



ALEXIS I BROWN

Writing Sample

Press Release for Theater Production

About Motherhood, Barbells & T-Shots

Motherhood, Barbells, & T-Shots is an autobiographical one-woman show that incorporates gesture-based dance, ritual movement, and Olympic weightlifting.

"I have two sons. Four years ago, my youngest son was my daughter. This show is about how we learned to negotiate and transition from a mother/daughter relationship to a mother/son relationship." – Mona Malec

Motherhood, Barbells & T-Shots includes some of her youngest son's experience and was done with his blessing. It is not intended to cancel her son's experience or silence the voices of transgender people. Rather, it tells the raw, honest, and even "ugly" story of what Mona went through as a mother during her son's coming out and transition. Mona's participation in the Highland Games and weightlifting has a predominant role in the story, just as it does in her life. It was a valuable tool for her to process emotions and release energy during a stressful time.

For some parents of trans youth their beliefs systems make it nearly impossible for them to accept their child. But, even if a parent is progressive and open-minded, the news can be shocking and brings about a wide range of feelings, such as fear, confusion, sadness, and concern. How has this effected their child's mental health and for how long? Does this explain their child's depression or anxiety? How will I navigate the opposition between my memories and understanding of who they were and how they present themselves now? How could I have not known? Will I offend them if I call them the wrong name or pronoun? Will they be safe in this transphobic world? How can I protect them? Are they ready to make the decision to transition? How do we figure out what to do? Where do I find the resources they need? Who am I, as a mother? How will our relationship change? Am I strong enough to handle this?

There are a few great resources for transgender people in New Mexico (see below). But, resources for parents of transgender youth are nearly non-existent. A parent must grapple with their own complex thoughts and feelings while needing to find the strength to put those feelings aside so they can support their child.

Artist's Statement

"As my son began to transition, there were very few places for him to find support and even less for parents of transgender children. I understand that this journey is, in most ways, not mine at all and that it is critical that we listen to transgender voices. But I couldn't help but wonder if there was a place for a mom to be heard. This became painfully obvious one night while out with friends – I could not find the words; I had no way to describe to these women what had just happened; I had lost my voice. And even when I found a support group on Facebook, I rarely shared. I felt like all of these other moms had all the answers and that I was doing and thinking about everything the wrong way.

And so, I began to write. Putting my thoughts to paper allowed me to process my experience so I could show up better for my son. I never imagined I would share my thoughts with anyone, but something urged me to share my initial writings with a colleague. And through that, I realized that my experiences were not unique to parenting my son. In fact, parenting the child you have and not the child you expected is a lesson all moms face."



About Mona Malec (Writer, Actor)

Mona Malec is a world champion Highland Games athlete, actress, power lifter, and mother of two. She has a BA in Theater Performance & Anthropology from Cornell and an MFA in Theater Arts from Ohio State. She has done master classes in acting with Peter Brooke and Wendy Chapin, movement with John Flax, masks with E Reid Gilbert, and dance with Della Davidson and Eric Kupers. She has extensive movie and theater experience, performing on stage in productions by [Santa Fe Playhouse](#), [IronWeed Productions](#), [the Lensic](#), [Theater Grottesco](#), and [Theaterwork](#).

About Rod Harrison (Dramaturge, Director)

Rod Harrison was Mona's advisor during the writing of the script for *Motherhood, Barbells & T-Shots* and is the director for the stage performance.

A classically trained actor, Rod has worked as an actor, dancer, writer, comedian, and performance artist in Santa Fe since 1991. His performances have ranged the classical (with Shakespeare in Santa Fe) to the more experimental (with High Mayhem, Meow Wolf, and the AHA Festival.) From 1996-2010, he was an ensemble member of Theater Grottesco, and he has worked with Ironweed Productions, TheaterWork, The Santa Fe Playhouse, and Santa Fe Actors Theater. His one-man show, *Lord Buckley's Church of the Living Swing*, has performed across the country including performances at the Beat Museum in San Francisco and the Bowery Poetry Club in New York City. In 2010 he performed at Lincoln Center for the Arts as part of their Roots of American Music Festival at Lincoln Center Out Of Doors.

Rod Harrison and Mona Malec have worked together in many productions including *King Lear* and *Frankie & Johnnie in the Claire de Lune*.

About The Swan Theater

The mission of the International Shakespeare Center Theater is to provide a world-class Shakespearean theater in Santa Fe. But in addition, they took over the former Adobe Rose theater to open The Swan – a community black-box theater, available to other local theater groups. [More info](#)

Transgender Resources in New Mexico

- [Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico](#) in Albuquerque
- [Casa Q](#) in Santa Fe

- The [Santa Fe Trans Support Group](#)
- [Equality New Mexico](#) in Albuquerque
- [Education & Violence Prevention Department at Solace Crisis Treatment Center](#) in Santa Fe
- [Identity Inc.](#) in Farmington
- [PFLAG Las Cruces](#)
- The [Envision Fund at the Santa Fe Community Foundation](#) in Santa Fe

The Envision Fund at the Santa Fe Community Foundation is a proud sponsor of *Motherhood, Barbells, & T-Shots*. The Envision Fund promotes the health, safety, and empowerment of at-risk and underserved LGBTQ+ New Mexicans. The largest philanthropic entity in New Mexico dedicated solely to serving the LGBTQ+ population, the Fund has made over \$650,000 in grants since its inception in 1997. The fund is staffed by a committee of volunteers who represent the diversity of New Mexico's LGBTQ population.

The Envision Fund has established three priority areas: 1) Creating an HIV-Free generation in New Mexico; 2) Combatting discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in whatever form (such as employment, housing, immigration, access to health services, etc.); and 3) Supporting school-based programs that create a safe environment for all students, including LGBTQ+ students.

For more information about the Envision Fund, please contact Gabriela Gómez at 505-988-9715 x 7006.