MIKE BENCIVENGA *Writer/Director/Instructor*

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THEATER WORK:

- ***TALK OF THE TOWN*** (2023) Wrote full-length play adaptation of James Thurber's memoir 'The Years with Ross' with full permission of the estate.
- ***COMPROMISED*** (2019) Wrote full-length play and directed two public readings in New York and LA. Presented at The Gulfshore Playhouse in 2022.
- ***WASTED DAYS*** (2018) Wrote full-length play produced as a staged reading at The Blank Theatre in LA.
- ***SUMMER ON FIRE*** (2016) Wrote full-length play. Produced at the Scorpion Theater in Calgary, Canada in 2017.
- ***MINUET ON THIRD*** (2016) Wrote full-length play commissioned by The Purple Rose Theater in Chelsea, Michigan.
- ***BAD HEARTS*** (2015) Wrote full-length play. Read at The Blank in LA.
- ***BILLY & RAY*** (2013 - 2016) Wrote full-length play. Produced at The Falcon Theater in Los Angeles directed by Garry Marshall in 2013. Produced and directed again by Garry Marshall at The Vineyard Theater in NYC starring Vinnie Kartheiser in 2014. Produced again at the Laguna Playhouse in 2016.
- ***COUPLETS*** (2003) Wrote and directed full-length original play with music adapted from the sonnets of William Shakespeare. Produced by the Lightning Strikes Theater Company at Collective Unconscious Theater in NYC.
- ***SINGLE BULLET THEORY*** (2002) Wrote full-length play. Produced by The Lightning Strikes Theater Company at the 29th Street Rep Theatre in NYC.
- ***THE CHAINSAW BOYS*** (1997 – 2003) Produced and performed in a long running improvised comedy show featured in the NYC Fringe Festival (2000).

FILM WORK:

- ***NEARLY DEPARTED*** (2025) Wrote feature romantic comedy script. Currently in development with producers Brady Kirchberg and J. Todd Harris.
- ***BILLY & RAY*** (2018) Wrote screenplay based on my award-winning play. Optioned for production by producer Bob Greenhut in 2019.
- ***GREAT PLAINS*** (2016) Wrote original suspense screenplay. Produced by Mar Vista Films in Los Angeles for cable and video release.
- ***TALIESIN*** (2014) Wrote original screenplay about the early, scandalous life of Frank Lloyd Wright. In development at Branded Pictures Entertainment.
- ***HAPPY HOUR*** (2004) Co-wrote and directed feature film drama starring Anthony LaPaglia, Eric Stoltz & Robert Vaughn. Currently streaming on Amazon Prime.
- ***LOSERS IN LOVE*** (1993) Wrote, directed and produced independent feature comedy starring Nick Searcy and Alicia Brandt. Limited theatrical release.
- ***AWAKENING*** (1979) Created animated short film distributed on HBO.

TELEVISION WORK:

- ***UNGRATEFUL*** (2026) Wrote pilot for original one-hour limited series.
- ***EYEWITNESS NEWS*** (1982 – 2025) Editor, camera, web content creator and producer of breaking news, political, and entertainment content at WABC-TV.
- ***CHASING THE DARK*** (2018) Wrote pilot and bible for an hour-long dramatic series. In development at Branded Pictures Entertainment.
- ***YOKO ONO: THEN AND NOW*** (1984) - Supervising editor and co-producer of a full-length documentary presented on PBS Frontline and on HBO.
- ***SESAME STREET*** (1981 - 1983) Performed voice characters and painted cells for animated spots on the award-winning series.

EDUCATION:

- ***HP STUDIO - NYC*** (1980 to 1982) Studied acting, playwriting and directing.
- ***NEW YORK UNIVERSITY*** (1978 – 1980) Tisch School of the Arts.
- ***ADELPHI UNIVERSITY*** (1974 –1976) Film, television and theater major. (Returned 2016 – 2017) Graduated with Bachelor of Arts - Summa Cum Laude.

TEACHING/LECTURING/MENTORING:

- ***NEW CANAAN MEN'S CLUB*** (2026) Presented a multi-media lecture on the history and present state of the news business to over one hundred attendees.
- ***SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS*** (2017) Guest Lecturer at a Media & Society Class to college level students on how to generate ideas for film and TV projects.
- ***WRITING MENTOR*** (2015 – Present) Shared notes and advice to writers as part of The Drawing Board writer's group in NYC and on a freelance basis online.
- ***IMPROVISATION CLASSES*** (1995 – 2005) Guest lectured and substitute taught for renowned improv teachers Tom Soter in NYC, and Todd Stashwick in LA.
- ***52ND STREET PROJECT*** (1995-1996) Taught playwriting to children, ages 9 to 18, at a celebrated not-for profit organization in Hell's Kitchen, NYC.
- ***ADELPHI UNIVERSITY*** (1993) Returned as Alumni Lecturer to screen my films and discuss my experiences in TV and film with undergraduate classes.
- ***WABC-TV*** (1990 - 2025) Aided management to evaluate and train new writers, editors and reporters. Served as Supervising Editor during large scale events including the NYC Marathon, the Oscars, the Emmys, and national political races.
- ***NYU GRADUATE FILM SCHOOL*** (1980 – 1982) Worked as Equipment Manager and Lab Assistant to graduate students in the Film and Television program.
- ***NEW YORK UNIVERSITY*** (1978 – 1980) Script Clinic mentor, giving detailed notes on student projects. Also worked as a Teaching Assistant in the Animation Department, supervising students and running labs on the use of equipment.
- ***FIVE TOWNS COMMUNITY CENTER*** (1975 -1977) Taught photography and video production at a New York State funded after-school program for high school students. Wrote grants to secure fun ding for the program.

AWARDS:

During my thirty-plus career as a playwright, screenwriter and television professional I've received over one hundred honors for my work. Here are some highlights.

- ***THE BLACK LIST – Top 10% of scripts on the site*:** NEARLY DEPARTED (2026)
- ***NEW YORK SCRIPT AWARDS – Finalist*:** UNGRATEFUL (2025)
- ***BARNSTORM FESTIVAL– Top 10 rating*:** THE BARBER (2025)
- ***PAGE TURNER AWARDS – Semi-Finalist*:** OUT OF NOWHERE (2024)
- ***SCREENCRAFT STAGE PLAY – Winner***: TALK OF THE TOWN (2023)
- ***AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL – Best Stage Play***: TALK OF THE TOWN (2022)
- ***WIKI COMPETITION – Best Screenplay***: OUT OF NOWHERE (2022)
- ***GULFSHORE NEW WORKS – Finalist*:** COMPROMISED (2022)
- ***WIKI CONTEST – Best TV Script*:** CHASING THE DARK (2021)
- ***PLAYWRIGHTS FIRST NYC – Best Play****:* COMPROMISED (2020)
- ***EUGENE O'NEILL AWARD – Semi-Finalist:*** COMPROMISED (2020)
- ***ROBERT J. PICKERING AWARD:*** MINUET ON THIRD (2019)
- ***PAGE AWARDS – Best Historical Screenplay*:** BILLY & RAY (2018)
- ***STANLEY DRAMA AWARD****:* BAD HEARTS (2016)
- ***CHRISTOPHER WOLK PRIZE***: SUMMER ON FIRE (2014)
- ***W. KEITH HERRICK PRIZE – Best Play****:* BILLY & RAY (2013)
- ***VAIL FILM FESTIVAL – Best Screenplay***: RUNNING GUN (2010)
- ***VISIONFEST*** – ***Best Screenplay***: SINGLE BULLET THEORY (2005)
- ***DESERT REEL FESTIVAL – Best Director***: HAPPY HOUR (2004)
- ***TIBURON FILM FESTIVAL – Best Screenplay***: HAPPY HOUR (2004)
- ***FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL – Audience Award:*** HAPPY HOUR (2004)
- ***LOS ANGELES PRISM AWARD***: HAPPY HOUR (2004) Awarded for outstanding creative contribution in the accurate depiction of drug and alcohol abuse.
- ***HOUSTON FILM FESTIVAL – Best Feature***: LOSERS IN LOVE (1993)
- ***THREE EMMYS and the EDWARD R. MURROW PRIZE*:** (1993 to 2025) Awarded for my work as Editor/Producer/Writer at WABC-TV in New York.

SKILLS:

Fluent in PC and MAC computers. Proficient in MS Office 365, Final Draft, Premiere editing systems, Adobe Photoshop and iMovie. Member of The Dramatist Guild.

For more about Mike's work visit: www.MikeBencivenga.com