

The Work of Bernard Slade

Comedic Genius

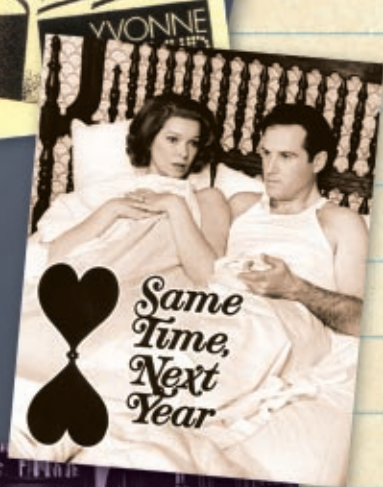
48:00 documentary

Chronicling the remarkable career of one of the most well respected and prolific writers in the entertainment industry, **COMEDIC GENIUS: THE WORK OF BERNARD SLADE** offers a rare and intimate look at one of the modern architects of comedy writing for stage and screen.

Canadian **Bernard Slade** started his career as an actor, performing in regional theatres around Toronto and on camera for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. His early ambition as an actor gradually gave way to the exciting challenge of writing comedy. Early successes as a writer lead to a healthy, albeit frugal, career in Toronto. As happened with so many gifted Canadians, it wasn't long until Hollywood beckoned and Slade found himself as a staff writer on the sitcom **Bewitched**. **Bewitched** led to **The Flying Nun**, **Bridget Loves Bernie**, **The Partridge Family** and **Love On A Rooftop**. Credited as creator, writer, story editor and producer, Slade was considered one of the true heavyweights in Hollywood.

But the sausage factory of 60's and 70's sitcom began to frustrate Slade and so he turned his comedic genius to the theatre. In 1974 Slade began writing a play for the Broadway theatre and on his first time up to bat launched one into the seats. **Same Time Next Year**, his first script for the Broadway stage, was the unparalleled hit of the 1975 season. It has gone on to become the most performed two character play in history, translated into over 30 foreign languages, with thousands of performances in prestigious theatres from London's Old Vic to the Anton Chekov in Moscow. It was nominated for a Tony Award and won the prestigious Drama Desk Award. The film, starring Alan Alda and Ellen Burstyn, which Slade also wrote, was nominated for two **Academy Awards** including Best Screenplay. He followed up three years later with **Tribute** starring Jack Lemmon in both the successful Broadway production and in the film adaptation. **Romantic Comedy** starred Anthony Perkins and Mia Farrow on Broadway and went on to become a movie with Dudley Moore and Mary Steenburgen.





His sequel to *Same Time Next Year*, *Same Time Another Year* has also been well received and his work is considered a staple of regional theatres around the world. And Slade has been to the dark side of the entertainment industry as well. *Special Occasions*, starring Suzanne Pleshett and Richard Mulligan, closed after only one performance on Broadway.

COMEDIC GENIUS offers us unlimited access into one of the great minds of the modern entertainment industry through archival photography and selected footage from Slade's television and stage productions, home movies, and candid interviews with Slade and notable cast members, collaborators and critics such as **Pauline Collins, Norman Campbell, Gordon Pinsent, Dick Van Patton, David Cassidy, Shirley Jones, Clive Barnes** (New York Post), **Robert Picardo** and **Arthur Storch** among others. As dramatic, acerbic and funny in person as he is on the page, Slade shares his passion for his work and his passion for life; and explains how the pain of living is consistently the secret behind great comedy.

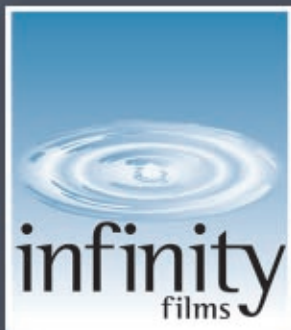
Shot on 16:9 digital betacam, *COMEDIC GENIUS: THE WORK OF BERNARD SLADE* is directed by award-winning filmmaker **Shel Piercy** (*Guinea Pig Club, The Swinging Nutcracker*) for BRAVO! NewStyleArtsChannel, Canadian Learning Television, SCN and Knowledge Network in English Canada and Canal D in French Canada.

Narrated by Colin Mochrie.

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