



# CONTACT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD



**TAG TICKETS**

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phone (902) 451-1221 or  
at Atlantic Superstore Locations

THE POND PLAYHOUSE - 6 PARKHILL RD. HALIFAX NOVA SCOTIA INFO@TAGTHEATRE.COM

## TAG PRESENTS

*Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)*

Written by Ann-Marie MacDonald and directed by Phil Reid, our season opener promises to provide a thoroughly entertaining romp through the imagination of a Shakespearean scholar not only for those audience members enamoured of all things related to the Bard but also for those less familiar with Othello or Romeo and Juliet.

Ann-Marie MacDonald's play revolves around the musings of Constance Ledbelly, a somewhat downtrodden and thwarted graduate student at Queen's University. She explores her theory that both of the works mentioned were originally comedies that Shakespeare had lifted and reworked into tragedies based upon the flimsiest of causes. Things go awry when the ancient manuscripts she is studying for evidence to support her thesis pull her into the worlds of first one play then the other. She is given the opportunity to engage in the plots of each play with disastrously funny consequences. You may never think of Desdemona, Romeo and Juliet in quite the same way after viewing this play!

Phil is honoured to be working with such a talented cast and crew. Just in case you think that he has been frugal in assigning multiple roles to four of the cast, he would like to point out that this casting is a stipulation of the author! As a consequence, Johnathan Munroe, Rachelle Payne, Rayna Smith-Camp and Jonathan Tyson graciously accepted the challenge of enduring a kind of Shakespearean "boot camp" whilst providing able support to Lorraine Cantwell's tour de force as the bewildered Constance.

## GOODNIGHT DESDEMONA (GOOD MORNING JULIET)

BY ANN-MARIE  
MACDONALD



SEPTEMBER 24 -  
OCTOBER 10

DIRECTED BY  
PHIL REID



## Buy Your Tickets

- \* Ticket Atlantic Box Office
- \* Charge by Phone at (902) 451-1221
- \* Online at www.ticketatlantic.com
- \* At the 17 participating Atlantic Superstore outlets
- \* At the door (subject to availability)

Mailing Address: Theatre Arts Guild 287 Lacewood Drive Unit 103 Suite 412 Halifax N.S. B3M 3Y7

# PRESIDENTS REPORT

Welcome all TAG members and friends to the first newsletter of our 2009/10 season. Looking back at last year it was wonderful how a shortened season, four productions not five, managed to keep revenues up by increasing the number of performances and constantly filling houses with very popular plays. The Christmas Pantomime was packed, Oklahoma could have sold twice the number of seats, Norm Foster's Drinking Alone sold out and Marie Antoinette; The Colour of Flesh proved to be very popular indeed. We are grateful to all these productions for getting us through a shortened season successfully.

As you have read elsewhere, we have finally been able to respond to the many requests for credit/debit card bookings, confirmed seats and the flexibility of receiving your tickets in advance. This has been achieved at an increase in ticket pricing of only one dollar so we hope you will enjoy the new service. The many volunteers who have taken care of reservations in the past have done a sterling job, but with the increased expectation of booking and paying on-line, plus the need to provide reservation confirmations, we think you are going to enjoy the new system.

Our building committee is pressing ahead with a new roof and insulation this fall. The Playhouse will be much warmer this winter and cooler next summer thanks to this important project. As usual, additional donations are always welcome whether it be a loonie in the box on the bar, or the purchase of another seat. Whatever you can do will be appreciated.

Our AGM on September 14th will elect a new slate of officers and managers and we look forward to a wonderful year returning to a five production season. The shows look ambitious and very entertaining, I hope you enjoy them all.  
~ Nick Jupp, President

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Mon., Sept. 14th, 2009

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Pond Playhouse,  
6 Parkhill Road, Halifax

All members in good standing are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting at the Pond Playhouse. Board members and managers will present annual reports and the financial statements for the year will be presented. A nominating committee will present a slate of officers and managers for the 2010 fiscal year as well as nominations from the floor.

August 2009 CONTACT

## AUDITION CALL A Spirit for Evermore by Ian McCutcheon

The TAG Pantomime, *A Spirit for Evermore*, will run Dec. 3-19, 2009 with matinees on Dec. 5, 12, 13 and 19. Seeking 13 to 16 characters with age ranges from 16-65.

### Audition Dates & Times:

Sunday Sept. 27th 1-4 p.m.

Monday Sept. 28th 7-9 p.m.

**Location:** Pond Playhouse  
6 Parkhill Rd. (off the Purcell's  
Cove Rd.)

Actors should be able to sing and know how to have fun. You will be asked to read excerpts from the script, as well as sing a few lines of a song. You may be asked to do a little improvisation. For further details please contact the director, J. Frederick Brown (466 - 1015) or e-mail [jfrederick-brown@hotmail.com](mailto:jfrederick-brown@hotmail.com)

## COMMUNITY NOTES

Bedford Players presents *Sorry! Wrong Chimney!* a wacky, light-hearted Christmas farce full of mistaken identities and zany foul ups, with a smattering of slapstick comedy. Written by Jack Sharkey and Leo W. Sears the show runs November 5th to 21st. Visit [www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca](http://www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca) for more information.

A BIG THANK YOU  
TO ALL OF OUR  
MANY VALUED  
TAG VOLUNTEERS

## Renew Your TAG Membership Today!

- \* receive a discount off admission to all shows,
- \* receive five informative newsletters each year,
- \* attend special members-only events.

**ONLY \$15**

# TAG Introduces NEW Ticketing System

In recent years, our patrons' expectations have risen in regards to ticket reservations at Theatre Arts Guild. There have been requests to allow credit/debit card payments, confirmed seats as well as the ability to purchase tickets online. TAG has listened and a new ticketing process is being adopted. Beginning with the opening show of the 2009-10 season, TAG tickets will be sold through Ticket Atlantic. This provides a great deal of flexibility as tickets may be purchased at the Metro Centre box office, online at the Ticket Atlantic website, charged by phone, and at any of 17 participating Atlantic Superstore locations. As in the past, tickets will also be available at the door if seats are still available at the time of the performance.

In order to minimize the increase in ticket prices caused by the change, TAG is absorbing 50% of the service charge. Ticket prices will increase by \$1 (adults, \$16, members/students \$13) and include all service charges. It is important to note that all sales are final but refunds will be available if TAG cancels a performance as it was forced to

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- \* At the door (subject to availability)

do as a result of the forest fire earlier this year. Tickets will remain general admission and the theatre will continue to make an effort to accommodate those with special needs – please tell the customer service representative when they are processing your transaction.

TAG would like to offer a BIG thank you to the many volunteers that have managed the theatre's reservation system over the years. It was a very time consuming job and their efforts were greatly appreciated.

We trust that our patrons, both old and new, will enjoy the flexibility of the new system and we look forward to your feedback during the season (email: [info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com), or phone 902-477-2663)

## Ladies and Gentlemen, Please Take Your Seats!

Dedicate a Seat for \$500 and take a permanent place in the history of the Pond Playhouse Your seat will be identified with an engraved plaque.

**50%  
SOLD!**

- ▶ Celebrate a special occasion/event
- ▶ Cherish the memory of a loved one
- ▶ Record a milestone
- ▶ Raise your company's community profile
- ▶ Show your support for the arts

Your contribution is tax deductible.

All proceeds to the TAG Capital Campaign.

Visit [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com) or email [seatsale@tagtheatre.com](mailto:seatsale@tagtheatre.com) for more information about this exciting fundraiser.!

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Watch for TAG's holiday production - *A Spirit for Evermore*, A British pantomime written by Ian McCutcheon and directed by J. Frederick Brown (Dec. 3 -19, 2009). The Kingdom of Evermore is nearly bankrupt, thanks to the thieving of evil butler Skulk. To restore their fortunes, the Princess Daisy is to be married to rich but thick Lord Larry of Luton, but then she meets George and falls in love. Will Skulk stop the match to get his hands on Larry's loot too, or can Willow the ghost come to the rescue? Mark Your calendar today!

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Email [info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com)  
for more information

# A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE (Actually, it would have been an early afternoon!)

Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary - the 28th in a continuing series...

It is the autumn of 1594 and there is a palpable air of excitement in the city, since the authorities have recently allowed all playhouses to open again. (They had been forced to close in January of 1593, due to the plague). You have managed to hitch a ride to Shoreditch on a wagon whose eventual destination is the river and now you stand before the playhouse (called simply “The Theatre”), built by James Burbage in 1576. The acting company [the Lord Chamberlain’s Men] is to give the first performance of a new tragedy today, by the company’s principal writer, William Shakespeare. The most famous actor of the time, Mr. Burbage’s son Richard, will play the doomed hero of this new piece, “Romeo” and Master Robert Goffe the equally doomed heroine, “Juliet.” [No actresses on the Elizabethan stage!].

You have worked hard in the past week and have two pennies ready in your hand, which will give you admittance to the covered gallery which runs around three sides of the stage. This gallery is in tiers and has a thatched roof, so there is at least some protection if the weather is poor. Those who can only afford one penny (nicknamed the ‘groundlings’) will have to stand in the open yard between the edge of the gallery and the stage.

The pennies go into a box placed by the entrance (hence the ‘Box’ in ‘Box Office’), you crunch your way across the nutshells spread over the bare earth and find a seat on one of the benches of the gallery.

What an impressive sight the stage is! Some five feet off the ground, it is 43 feet in width and some 27 feet deep (our TAG stage is 27’ by 15’). A canopy over the stage is supported by two thick columns, stage right and stage left, with the underside painted to represent the sky. There are no curtains, and no scenery. The back wall of the stage is divided into two levels, with the lower level having three fixed entrances (to use the proper terminology – at upstage left, upstage centre and upstage right). The upper level is a minstrel’s gallery, with balustrade, which has a curtain running along its length, again, with fixed entrance points. With no scenery, the fabric of the stage itself must become all things to all people. The columns supporting the canopy are the trees of a forest, the pillars of a citadel, the spars of a sinking ship. The gallery becomes a headland, the inner room of a palace, or the balcony leading to the bedroom of a lovesick teenager in Verona.

The Company does use special costumes however, and some props (brought on and taken off by the

actors). The costume changes take place in the ‘tiring-room,’ situated behind the rear wall of the stage. After spending the two pennies on admission, you have no money left to buy any food or drink from the vendors wandering around the theatre with their trays, but the kindly gentleman sitting next to you offers to share his small loaf of bread. But wait, the minstrels are coming out onto the gallery, to announce the start of the performance – “The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet” is about to begin – and enter into the history books.

Footnotes: By September of 1603, when Shakespeare begins the composition of “Othello,” his fortunes are much improved. From 1599, the company has performed in a new theatre, The Globe, on the opposite bank of the Thames, and, with the patronage of King James I, are now called The King’s Men. The King in fact is the first to see this new play at his Palace of Whitehall, on November the first, 1604.

And the early afternoon of my title? Since artificial lighting is unknown, Elizabethan theatres held their performances during the day, usually between two and five in the afternoon. So, no need to worry about catching the last transport home!! ~ Judy Reade

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submissions to  
[newsletter@tagtheatre.com](mailto:newsletter@tagtheatre.com)

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