



CONTACT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD



TAG BOX OFFICE
477-2663

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

Theatre Arts Guild Presents

DRINKING ALONE

by Norm Foster

April 23 to May 9, 2009

Directed by Frank MacLean
Produced by Valerie Dubois

for tickets call 477-2663
POND PLAYHOUSE
6 Parkhill Road
(off Purcell's Cove Road Road)



Opening
April 23th



Reservations
477-2663
www.tagtheatre.com

Send your newsletter
submissions to
newsletter@ns.sympatico.ca

TAG PRESENTS

Sometimes my family drives me crazy. My brother once told me, "you can't pick your relatives little brother". If you ever felt like your family was driving you to drink, then you will relate to this romantic comedy by Norm Foster.

'Drinking Alone' tells the story of Joe Todd who, in a desperate attempt to impress his estranged father Ivan, hires Renee Duchene, an escort, to pretend she is his fiancée. Joe hasn't seen his father since he left him and his abrasive, heavy drinking sister Carrie to fend for themselves with their alcoholic mother years ago.

Ivan has returned to deliver some interesting news and has brought along his new wife Phyllis. The plot unravels in the traditional "comedy with a dramatic twist" flare that Foster is so noted for. I love the way he makes us laugh at what we might think is the not so funny side of life.

I promise you'll get some good laughs watching the dysfunctional Todd family struggle through their resentment and cry with them as they somehow reach an understanding of each other, even though they try to solve their dilemmas with alcohol. A perfect remedy for those winter blues and seasonal affective disorders that have been plaguing us all, 'Drinking Alone' promises some great laughs and thought provoking theatre. You'll walk away with a whole new understanding of your family whether you like them or not. Remember... "you can't pick your relatives". ~ Frank MacLean, Director

Please Note - This show contains adult language.

Renew Your TAG
Membership Today!

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

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Welcome to spring and another busy summer approaching for TAG. Our winter show Oklahoma was an enormous box-office success and a huge crowd pleaser. It's hard to believe a cast of 18 could fit on the TAG stage, but Director Gisela O'Brien and her extremely able crew made it happen. It was a wonderful show that kept the reservation line ringing constantly; we could have sold double, perhaps triple the number of seats with ease. The demand for seats was greater than any show in living memory and at times overwhelming. If you are one of the persons that experienced some difficulty when you arrived at the show, or if you were unable to get a ticket, please accept our apologies. Your Board is looking into ways to automate reservations and accommodate credit cards, but

this will take some time. The cost of these systems will have to be added to the ticket price and of course volunteers will be needed to run things.

A group of volunteers continue to chip away at outstanding renovation projects, but the absence of insulation in the theatre roof is our major concern. We need to raise about \$25,000 to insulate and re-roof the theatre and this will continue to be our most important focus. Your help and suggestions to raise this money are always welcome.

Our next production is Drinking Alone by Norm Foster. This romantic comedy is just the thing for spring when we all need a little uplifting to get us going for the summer. Directed by Frank McLean, Dinking Alone is sure to be very popular.

~ Nick Jupp, TAG President

We Want to Hear From You!

Just have to see a certain play on the stage at TAG? Want to try your hand at directing? Then we want to hear your ideas!

The Artistic Committee is looking for play submissions and directors for the 2010-2011 season. If you have seen or read a play that you would like to see on stage at TAG, or better yet that you would like to direct, please forward the name of the play and the author to Rebecca and Carolyn Humphreys at rebandian@gmail.com.

If submitting a play as the director, please indicate your first and second preference for time slots (Fall, Christmas, Winter, Spring, Summer)

The deadline for submissions is June 30th, 2009 but the earlier you send us your ideas the better!

Variety Night

Mark your calendars! TAG will be holding its annual Variety Night on May 23rd.

Do you have an act to add to the line-up? Are you interested in producing this night of frivolity? Then e-mail info@tagtheatre.com

BIG THANKS!

Thanks go out to all of our generous Front of House Volunteers. We have so many wonderful people who gladly man the ticket table or bar, often for each of the five shows in a season. Your smiling faces and congenial spirit always adds the extra touch to the Pond Playhouse experience. Bravo!!!

AUDITION CALL

**Marie Antoinette:
The Colour Of Flesh
by Joel Gross**

The play covers the time period between 1774 and 1793; the years covering both the French Revolution and the American War of Independence. The show will run June 25th to July 11th.

**Audition Dates: Mar. 29&30
Time: 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.
Location: Pond Playhouse
6 Parkhill Rd. (off the
Purcell's Cove Rd.).**

We are looking for 3 characters: Marie Antoinette the Queen of France, Elisabeth Louise Vigee Le Brun a portrait painter, and Count Alexis de Linge. Those auditioning will be asked to read extracts from the script. For more information please contact the Director, Nick Jupp (477-8697).

COMMUNITY NOTES

Dartmouth Players presents 'Don't Dress for Dinner' April 15 to May 2, 2009. A farcical comedy by Marc Camoletti adapted by Robin Hawdon. Visit dartmouthplayers.ns.ca or call 465-PLAY for reservations.

Bedford Players presents 'Maggie's Getting Married' by Norm Foster April 23 to May 9th. A touching romantic comedy that follows the pitfalls a family encounters on the eve of their daughter's wedding. Visit www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca or call 832-3300 for reservations.

TAG CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

A one-time "seat sale" in the Pond Playhouse is being staged by the TAG to raise funds to complete renovations to the theatre.

For a tax deductible donation of \$500, donors have the opportunity to name a seat in the 90-seat theatre and support the longest continuously running community theatre in Canada.

Of critical importance now, is the need to re-roof the playhouse. A recently completed two storey addition to the theatre has a lobby, washrooms and refreshment

facilities on the ground floor and rehearsal space and washroom on the second.

"The theatre's expansion is complete, but the renovation financial cupboard is now bare" says Nick Jupp, President of the Theatre Arts Guild.

The seat sale is open to individuals, groups and companies. It's a terrific way to remember a loved one, celebrate a special occasion, record a milestone or raise your company's community profile

"It's a great way to raise money for

our theatre," says Valerie Dubois, Coordinator of the Fundraiser. "A seat-sale is a very standard fundraising method used by theatres across the country."

She adds that "the \$500 donation is extremely modest compared with other theatres where seat prices can command thousands of dollars depending on the venue."

Individuals or companies interested in taking part should contact Valerie Dubois at seatsale@tagtheatre.com for more information.

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.

- 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

Use the enclosed form to make your tax deductible contribution. All proceeds go towards the TAG Capital Campaign. Contact Valerie for more information (422-8176) or e-mail seatsale@tagtheatre.com

WANTED

"Wanted" - Stage Manager and Producer for TAG's opening show in September, 2009. For more information please call Michele Moore at (902) 477-4943.

Rehearsals start at the end of July: Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sundays (either late afternoon or early evening). There will be some readings in June with the cast and crew.

TAG Ponders Box Office Changes

It has become increasingly difficult to find dedicated souls to take on the difficult task of reservations for TAG. The job requires six weeks of evenings and weekends processing reservations received via TAG's voice mail and website. We owe an enormous thank you to the Swingers, the Westrops, Mark Monk, Chantelle Dooley, Michele Moore, Bill VanGorder, John Gratwick and others who have volunteered countless hours over the years.

We have always asked patrons

to pay on arrival for their tickets. However, there has been a noticeable increase in 'no shows' resulting in a loss of revenue for the theatre.

Therefore, the TAG Board is actively seeking new ways of handling reservations, as well as payment for tickets.

This may result in our having to use an outside agency such as Neptune or Dalhousie Box Office. It would, however, require an increase to ticket price when using MasterCard or Visa at one of these Box Offices.

We would very much appreciate hearing from you as to how you feel about a slightly higher ticket price balanced by the convenience of using a credit card if we choose this alternative method.

We would welcome your comments and suggestions. Please e-mail info@tagtheatre.com, attention Nick Jupp, President; or Michele Moore, Executive Producer. You may also leave a message on our voice mail at (902) 477-2663.

"THE FLOOZY WITH THE HEART OF GOLD"

Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary - the 26th in a continuing series...

Regular attendees of TAG shows have now had several opportunities to see the works of Canadian playwright, Norm Foster – *Opening Night/Melville Boys/The Affections of May/Office Hours/The Foursome* – so should be familiar with the marks of his style – usually a small cast, a contemporary setting, an overlying sense of humour, a love interest, a secret about to be revealed, which introduces a serious tone, etc.

Although Foster has a definite talent in portraying the frailties and idiosyncrasies of the human species, he must of necessity be a strategist, like all dramatists and one stratagem used in "Drinking Alone" (I refer you to the title of this piece, where I'm being very polite in my choice of words!) is one you are probably familiar with. I'm referring of course to the 'fallen woman,' who, through no fault of her own, must live on the fringes of society, but meets a kind-hearted man who can recognize her inner goodness and is prepared to marry her anyway. Either that or our floozy must sacrifice this hope of redemption because it gets in the way of lover boy's inheriting a fortune/marrying the boss's daughter/joining the army/standing for political office, etc. There are endless variations on the reason and its tragic outcome for the female involved.

Renee Duchene, the heroine of "Drinking Alone," works for an escort service. It's not what she wants to do, but she has a young daughter to support, whose father left town years ago and life must go on. Close parallels here to Fantine,

the prostitute of "Les Misérables," who loses her factory job and is forced onto the streets out of the need to provide for her child, Cosette. Renee, at least, is not about to suffer physically because of the place she occupies in society. Other 'fallen women' in this literary/dramatic category often do – think of Nancy in "Oliver Twist," a prostitute, a thief, an associate of the evil Fagin, who takes pity on Oliver and is beaten and killed by Bill Sikes, who mistakenly thinks she has betrayed him.

Not to dwell too much on doom and gloom, being a 'fallen woman,' at some points in history has actually lead to a charmed life. When 'prostitute' becomes 'courtesan,' things usually change for the better! And don't immediately think Madame de Pompadour and Nell Gwynn – the Ancient Greeks recognized the position of 'hetaera' – a female companion [not wife or fiancée], who provided not only sexual favours, but was well-educated, well-read and provided intelligent and sophisticated conversation and could discuss the critical issues of the day. Courtesans in the 19th century were still continuing this tradition, providing their home as a gathering place for artists, musicians and poets and encouraging innovation and development in the arts. Rose Alphonsine Plessis, born in 1824 was one such example, an exceptionally pretty girl whose father began hiring out his daughter from the age of twelve. Rose Alphonsine eventually finds her way to Paris, as 'Marie

Duplessis' and attracts a string of lovers, including Alexandre Dumas Fils. Yet another name change makes Rose 'Marguerite Gautier,' in the tale that this novelist creates from his experiences – "La Dame aux Camélias," in 1848. (Rose Alphonsine had actually died a year earlier, of tuberculosis). Then followed eight silent films featuring the character, with Greta Garbo finally giving voice to Marie in "Camille" (1936, with Robert Taylor) and yet another legend is born! And before I forget, there's the transition to opera, as "Violetta Valéry" in Verdi's "La Traviata" (1853). Verdi's librettists make free with the details of the story however and Violetta gives up the love of her potential redeemer, Alfredo Germont, so that his sister may make a good marriage.

Um...tuberculosis...Paris...think Satine, "Moulin Rouge" and Nicole Kidman – I could go on like this for hours! But I won't and I won't tell you what happens to Renee – come see "Drinking Alone" for yourself!
~Judy Reade



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