

BERTHA BY LUCY HILL

Globe Theatre's



Lucy Hill
as Bertha

Directed by Joey Tremblay

Bertha is leaving. She is saying goodbye to her little plain room, to her most treasured possessions, to her friend, Julia, to her comfy chair, to her foul-mouthed neighbor, Trish, to everything that she has known and created. She just doesn't know when. She waits for the man of her dreams to save her from the global crisis her world is facing, but will he ever come?

Come join Bertha for her Bon Voyage celebration and hear her stories of romance, dreams, and loneliness. Bertha will take you on a journey that will make you **laugh**, **wonder**, **discover**, and **dream** right along with her.



“it’s a wonder to watch the effect of that mask on the artist behind it...”

by Mark Claxton

From the blog, *Mark: My Words*
on globetheatrelive.com



About *Bertha*

Bertha by Lucy Hill

Directed by Joey Tremblay

Emerging artist Lucy Hill discovered *Bertha* in 2008 while exploring half-mask theatre with the Globe’s inaugural Actor Conservatory Training Program. Unable to forget the story her chosen mask was telling her, she had the mask re-created by renowned Montreal craftsman Philippe Pointard. Since then, *Bertha*’s story has emerged.

In the winter of 2008, Lucy pitched the concept of *Bertha* to the three Shumiatcher Sandbox Series associates at Globe Theatre and was accepted into the 2009/2010 Shumiatcher Sandbox Series season.

Lucy worked for a year on writing *Bertha* and working in the studio with the mask. In January of 2010, Joey Tremblay joined the process as dramaturge and director.

On April 29, 2010, *Bertha* premiered as part of Globe Theatre’s Shumiatcher Sandbox Series and ran for two weeks to May 8, 2010. The second week was completely sold out.

Lucy Hill: Creating *Bertha*

The inspiration to create *Bertha* began with the character of *Bertha*. In 2008, I was a member of Globe Theatre's Actor Conservatory Training Program where we had the opportunity to do a three day, half-mask workshop with Perry Schneiderman.

Perry encouraged us to try all 23 masks, however, if there was a particular mask that we connected to, we could go back and discover more about them. **I kept coming back to *Bertha* and wanting to learn more about her. I felt like with the mask on, I could be someone completely different, see the world with a different filter.** I loved (and still do) the immediacy of *Bertha*'s emotions and how she can swing from elation to deep melancholy within seconds. Within those three days, I began to discover part of *Bertha*'s story. But I wanted to learn more.

In 2008, I pitched the idea for the show to the three associates of the Sandbox Series at Globe Theatre. *Bertha* was accepted to be a part of the 2009/2010 Shumiatcher Sandbox Series. I then had the *Bertha* mask recreated by Montreal craftsman, Philippe Pointard.



Since the workshop in 2008, *Bertha*'s story evolved significantly but her playfulness, loneliness, and imagination are still very much a part of who she is. *Bertha* tries to be happy and hopeful and make her romantic dreams come true, but her loneliness is like another character in her story that is always visible. **Although *Bertha* is a mask character and has a clown-like quality, she is still very relatable and human.** She feels the weight of her circumstances fully, which is what I love about being *Bertha*. She forces me to stay present which allows me to be open and vulnerable.

Much of the material was generated through improvisation with the mask, often times by myself with just a mirror and a video camera. Other times, it was with director, Joey Tremblay, who

"And now I understand why Lucy couldn't forget her (*Bertha*). It'll be a while before I do."

By Mark Claxton
from the blog *Mark: My Words* on
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spent hours having conversations with *Bertha*. It was important to both Joey and I to keep improvisation integrated within the show. ***Bertha* tells her story to the audience members. Each night is different depending on what the audience is able to give.** If they are more talkative, or more timid, or if they connect more with the darker or the lighter sides of *Bertha*, it gives *Bertha* something new to respond to each night. This is what I find really exciting as a performer.

-Lucy Hill
Creator and performer of *Bertha*.

Director's Notes: Joey Tremblay

Working in studio with a mask character, was a wonderful reminder of the very basics of creating theatre. From the start it was important to construct a universe where the mask could come to life in a world of her own invention – with her own set of rules. The process could never impose anything on the characters world view as that always destroyed the illusion. However when you let the universe and the narrative unfold playfully and organically, sparks of originality abound.

Bertha, the play, grew from a series joyful conversations between the mask and I.

Often hours would pass and I would realize that I had totally lost Lucy the actress, and was immersed completely in a world of make-believe. I became a sort of meta-character, 'the boss' as Bertha called me, who could push her to speak about things she felt were too private. Together we explored the extremes of light and darkness embedded in the masks ingenious chiaroscuro. **What emerged was a riveting three dimensional persona that could in one moment be sweet and innocent and in another be**



“The experience of attending *Bertha* is all about the pure essence of theatre.”

-Joey Tremblay

morbid and even mean spirited. Constructing the monologue was very much about recreating the essence of our playful conversations.

Before rehearsal, Lucy had completed a draft text giving us a kind of template to begin our journey. However, in studio, we were ruthless in allowing the monologue to be shaped and edited by Bertha. **Text was never sacred in our process; keeping Bertha believably animated was.** This paradigm shift in rehearsal is what allowed us to create a narrative that was fresh and full of surprises as we were working in a pure genre of theatre that predates the written language. The subject of the story dictated the words, we simply recorded them.

The theatre is one of the only spaces that empowers the

audience to view the world with child-like innocence. As theatre-makers we invite the audience to partake in the fantastic ritual of animating the inanimate – the very essence of our craft. Consequently, an amazing euphoria comes from this willing suspension of disbelief and I think, at a basic level, this is what draws us to attend plays. **The experience of attending *Bertha* is all about the pure essence of theatre.** For a brief hour, we watch a character come to life before our eyes and we forget that she is simply an actress wearing a piece of sculpture on her face. It is impossible not be delighted by such an experience.

-Joey Tremblay
Director and dramaturge of *Bertha*.

The Artists

Lucy Hill: Creator/Performer

Lucy is a Regina-based actor and theatre creator who is quickly becoming one of Saskatchewan's most exciting emerging artists. In 2008, Lucy graduated from Globe Theatre's Actor Training Conservatory Program, where she trained under theatre professionals from across the country including, David Latham, Miles Potter, Perry Schneiderman, Candace Cox, and Geoffrey Whynot. Since then, she has appeared on Globe Theatre's Main stage as 'Puck' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 'Alice' in *The Alice Nocturne*, and 'Wendy' in *Peter Pan*. Her Lucy is also an improviser and produces her own improv show called Mix Improv. Lucy was recently nominated for the 'Emerging Artist' award in Regina's 2010 Mayor's Arts and Business Awards.

Joey Tremblay: Director/Dramaturge

Joey received a B.F.A. in Drama from the University of Regina (1987) and a Diploma from the Vancouver Playhouse Acting School (1989). After working several years as a freelance actor, Joey co-founded Noises in the Attic, a theatre company mandated to produce and create new Canadian plays on the fringe festival circuit across Canada. From 1996 to 2002, Joey became Artistic Co-Director of Catalyst Theatre in Edmonton where he wrote, directed and produced (and sometimes performed in) the following plays: *Electra*, *The Abundance Trilogy*, *My Perfect Heaven*, *Elephant Wake*, *Songs for Sinners*, *The House of Pootsie Plunket*, *The Blue Orphan* and *Carmen Angel*, which, combined, have garnered over thirty awards and nominations for outstanding work: including two Scotsman Fringe First awards for outstanding writing. Currently Joey is living in Regina and is pursuing his career as a freelance actor/director/writer/teacher. For Globe Theatre, Joey has written and directed, *The Alice Nocturne* and *George Dandin*. He devised and directed *Fusion I, II and III*. He performed in the plays *Man for all Seasons*, *Twelfth Night*, *Just So* and *Sylvia*.

Daniel Maslany: Sound Designer

Daniel Maslany has been creating music for the past five years. He has sound designed three dance pieces with choreographer Johanna Bundon: *Bazooka Jo(e)*, *it may well be well* and *Closets*. He was assistant composer on the documentary *Silent Bombs: All for the Motherland*. Daniel also contributed pieces for *The Alice Nocturne* in the Sandbox Series at Globe Theatre. He composed, sound designed and created projections for *Fusion VI*. Daniel is also an actor and improviser, his credits at the Globe Theatre are *Fusion I, II, III*, *Rage*, *George Dandin*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Peter Pan* and *The Alice Nocturne*.

Andrew Manera: Lighting/Set Designer

Andrew J. Manera moonlights as a scenic painter, sculptor, and cabinet maker - this is his first lighting design in the Sandbox. During the day, Andrew works as Globe Theatre's Production Manager and is one of the Artistic Associates responsible for programming the Shumiatcher Sandbox Series. Andrew is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada and the University of Toronto.

Kim Bujaczek: Stage Manager

Kim is very pleased to be part of *Bertha* created by a talented young artist. Selected credits include *Wingfield Lost & Found* and *The Wizard of Oz* for Citadel Theatre; *The Syringa Tree*, *Peter Pan*, *Wingfield's Inferno*, *Sexy Laundry*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks*, *George Dandin* and *Dogbarked* for the Globe Theatre (Regina); *The Nutcracker*, *An Italian Straw Hat* and *Cinderella* for the National Ballet of Canada; *John Gabriel Borkman* for Soulepper Theatre Company; and *Leo* for Great Canadian Theatre Company. Kim has a BFA in Stage Management and Technical Theatre from the University of Regina.

Show Notes

Technical Information

Ready for touring fall of 2010.

Running Time: One hour with no intermission.

Production Notes: Tour ready. Set: Minimum of 16'x16' stage space. Require a small bed, high back chair, DVD projector, a computer equipped with Powerpoint, and a small side table. The show travels with 8 4'x8' cardboard panels to be glued on to stock flats provided by the presenter. Minimal set, props, sound cues. Two days for lighting hang, cueing, and rehearsal. Ready for performance the evening of the second day.

Fee range: \$8,000-\$10,000

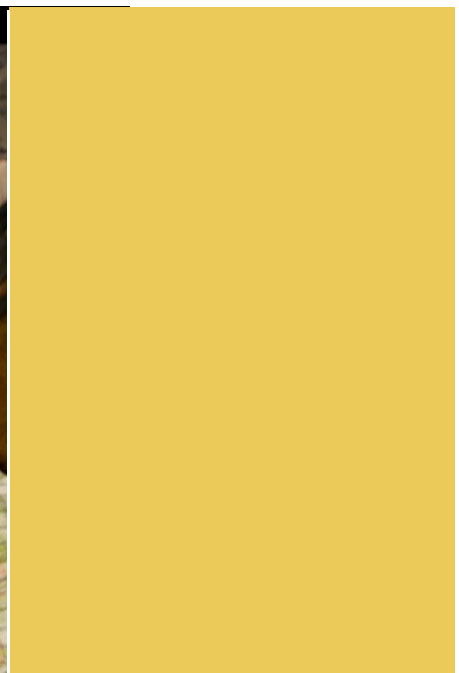
Some strong language.



Bertha

Created and performed by Lucy Hill

Directed by Joey Tremblay



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'Bertha'.



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