

Top 12 plays of 2012 | The Scene

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December 27, 2012

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- Michael McPhee stars as Anthony in *Bone Boy*

Choosing my favourite plays every year is both a challenging and pleasurable task. Challenging because Nova Scotia's theatre community produces so many outstanding shows that it's impossible to give all their due. Pleasurable because it's an opportunity to take a walk down memory lane and recognize at least some of the fabulous plays I've seen in the past twelve months. Here are my top 12(ish).



12. *Lysistrata, Temptress of the South (Two Planks and a Passion)*: Raunchy and fun, the classic fifth century Greek comedy became a highly entertaining musical set in the American Civil War era.

11. *Titus Andronicus (Shakespeare by the Sea)*: Strong performances and sensitive handling of the violence and gore made this seldom-produced Shakespearean tragedy stand out in a summer of great theatre. 10. *Hawk (Onelight Theatre)*: This play explored the pain of a young man torn between two cultures. It packed a powerful message and was a true visual stand-out.

9. *Twelve Angry Men* and *Arsenic and Old Lace (Lions Den Theatre)*: So exciting to see old theatre favourites such as these brought to the stage by this young, talent-filled company.

8. *The Drowsy Chaperone (TAG)* and *Inherit the Wind (Dartmouth Players)*: The first is a charming Canadian classic that delivered a lot of laughs. The second is a thought-provoking courtroom drama. Two very different plays, but both reflective of the high quality of work delivered by our community theatre groups.

7. *Same Time Next Year (Festival Antigone)*: An oldie-but-goodie, just right for the Bauer Theatre stage. Charming performances really brought it to life.

6. *Pageant (DMV Theatre Collective)*: Another edgy choice by DMV. A dark, quirky play about society's obsession with appearance. It definitely got under my skin—in a good way.

5. *Bone Boy (Frankie Productions)*: A black comedy set in an off-kilter world. The production is memorable for the strength of the performances and the poetry of its script.

4. *Bare (Left of Centre)*: Fabulous energy and talent in this emotion-stirring musical that tackled everything from bullying to homophobia.

3. *Whale Riding Weather* (Produced for the Sex Festival): Raw and intimate, this story of three men in a devastating love triangle was hauntingly good.

2. *The Monument (LunaSea)* and *The Men Who Killed Me (Alayna Kolodziechuk)*: Both plays are

about horrific war crimes. Both left me weeping and shaken. Both have stuck with me. That is the power of great theatre.

1. *Kill Shakespeare (Lions Den/ Vile Passéist)*: This was a unique theatre experience: A combination of projections from a graphic novel and radio-play-style dialogue. The engaging format coupled with an intriguing storyline made *Kill Shakespeare* a high point for me.