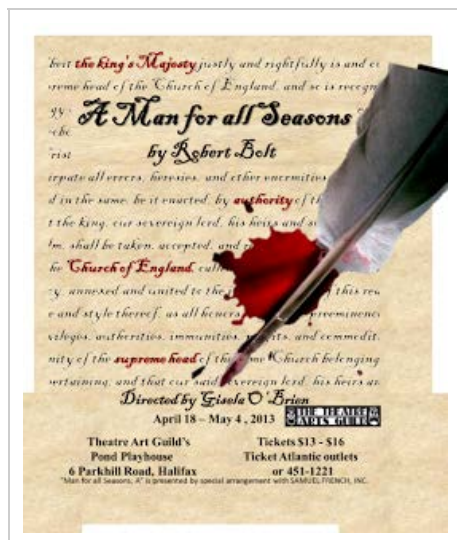


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Theatre Arts Guild Presents A Man for All Seasons



Review by Martin Wallace

Theatre Arts Guild (TAG) advertises itself as “Canada's oldest continuously operating community theatre.” While in some cases the term “community theatre” can seem as much a warning as a description (think of “Waiting for Guffman”), in the case of TAG what’s remarkable is the level of professionalism that seems evident in every aspect of a production.

Last Thursday, I attended the opening night of TAG’s production of Robert Bolt’s “A Man for All Seasons,” (which the older among us may remember most from the 1967 film adaptation), the story of Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor to King Henry VIII, who, for reasons of religious conviction, refused to endorse the King’s wish to divorce his Queen and marry the sister of his former mistress. While the specific political and theological issues may seem distant from the concerns of a modern audience, the theme

of sticking to one’s beliefs, in the midst of overwhelming pressure to change them, is timeless. “A Man for All Seasons” is a dark and complex play and its inclusion in the 2012-2013 season shows TAG’s laudable commitment to producing a wide range of material.

While, to me, the performances seemed uneven (the subtle irony of some of the dialogue was blunted or left un-mined and not all performers had good control of their accents), Phil Reid grounds the play with a subtle portrayal of More as a quietly thoughtful man whose conviction is so strong that he need neither seek out nor respond to conflict to prove it. Such restraint lends particular energy to those moments when More breaks free emotionally, as with an affecting farewell scene with More’s wife, ably played by Ruth Anne Flemming

The production itself is a master class in stagecraft. The staging and lighting is deceptively simple and the costumes look authentically 16th century and seem perfectly tailored to the actors’ bodies. The Guild’s own notes call the production “minimalist,” but that underplays the attention to detail evident here—if you can fulfill your purpose simply, that’s not “minimalism,” that’s precision.

If you're unfamiliar with TAG and more accustomed to heading downtown for your dramatic needs, I

[Send feedback](#)

Salon de PARC

Celebrated playwright, director, theatre co-founder and Portia White Award recipient Mary Vingoe will headline Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre's 4th Annual Salon de PARC.

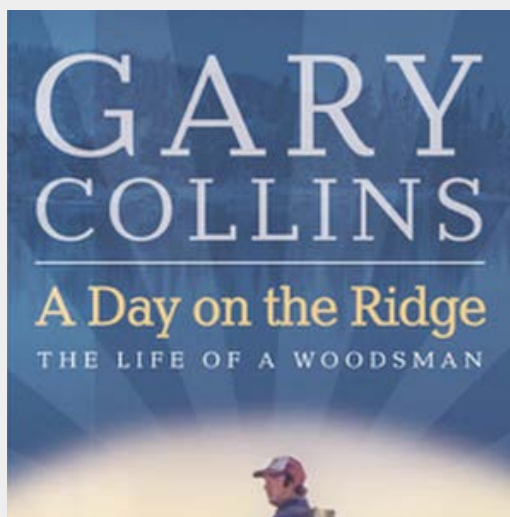
Inside The Glace Bay Miners Mu:

Set against the darkness and disasters of the coal mines of 1940's Cape Breton, The Glace Bay Miners Museum – which runs from Feb 26 to Mar 17 at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax - is the joyful, heart-scalding story of Margaret MacNeil and her rebellious love for Neil Currie, a miner and bagpiper.

Opera Box!

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A Day on the Ridge

Among the bays, inlets, and communities of the province, Newfoundland author Gary Collins has earned a seat at the head of the table as Newfoundland and Labrador's favourite storyteller.

The Nova Scotia Talent Trust

The Nova Scotia Talent Trust (NSTT) will recognize the 2012 Scholarship and Special Award recipients at 2:00pm on Monday, December 17th at Government House in a ceremony hosted by His Honour Brigadier-General the Honourable J.J. Grant, CMM, ONS, CD (Ret'd), Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia.

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