



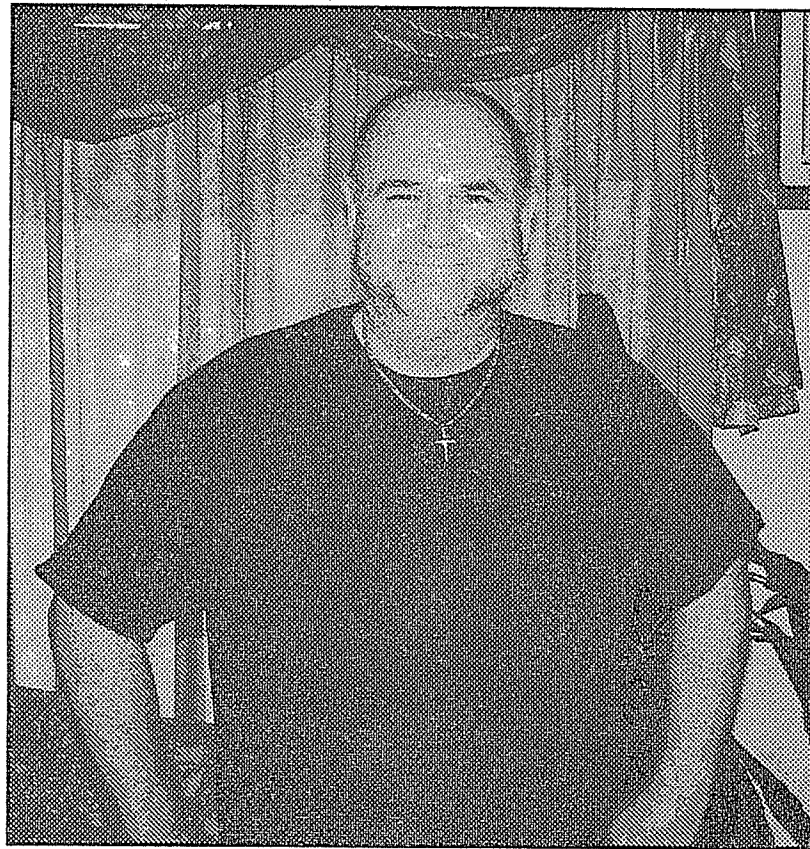
Local Playwright's Prolific Works

By Greg Meyer, Summer Intern

Playwright and lyricist t.d. barna has led a varied life. He estimates that he's spent a third of his life outside the United States. He has lived in a mud hut in West Africa, spent a year in Las Vegas, and served two tours of duty in the Middle East. These experiences give him a broad background to write from.

Indeed, write, t.d. has. In the eighteen months since he began writing plays, barna has penned eight full-length plays, two unauthorized full-length plays, and six short plays, as well as the lyrics for seventeen songs in his play *GodWorks*, for a total of 16 plays. He has also been a lyricist for 30 years. Barna's usual method of writing is simple. He researches his subjects extensively, then travels to his cabin on Lake Imogene for the weekend and writes. On average, he can finish a first draft of a 100-150 page play in three to four weekends.

Barna's plays are varied in content. They include *GodWorks*, a story about St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order; *The Vanquished Victim*, about



multiple personalities attending their host's funeral; *The Horror of It All*, a short play involving John Wayne Gacy; and *Beat It: The Musical*, an unauthorized musical featuring the music of Michael Jackson. Barna has even sent a political thriller, *The Korean Scenario*, to Michelle Obama.

The Horror of It All was

recently accepted for the Minnesota Shorts Play Festival. Barna was one of the 20 applicants accepted from more than 100. A short play is a play of less than fifteen minutes.

In addition to *The Horror of It All*, barna also has three

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other plays in production for the 2010 season: *Big Girls Don't Cry*, performed in April; *The Chronicles of Francis Xavier*, which was performed earlier this month; and *The Vanquished Victim*, slated for July, August, and October of this year.

Barna also has another play, *Just Girlz Girlz Girlz*, in the "reading" phase of editing. Reading is an important part of the playwriting process. It allows writers to identify parts of their work that need editing. Reading is done by actors—however, the actors are simply reading the script.

Barna belongs to several playwrights' guilds, including the Dramatists' Guild of America, the Playwrights' Center of Minneapolis, 4Playwrights of Minnesota, and the Theater Communications Group. He is also a founding member of the Blue Earth Reader Workshop and a member of the executive board of the Twin Rivers Center For the Arts.

T.d., whose real name is Tom D. Barna, was born to a military family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Barna attended New Mexico State University.

After college, barna joined the Peace Corps and spent years in Burkina Faso, leaving the Peace Corps and moved to Las Vegas a year, where he experienced "definitely some cultural shock...after coming out of a mud hut, and going to Vegas..." Barna then joined the Marines. He has served two tours, one ten-month during the Gulf War, and another ten-month tour during the Iraq War. He has been a Marine for 22 years, and is currently a Lieutenant Colonel. Barna currently works as a Director of Marketing and Sales for VSI, a technology solutions company.

Barna has been married to his wife, Carmen, for 27 years. They have three children; Christine, Sarah, and Alex, as well as a granddaughter, Laylah.

As you read this article, you may have been wondering what the reason for barna's lowercase pen name is. According to barna, "I'm not somebody...who said, 'I'm not my name lowercase s' reminds me that I'm not that important.' I just liked that