WINNER
Best
Autobiographical Script
United Solo
Theatre Festival
Best Plays
Plays and Playwrights
Indie Theater Now
2017
WINNER
Best Actress
United Solo
Theatre Festival
THE good adoptee
A NEW PLAY BY SUZANNE BACHNER
PERFORMED BY ANNA BRIDGFORTH

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About

Can you imagine not knowing your own identity?

The Good Adoptee is the riveting and outrageous true story of award-winning playwright Suzanne Bachner's search for the truth of her origins and birth parents in the face of New York State's sealed records. Once she opens Pandora's Box, can she find a way to integrate her dual identities and still remain "the Good Adoptee"? Suzanne's play won awards for Best Autobiographical Script and Best Actress for star Anna Bridgforth when it premiered in the United Solo Theatre Festival in New York City. It was also named a Best Play by Indie Theater Now and is included in ITN's Plays and Playwrights 2017 anthology. The show has toured to the London International Fringe Festival and all over the U.S., including a 7-week 9-city Connecticut tour to support the vital legislative efforts of Access Connecticut.

The Good Adoptee
was awarded

WINNER
Best
Autobiographical Script
United Solo
Theatre Festival

Best Plays
Plays and Playwrights
Indie Theater Now
2017

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Best Actress
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Theatre Festival

Best Autobiographical Script – Suzanne Bachner
Best Actress – Anna Bridgforth
United Solo Theatre Festival
Best Plays 2017 – Indie Theater Now

Company

Suzanne Bachner • *Playwright & Director*
is an award winning playwright and director. Her play, *CIRCLE*, was called “ingenious” by *The New York Times* and ran for five months Off Broadway, was produced nationally followed by a Sold Out International Tour where it was optioned for production in Australia and awarded Most Daring Show of the London Fringe. *The Good Adoptee*, Suzanne’s new play starring Anna Bridgforth, premiered in the United Solo Theatre Festival and won awards for Best Autobiographical Script and Best Actress and was included in Indie Theater Now’s Best Plays 2017 Anthology. Under Suzanne’s direction, the show has toured to the London International Fringe Festival and all over the U.S. including productions in Florida, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Albany, Austin and a 7-week 9-city Connecticut tour. Playwriting and directing: a six month NYC run of her cult hit, *Icons & Outcasts*; a five month NYC run and international tour of her choose-your-own-adventure comedy, *BITE*; her 14-actor reunion and marriage equality epic, *Brilliant Mistake* and multiple NYC productions of her celebrated kaleidoscopic memoir play, *We Call Her Benny*, which Broadway World called “the future of theatre”. Her plays have been seen at PS NBC@HERE, the Duplex, the National Arts Club, the Michael Weller Theatre, the Samuel French Short Play Festival, Pulse Ensemble Theatre, Zeitgeist Stage Company, Mercury Players Theatre and 20th Century Fox at the Coronet Theater in LA, among others. Other plays include *Screwdrivers & Sunday Brunch*, *Alexandra Triptych*, *Don’t Let Destiny Push You Around*, *Jump Start*, *Alice Through the Looking Glass, Temptation*, *Sex Ed*, *Flirting with Reality* and *Twin Studies*. She is the director and developer of Bob Brader’s internationally acclaimed, multi-award-winning solo shows including *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil* and *Smoker.* Current solo show directing: Gloria Rosen’s award-winning *Listen…Can You Hear Me Now?* Suzanne studied playwriting with Romulus Linney and Adrienne Kennedy and holds an MFA from the Actors Studio Drama School at the New School University. She is a four-time OOBR Award winner, Playwright-in-Residence Emeritus at The Actors Institute and a member of the United Solo Academy and the Dramatists Guild.
jmtctheatre.com • circletheplay.com • thegoodadoptee.com

Anna Bridgforth • *Performer*
is an award-winning actress and Virginia native who has lived in NYC since 2004. She started her career working in independent film where she starred in several features, including *The Wickeds*, *Kamikazes: A Deathography*, *Holler Creek Canyon* and *The Screening* among others. New York theater includes the JMTC Theatre production of *BITE*; which she has done twice, both in its original incarnation at The Red Room Theater in the East Village in 2006 and again as a part of the Orlando International Fringe Festival in 2014. Also with JMTC, Anna originated the role of Young Anna in the critically acclaimed play, *We Call Her Benny* as part of the FRIGID New York Festival, as well as in its own run at the Michael Weller Theatre in 2008. Other New York theater includes *Measure for Measure* and *An Ideal Husband* with Big Rodent Theater

Company, and *Hope* with tripNYC. After appearing in a burlesque comedy at Broadway Comedy Club in 2008, Anna has been hosting and performing burlesque all over the country as Boo Bess. With her own unique version of theatrical striptease, Boo has hosted, sung and stripped her way across the stages of City Winery, The Highline Ballroom, The Slipper Room, The Bell House, Verboten, The Coney Island Sideshow, Times Scare, The Kraine Theater, Bathtub Gin and everywhere from Detroit to Denver to New Orleans. She's traveled all over the country with touring burlesque troupe Twirly Whirly Burly Q and continues to host and perform regularly in NYC. She recently self produced a trailer called *By Night* about artists living and working with duality in the New York nightlife community that she is continuing to develop. Anna starred in her first solo show, Suzanne Bachner's *The Good Adoptee*, which premiered as one of 150 shows in the United Solo Theatre Festival on Theatre Row in 2015 and for which she won the coveted Best Actress Award. *The Good Adoptee* has gone on to travel all over the country and beyond, including a run in the London International Fringe Festival as well as a 9 city tour of Connecticut, and shows in Cleveland, Austin, Massachusetts and NYC. Adventures in social justice via theatre with JMTC Theatre continue!
annabridgforth.com

Bob Brader • *Dramaturg*

Bob Brader is an award winning writer, actor and monologist. *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil*, Bob's acclaimed solo show, has toured all over the U.S. and Canada and won 7 Best of Awards including Best Show of the London Fringe and Best Script and Best Encore at the United Solo Theatre Festival. Bob's brand new retelling of the story on the RISK! Podcast was called by RISK! creator and host Kevin Allison: "An absolute stunner. Bob Brader's story 'Spitting in the Face Of The Devil' is one of our best episodes ever." Bob made his international debut at the London Fringe Festival with his second solo show, *Preparation Hex*, a hemorrhoid tale and love story, which toured Canada and played in NYC at the Directors Company and the United Solo Festival. His new monologue, *Smoker*, had its world premiere on Theatre Row as part of United Solo, where it won the Best Autobiographical Show Award and went on to a highly acclaimed Canadian tour. Bob's numerous acting credits include headlining the two-actor NYC run as well as the sold-out international tour of *CIRCLE* (Most Daring Show, London Fringe). He was in the original cast of *We Call Her Benny* and performed in both the recent tour and original five-month NYC run of *BITE* with JMTC Theatre, for which he is Executive Director. Other New York Theatre credits include Bryan Enk and Matt Gray's supernatural theatrical serial, *Penny Dreadful*, at the Brick Theater (Teddy Roosevelt) and numerous DMTheatrics' productions: *Girls School Vampire*, *Bitch Macbeth*, *Who in the Hell is the Real Live Lorelei Lee?* and *Antony and Cleopatra* (Caesar, OOBR Award). Film credits include *Eat Me* and DelanoCelli Productions' award winning *Brooklyn in July*. Bob trained with the Stella Adler Conservatory at the Tisch School of the Arts and is a member of the United Solo Academy, SAG-AFTRA and the Dramatists Guild.
bobbrader.com • spittinginthefaceofthedevil.com • smokertheplay.com

Katie Chai • *Lighting & Sound Design*

A stage manager and technician originally from Dallas, TX and a graduate of Marymount Manhattan College, Katie has worked with many companies in New York City, including American Globe Theatre, Horse Trade Theater Group, Playwright's Realm and others. She has also worked with the New York Musical Theatre Festival, NY Frigid Festival, the NYC Fringe Festival and five years with the United Solo Festival.
katiechai.webs.com

Michael Koch • *Graphic Design*
is a freelance graphic designer and Resident Graphic Designer for JMTC Theatre.
mkochgraphics.com

Shar Adrias • *Video Production & Photography*
is the owner and Creative Director of Movements by Shar. Shar established a film company in 2005. Having been a dancer all her life and a choreographer, she brings a special kind of texture and vision to her projects. She operates on instinct and feeling, rather than math and science. Specializing in documentary and dance, her passion is in the art of story telling. "The world is so full of stories. I'd like to tell as many I can, for as long as I can."
movementsbyshar.com

JMTC Theatre • *Producer*
is an award-winning, international artist-driven theatre company committed to creating powerful, visceral, passionate theatrical experiences that are provocative and transformative. By partnering with national and international non-profit organizations, JMTC Theatre combines art and advocacy to raise funds and awareness. Founded in London in 1994 by Patrick Hillan, JMTC Theatre is based in NYC and has produced over 50 productions in New York City and collaborated with 100s of incredible theater artists. Past productions include Suzanne Bachner's award-winning Off Broadway hit, *CIRCLE*; Thom Fudal's daring production of Shakespeare's *Othello* starring Patrick Hillan and Geoffrey Owens; Bob Brader's acclaimed solo show, *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil* and Suzanne Bachner's celebrated kaleidoscopic memoir play, *We Call Her Benny*. JMTC has presented work at PSNBC@HERE and 20th Century Fox at the Coronet Theater in LA, The Duplex, The National Arts Club, Flicks on 66 Wild West Digital Shootout (Finalist), the first-ever and 2nd annual FRIGID New York Festival, the Midtown International Theatre Festival (Best of the Fest) and the London International Fringe Festival, among many others. JMTC ran its own unique white box theater space in Chelsea for four years, is a Resident Company Emeritus at Pulse Ensemble Theatre, the Actors Institute (now TAI Resources) and Horse Trade Theater Group, and has received four OOBR Awards, 14 Best in Fest Awards and Spirit of the Fringe from the London Fringe.
jmtctheatre.com • circletheplay.com • spittinginthefaceofthedevil.com • smokertheplay.com

Production Photos

Photos by Shar Adrias

Production History

JMTC Theatre's NYC Benefit
Shows for You Gotta Believe
3 From JMTC @ APAP 2019
January 2 - 13, 2019
www.YouGottaBelieve.org

Keynote Presenter
Indiana Adoptee Network's
2nd Annual Conference
"Racing to the Records,
The Final Lap"
Indianapolis, IN
April 20, 2018
www.IndianaAdopteeNetwork.org

JMTC Theatre's NYC Benefit
Run for Access Connecticut
January 13 - 21, 2018
www.AccessConnecticut.org

Part of AKA's 25th Annual Conference:
"Coming Home to Your Self"
November 4, 2017
www.AdoptionKnowledge.org

Massachusetts Mini-Tour
to Benefit Access Massachusetts
Framingham & Northampton
June 9 & 10, 2017
www.OBCforMA.org

The Adoptive and Foster Family
Coalition's 28th Annual
New York State Foster Care
and Adoption Conference
May 11, 2017
www.AFFCNY.org

7-Week 9-City Connecticut Tour
to Benefit Access Connecticut
October - December 2016
www.AccessConnecticut.org

Concerned United Birthparents
(CUB) Retreat
Safety Harbor, FL
October 29, 2016
www.CUBirthParents.org

Calo Programs Adoption Summit
Lake Ozark, MO
October 17, 2016
www.CaloPrograms.com

The London
International Fringe Festival
May 31 - June 11, 2016
www.LondonFringe.ca

OriginsCanada®
supporting those separated by adoption

A portion of the proceeds from the London Fringe run was donated to Origins Canada.

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www.LaraRiggio.com

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WESTLAKE

Theatrical Production and Talk Back
Adoption Network Cleveland's
Inaugural Annual Adoption Conference
March 20, 2016
www.AdoptionNetwork.org

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United Solo Theatre Festival
Theatre Row, NYC
November 2015
www.UnitedSolo.org

A portion of the proceeds from the United Solo run was donated to
Advocating Legislation for the Adoption Reform Movement (ALARM)

"A roller-coaster ride...superb... deft and fearless...the future of theatre!"

-- Broadway World on Bachner & Bridgforth's We Call Her Benny

THE good adoptee

A NEW PLAY BY **SUZANNE BACHNER**
PERFORMED BY **ANNA BRIDGFORTH**

SOLD OUT! Nov 3 &14 ! THIRD SHOW ADDED!

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Award-winning playwright Suzanne Bachner's lifelong search for the truth of her origins. Once she opens Pandora's Box, can she find a way to integrate her dual identities and still remain the Good Adoptee?

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DRAMATURGED BY **BOB BRADER** • LIGHTING DESIGN BY **KATIE CHAI** • TECHNICAL DIRECTOR **KATIE KAVETT** • GRAPHIC DESIGN BY **MICHAEL KOCH**

Press & Accolades for The Good Adoptee

“Brava to Suzanne Bachner and The Good Adoptee. Incredible Writing and Performance! A powerful show that the entire world needs to see!”
- Suz Bednarz, birthmother, writingmywrongs.com

"Anna Bridgforth is dynamic in Suzanne Bachner’s spellbinding emotional detective story about an NYC woman searching for her birth parents!"
- Darryl Reilly, TheatreScene

“The Good Adoptee is everything you want a solo show to be: well-crafted, lovingly performed and thoroughly entertaining!"
- Leslie Dileo, Hi! Drama

“Yow! It is utterly true, funny, sharp, smart, fearless, sad and crazy funny at the same time. The script is powerful and Ms. Bridgforth gives a helluva performance.”
- Lorraine Dusky, Acclaimed Author, First Mother Forum

“Talented actor Anna Bridgforth delivers a stellar performance that grabs the audience’s attention and holds it to the end.”
- London Free Press

“Anna Bridgforth, an actor of enormous intelligence and warmth and intensity, brings Suzanne's own journey to life with energy, vivacity, and empathy...An exciting story that ultimately empowers an audience to set forth on further explorations of every corner of the human experience. Which is, I think, a grand mission indeed."
- Martin Denton, NYTheater Now

“The story is moving and compelling with a rich, intelligent script and a sensitive, spirited performance by Anna Bridgforth.”
- Bob Criso, Hi! Drama

"Brilliant...an emotional roller coaster!”
- On Stage Blog

“What a powerful piece of work - the script is tight and packed with emotion, the performance is brilliant and spot on. Perfection."
- Betsie Norris, Executive Director, Adoption Network Cleveland

nytheater now

Suzanne Bachner's THE GOOD ADOPTEE at United Solo

by Martin Denton, Editor

United Solo, the world's largest festival dedicated to solo performance, is important for a lot of reasons. There's the sheer volume/excitement of it all--a showcase for brave and talented and eager solo theater practitioners from all over the world, dozens and dozens of them performing in the intimate Theater Row Studio space in Times Square, yielding a nonpareil immersive entertainment experience unlike any other, brining audiences face-to-face (and just feet or yards away) from actors and actor/writers and physical performers who are alone on stage with nothing but their own talent and the talents of their collaborators to carry them through an hour or an hour-and-a-half of raw and unfiltered theatricality.

And then there's the impulse that drives it all--the dire urgency of these artists to communicate something, to share something. United Solo is first and foremost a platform for the sharing of diverse, intense, *necessary* stories. (This is what binds United Solo to Indie Theater Now so intractably; and we're grateful and proud to be a partner of the festival since its inception in 2010, and to preserve many of the finest examples of the festival's efforts in script form online.)

Which brings me to *The Good Adoptee*, one of the hundred or so new solo plays premiering at United Solo this fall. It's written and staged by Suzanne Bachner, whose work as a playwright and director is well known to any aficionado of the NYC indie theater scene. It's dramaturged by Suzanne's husband and longtime collaborator Bob Brader, who is a solo performer of great skill and therefore knows a thing or two about how to make a successful one-person show. And it's performed by Anna Bridgforth, an actor of enormous intelligence and warmth and intensity, who brings Suzanne's own journey as (per the title) a "good adoptee" to life with energy, vivacity, and empathy. Indeed, all of these qualities spill over into the audience as we witness this 90-minute distillation of an aspect of Suzanne's experience that ultimately enlightens and enlarges us all.

The Good Adoptee is about Suzanne's search for her birth parents. It takes the shape of a classic mystery novel, with the playwright herself cast as the intrepid detective (she refers to herself as "Nancy Drew" on more than one occasion in the narrative); like the best examples of the form, it's filled with colorful characters (an enigma-dropping case-worker at the adoption agency; a P.I. with a reality show on the Oprah network), oodles of false starts and red herrings, a steadfast Dr. Watson-esque sidekick (husband/partner Bob), and--maybe a bit of spoiler here, sorry--a very satisfying conclusion.

What's most exciting to me about the play is how much it teaches a person like me--raised by both birth parents; no questions about his ancestry or origins--about the singular dilemma of the adoptee, who, like Suzanne, may grow up with this significant hole in her knowledge of who she actually is. I never thought about the gigantic barrier, for example, that a medical questionnaire could erect for someone in Suzanne's position: does anyone in my family have glaucoma, or breast cancer, or heart disease? Most of us know, but--due in part to a number of institutional edifices that seem mainly designed to protect the institutions themselves--Suzanne and other adoptees, good (or bad), cannot know.

And so, for 90 minutes we walk in Suzanne's shoes, and the lessons of that encounter illuminate a whole area of human experience for us. Talking about the thorny question of whether to even find out who her birth parents are, Suzanne notes that once we know something, we cannot un-know it. Which is why an event like *The Good Adoptee* matters so much: I was not only utterly immersed in an interesting and exciting story, but I left knowing something I didn't know before, and with an immediacy that makes me not just passively accept what I learned but want to delve further and discover more. *The Good Adoptee*--along with so many other works at United Solo--ultimately empowers an audience to set forth on further explorations of every corner of the human experience. Which is, I think, a grand mission indeed.

Hi! Drama

BOB CRISO REVIEWS
THE GOOD ADOPTEE

Written and Directed by Suzanne Bachner
Performed by Anna Bridgforth
United Solo Theater Festival

The psychological issues involved with an adoption are often poorly understood by the general public, state legislators, mental health professionals as well as those individuals directly involved in the adoption triangle itself — the birth parents, the adoptive parents and the adoptee. An individual's right to know the truth about their origins has been under-appreciated and too-frequently undermined by ignorance and fear.

Suzanne Bachner has creatively addressed and articulated these issues through her own adoption experience in "The Good Adoptee," recounting her personal story with all its confusion, conflicts and emotional ups and downs. The title,"The Good Adoptee," refers to a term coined by author Betty Jean Lifton and refers to the anxious adoptees need to please in order to feel secure.

Suzanne always knew she was adopted but her emotional awakening begins when she was seeking her medical history. She also realized that her adoption experience did not jive with what she had learned from a professor in school: "Everything is genetically determined." She begins an arduous and, at times, emotionally wrenching search and frames it as if it were a Nancy Drew mystery with gravitas while somehow managing to keep her sense of humor along the way. We meet a small cast of characters that includes a frustrating and officious adoption agency worker on one hand and her loyal and helpful husband on the other.

The story is moving and compelling and keeps us interested to the end. With a rich, intelligent script and a sensitive, spirited performance by Anna Bridgforth, one hopes this playwright and actress continue to find good material to display their talents.

The Good Adoptee

Anna Bridgforth is dynamic in playwright Suzanne Bachner's spellbinding emotional detective story about a NYC woman searching for her birth parents.

Darryl Reilly, Critic

I believe that everyone has the right to know his or her own identity, history, heritage and genealogy. I had to break all the rules to find mine and there are still missing pieces.

Evoking Nancy Drew, author Suzanne Bachner's dramatized depiction of her own story spends several years attempting to find her birth parents in the course of her spellbinding autobiographical solo play, *The Good Adoptee*. Ms. Bachner's superior writing is matched by actress Anna Bridgforth's enthralling performance. Through her magnetism, charm and considerable acting skills, Ms. Bridgforth is dynamic on the contained and virtually bare stage for 80 minutes.

Nature verses nurture, loving one's adoptive parents while still wanting to meet one's birth parents and exploring the reasons for giving up a child are facets of the topic that Bachner skillfully explores with resonance.

Employing humor, documentary detail and suspense, Bachner offers an emotional detective story. Wit and whimsy meld with poignancy as the picaresque quest begins in present day New York City. It involves a gallery of characters, flashbacks. and often frustrating twists and turns, several of which are legal obstacles that impede such searches. Bureaucrats, a celebrated "adoption hunter," the adopted parents and other key figures are all imaginatively incorporated into the narrative. Bridgforth is vocally and physically titanic as she switches back and forth between being Susan and playing the other characters with grandly distinctive characterizations.

Bachner's direction has Bridgforth in a variety of precise and fluid positions that in concert with some simple clever visual flourishes make for an arresting presentation. There's two large classic children's ABC wooden blocks that get rearranged to connote different locations and that store a few instrumental props including an old-time Fisher Price chatter telephone. The symbolism of childhood is ever present throughout the adult situations. That's particularly evident when Bridgforth wears closed-feet bunny rabbit pajamas during a wistful oration.

Red hues used for fantasy scenes are a neat feature of Katie Chai's artfully stark lighting design. Ms. Chai's sound design is equally as adept in realizing musical interludes and effects.

The Good Adoptee is an absorbing and theatrical take on its eternal subject matter.

This production is presented as part of "3 From JMTC." JMTC Theatre is a company founded in 1994 that "combines art and advocacy to raise funds and awareness." *The Good Adoptee* plays in repertory with two other solo shows, *Smoker* and *Spitting In The Face Of The Devil*. The proceeds from this engagement go to You Gotta Believe, a foster youth organization and to the victim services agency Safe Horizon.

Press and Awards for Suzanne Bachner

“Ingenious…it is no accident that so many of the sharp jokes come as complete surprises.”
- The New York Times *(Circle)*

"One of the most theatrically interesting pieces I have seen in years...The direction is startlingly crisp and clean...The writing is deft and fearless...This play should be seen by anyone wanting to know the future of theatre!"
- Broadway World *(We Call Her Benny)*

★★★★1/2

“A flawless show that will keep the audience engaged and laughing from start to finish.”
- The London Free Press *(BITE)*

★★★★

“The real star is Bachner’s script. This smart two-hander is sometimes laugh-out-loud funny, sometimes unsettling, but consistently thoughtful and surprising.”
- CBC Manitoba *(Circle)*

“Suzanne Bachner’s impressive Circle puts on display a writer with such a winning combination of humor and empathy…elegantly written and moving…Bachner hits her social targets with repeated accuracy.”
- BACK STAGE *(Circle)*

“Deft Theatrical Storytelling…Bachner’s writing is witty, knowing, compassionate.”
- New York Post *(Circle)*

"Bachner has a genius for dialogue...Her direction is exquisitely theatrical...amazing."
- Broadway World *(Sex Ed)*

“Bachner’s mastery is once again revealed as she imperceptibly erases the thin line between innocent rebellion and staggering cruelty.”
- Electronic Link *(Sex Ed)*

“Bachner etches her characters with distinctive, psychologically revealing language.”
- The Village VOICE *(Don’t Let Destiny Push You Around)*

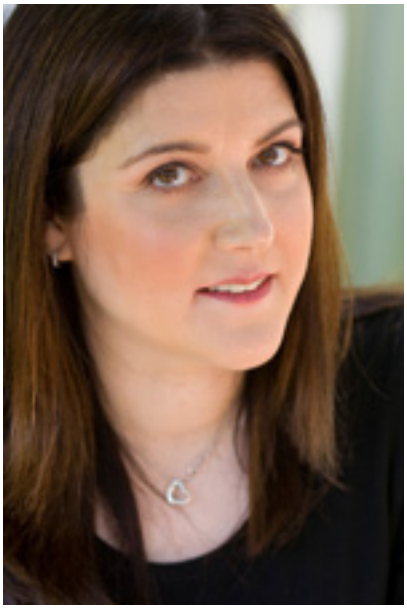
"One of the Biggest Hits in Indie Theater History!"
- Martin Denton, NYTheater Now *(Circle)*

WINNER • Most Daring Show • Circle • The London Fringe
WINNER • Spirit of the Fringe • The London Fringe
WINNER • OOBR Award • Circle
WINNER • OOBR Award • Twin Studies
WINNER • OOBR Award • Don’t Let Destiny Push You Around
WINNER • OOBR Award • Producer
WINNER • Best in Fest • Sex Ed • Midtown International Theatre Festival
WINNER • Best in Fest • Icons & Outcasts • Midtown Int’l Theatre Festival
WINNER • Madeline Sadin Award

My new play, THE GOOD ADOPTEE, Performed by Anna Bridgforth at Theatre Row as part of the United Solo Theatre Festival

An Interview with Suzanne Bachner

Indie Theater Now asked Suzanne Bachner a few questions about this upcoming event.



Who were the key figures who made this production happen—could be other artists, people who inspired the story, producers/producing company, etc.
Anna Bridgforth - the fierce, fearless, phenomenal actress with whom I have been lucky enough to work throughout the entire development of this project. Anna's performance is magnificent and will knock your socks off. Bob Brader - my intrepid, insightful, inspiring dramaturg and partner. Not only did Bob live through the events of this play with me, but he has put up with me and been a beacon as I've been making this piece. Dr. Omar Sangare & Marcin Lipinski at United Solo who created a festival and space where unique adoptee stories can be told and who invited me to tell mine before I even knew I could.

Why is this a play, as opposed to a film or a web series or a novel (or anything else)? And what is it about live theater that attracts you most, that keeps you revved and jazzed to work in this form?
To me, there is no better place to tell the truth than live and in real time in front of an audience in the theater. Theater is unflinching and unforgiving - in the best possible way. When I decided I was ready to tell this part of my story, I wanted to do it in the most essential and powerful way possible - with a single incredible actress bringing it to life on stage.

Who taught you how to be a playwright? This could be specific teachers, or role models whose work you've seen or read, or of course any combination.
The late, great Romulus Linney taught me how to be a playwright - even though he didn't believe it was something that could be taught. He gave out a one-page "textbook" on the first day of our workshop at the Actors Studio School of Drama at the New School listing 20 or so indispensable aspects of the craft and demonstrated to us that there was one item that had to be there or else nothing else mattered: blood and guts. Whenever I start getting too cute or too charming or avoiding the tough stuff, I can hear his voice and see the glint in his eye and it gets me back on course. I also had the great honor of studying one-on-one with another one of my theater heroes, the extraordinary Adrienne Kennedy. She got me started writing this incredibly personal piece when I had just begun searching. She kept saying: I think adoption is the key to this piece. She was right, of course.

What have you learned about this play as it has evolved from first draft to the present version? And what has surprised you in this current production-what did you discover in the work that you didn't realize was there?
The first draft of this play was 7 hours long. Anna read it to me in rehearsal as I wrote it, and I read it to Bob in a single afternoon. I learned the difference between my story and this play. Once I realized that the focus of this play needed to be the search itself, which has its own dramatic motor, I was able to let it have the shape and form it needed. I later realized that lots of moments that I cut still ended up getting communicated in other moments of the play. The more I let go, the clearer the story became. The biggest surprise in rehearsal is that the play is funny - particularly as played by Anna. Her dozen characters are delicious. One woman's tragedy is another's comedy!

Without giving away any important surprises—what moment or moments do you most look forward to when you see this play being performed?
The first moment of the play is a HUGE surprise and I'm very much looking forward to seeing how the audience reacts. We've already surprised Bob and Katie Chai, our amazing Lighting Designer, with this, but I'm excited to see how a theater full of people respond together. Really I'm looking forward to sharing this play with an audience period - every single moment. Thrilled and completely freaked out in anticipation.

Theater In The Now

Spotlight On...Anna Bridgforth

Name: Anna Bridgforth

Hometown: Vienna, VA

Education: A little of this, a little of that, a lot of hard knocks

Select Credits: A healthy dose of indie horror movies, "We Call Her Benny" and "Bite" with JMTC, Lots of other Off Broadway work and endless cabaret and burlesque shows.

Why theater?: Instant gratification

Who do you play in The Good Adoptee?: I play Suzanne Bachner, the writer and director of the piece, along with several other characters that were integral to this particular story, including her social worker, her mom and dad, her adoption searcher, and other special guests.

Tell us about The Good Adoptee: This is the story of a woman who was adopted as an infant into a loving home, who as an adult decided to look into her background and search for her origins by trying to find out who her birth parents are, and the many hoops she had to jump through in order to do that.

What is it like being a part of The Good Adoptee?: A joy and a pleasure as always to work with Suzanne who knows me and how to talk to me. A complete and utter challenge that I am relishing.

What kind of theater speaks to you? What or who inspires you as an artist?: My favorite kind of theater is the kind that speaks directly to me and lets me recognize myself in the characters, no matter how different they are from me. I'm inspired by the performers who are able to take me out of the theater and into the world of the story without me even noticing it. Also flashy, shiny, sparkly song and dance stuff.

Any roles you're dying to play?: Sally Bowles, Katherine Hepburn when someone writes a play about her, anything on American Horror Story.

What's your favorite show tune?: The soliloquy from Carousel. The entire Into The Woods score.

If you could work with anyone you've yet to work with, who would it be?: Alan Cumming.

Who would play you in a movie about yourself and what would it be called?: Helen Mirren. "Dogged Determination"

If you could go back in time and see any play or musical you missed, what would it be?: The premiere of Rent

What show have you recommended to your friends?: The Book of Mormon

What's your biggest guilty pleasure?: Bourbon

What's up next?: Circle with JMTC. My own short film. More hosting. More performance art. The World.

Contact

For booking requests or more information on
The Good Adoptee, please contact:

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