

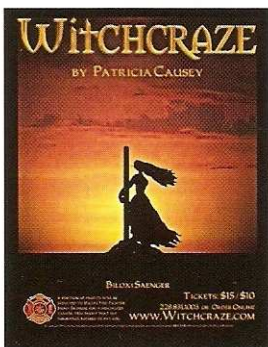
Leading Lady

Patricia Causey is a one-woman theatrical powerhouse who writes, sings, directs, produces, costumes, teaches, and sheds light on human rights issues.

story by
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Patricia Causey (above) is a very busy theatre maven as demonstrated by the posters for her many shows.

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Triple threat" is a theatrical phrase that refers to an actor who sings and dances. And then there's Gulfport native Patricia Causey who is a quintuple threat! Not only has she gone the singing, acting, and dancing route since age 2, but she is also an acclaimed writer and composer of original musicals. Then again, if you take into account her behind-the-scenes skills as a director, stage manager, producer, stage technician, and costumer, then Patricia is at least a decuple threat. Top that, Stephen Sondheim!

Despite a recollection of her earliest piano lessons from age 7 as "six years of unbearable tutelage under the Evil Dark Mistress of Music," Patricia has made quite a name for herself in the performing arts world. Most recently she received a \$4,000 fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission based on the quality her original two-act musical, *Witchcraze*. More treasures were unearthed after a recent spring cleaning, when she came across some of her earliest works and realized that everything she has ever written has dealt with human rights' issues. "It was life-affirming," she says. "I am more determined than ever to share my work with the world."

Witchcraze, Patricia's "magnus opus," is set to have its world premiere in August 2010 after being derailed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Set during the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, the musical explores the themes of women's rights, tolerance, protecting the First Amendment, and the responsibility of the public to

hold corrupt leaders accountable for their actions. "Writing the show was a labor of love, but getting it on stage as been true labor," she admits. "The waiting is the hardest part. Well, no, funding it is," she adds with a laugh.

However, Patricia is still moving forward. Aside from having been a volunteer organizer for SWAN Day (Support Women Artists Now), she is the founder of Gathering Grove Productions, whose motto is "Working for Human Rights Through Arts." Patricia also composed *Two Hearts*, a one-act opera for modern chamber orchestra that addresses LGBT issues and is under consideration to be produced in New York City.

Patricia's activities don't stop there: She also hosts the Internet radio program *Musical Theatre Talk* and is working on a film called *Surviving Katrina* that documents the areas hardest hit by the monster storm as well as the recovery efforts. She also teaches voice lessons, scene coaching, and workshops. In November she will be traveling to Mumbai, India as an official presenter with the U.S. Showcase at the 8th Women's Playwrights International Festival. And she is also working on a book for theatre and music performers due out by next summer. Whew!

However despite all of these demands on her time and talent, one constant remains in Patricia's life—her daughter Ari. "I am doing my best to succeed for her, to provide a good life for my daughter," she says. "I look at the issues I write about and always remember that I'm working to make her future better." ❁