has influenced (and continues to influence) her views on how humans interact with nature and each other.