

# CONTACT

The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre

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The Pond Playhouse  
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## NEXT AT TAG

### Proof

April 30th to May 16th

A delightful drama with touches of comedy and pathos that are sure to strike a chord with the audience.

Written by David Auburn and directed by Debora Pollock, *Proof* takes place entirely on the back porch of an older house in Chicago, not far from the university where Robert, the father, taught mathematics for many years and where his daughters Claire and Catherine grew up.

It's the year 2000, and changes are afoot at the old home, changes that bring together Robert, Claire, Catherine and Hal, a former student of Robert's - in the present, in flashback and in an illusion. Does Robert's former genius reside in his younger daughter Catherine? Can Claire ever make up for having moved away? What does Hal really want?

*Proof* is funny, even hilarious, in the way only genius, madness and blossoming love can be. At times, it is touching, sad and profound. And finally, it is mysterious, as each of us

is at heart. The simple setting, four unique characters illuminated by a brilliant cast, and a plot with strong, bare bones makes *Proof* capable of supporting many interpretations and layers of exploration. This play is a chameleon. Every time you watch it, you will see a different aspect, a different play.

He may not be a mathematician, but David Auburn found the formula for a story that delights, interests and inspires the mind.

Debora pays homage to the veteran production people (crew) who designed and built the set, created the light design and sound, and provided costumes, props and backstage support, who produced and stage managed the show. Without this army of talented folks, the magic could not happen. Read about them in the program.

*Proof* runs from April 30 - May 16th. Tickets are on sale now.  
- Debora Pollock, Director

Tickets on Sale NOW!

### TAG Ticket Prices

**\$15 Members/Seniors/Students**

**\$18 Non-Members**

Note: TAG prices include all Ticket Atlantic service fees

### Buy Your Tickets

- At the 23 participating Atlantic Superstore outlets
- By Phone (902) 451 1221
- At the door (subject to availability)
- Online at [www.ticketatlantic.com](http://www.ticketatlantic.com)
- Ticket Atlantic Box Office

March/April 2015 Contact

Mailing Address: Theatre Arts Guild 287 Lacewood Dr. Unit 103 Suite 412 Halifax NS B3M 3Y7

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Did someone say spring is here? The weather outside doesn't reflect that but the activities inside the Pond Playhouse shouts that spring is in full swing. Our third play of the season *Death by Design* just wrapped up with raving reviews! Brava all those involved with this fun-filled production.

Then before you know it the set quickly changes and Playwrights @TAG takes the stage. What a whirlwind! As producer of the festival I want to say to everyone involved THANK YOU, THANK YOU and THANK YOU! You are all amazing talents and it was privilege to work with all of you.

It doesn't stop there. Up next, *Proof*, a play that I personally have been waiting to see. From the buzz I'm hearing around the theatre it is sure to be an epic production. The heat generated from the show should melt away all the snow and then, voila, spring!

- Angela Butler, President

NEW

## PLAYWRIGHTS @ TAG

TAG welcomed our long-awaited spring with our second playwrights festival on March 20 and 21.

With a little help from the charming and witty Cheryl

Therault – who is normally a very nice person – we kicked winter to the curb with three original one-act plays written by TAG members. *Delusions of Grandeur* by JL Allen, *Butterscotch Palace* by Ryan Van Horne, and *There Are Fewer Acorns This Year* by Nick Jupp made their debut on the Pond Playhouse stage. The three playwrights directed their own works and with wonderful performances from all the actors all three plays were well received by the audience.

As usual, Austin Reade and Barry Marvel provided their technical wizardry on a tight schedule and our artistic director Rayna Smith-Camp kept it all running smoothly from the booth with the help of volunteers Jennifer Robbins and Jayme Lynn Butt backstage.

Angela Butler, who inspired the festival two years ago, produced the event and also acted in Jupp's play. As was the case in 2013 at the inaugural festival, many mentioned how it would be great if we could perform the plays more than twice – which inevitably turns to talk about staging them again. If you missed these plays this time around, look for them in the future.

All in all it was a great evening. If you don't believe us, just ask Cheryl. She'll be more than happy to give you her opinion.

- Ryan van Horne

Casting

**Delusions of Grandeur:** Nicole Moore, Matthew Darrah and Rob McIntrye.

**Butterscotch Palace:** Wanda Baxter, Valerie MacKenzie, and Frank MacLean.

**There Are Fewer Acorns This Year:** Tamara Smith, Angela Butler, Calum MacLean and Mike Taylor.

### Take Your Seat

Dedicate a Seat for \$500 and take a permanent place in the history of the Pond Playhouse. Your contribution is tax deductible!

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

# AUDITION CALL

## She Stoops to Conquer

She Stoops to Conquer

Director: Jolene Pattison

Performance Dates: **June 18th to July 5th 8pm**

Auditions: **Sunday April 12th 1-4pm**

**Monday April 14th 7-9pm**

at The Pond Playhouse, 6 Parkhill Rd.

What is a girl to do when her suitor can't talk to her? How will she cope when her family makes things worse by "helping"? Kate Hardcastle's clever solution is revealed in *She Stoops to Conquer* by Oliver Goldsmith. Originally produced in 1773, this play still delights with witty dialogue, interfering parents, prankster siblings, and mistaken identity. True love still finds its way! Free copies of the play can be found on Project Gutenberg.

### Characters:

**Parents:** Mr. Marlow, Mr. Hardcastle, Mrs. Hardcastle

**The Next Generation:** Charles Marlow, Kate Hardcastle, George Hastings, Constance Neville, Tony Lumpkin

**Servants:** Diggory, Maid, assorted other servants and bar patrons

For more information, please contact director Jolene Pattison at [Jolene.Pattison@nsc.ca](mailto:Jolene.Pattison@nsc.ca)

## RECENTLY @ TAG

Death by Design took to the stage from February 19th to March 7th, directed by James Boyer!



## MAD AS AS...

### Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary The 56th in a Continuing Series

To my mind, 'mad' as an adjective is a conundrum – It is at once both full of meaning - and meaningless.

When I was looking through our list of past productions (my usual practice as the TAG Archivist, in order to slip some historical notes into this column), searching for examples of mad characters, I found no congruence. Characters that we probably described as 'mad' in our publicity of the day ranged from the wildly eccentric Martha and Abby Brewster from *Arsenic and Old Lace* (whose solution to the problems of their male boarders is a glass of elderberry wine laced with cyanide!), to the intense jealousy (= madness) of the housekeeper Mrs. Danvers in *Rebecca* (given at TAG in 1952 and 2002) and the morphine-addled existence of Mary Tyrone in *Long Day's Journey into Night*. The house guests of the Bliss Family in *Hay Fever* by Noel Coward consider their hosts quite mad, since they have the disturbing habit of acting out scenes from a favourite play at the most inappropriate moments. Quite the range!

The term 'mad' has been used with abandon to apply to many of Shakespeare's characters. Is Hamlet truly mad, or coping with an overwhelming grief? Do the deaths of Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Polonius result from

an innate homicidal tendency in the Prince or is this an extreme reaction against those he considers to be bringing down his life in ruins?

Although Shakespeare explores madness in several of his pieces, the 'mad man/woman' as a stock character (and counter to the usually sane hero) had its beginning in theatre long before the Bard's time. The Greek philosopher and dramatist Theophrastus, in the fourth century B.C., set down definitions of thirty stock characters and yes, the constant nagger (= the mother-in-law beloved of stand-up comedians) was one of them! Did Hamlet truly have a brutish streak? Of Macbeth's actions, how many could be attributed to the machinations of his wife? Was Lear a mad old monarch, or someone whose mental faculties collapsed under the burden of betrayal from his own flesh and blood?

Time to offer a redefinition of madness in the theatrical world, as a handy catchall term for a multiplicity of mental states!

In *Proof*, is Catherine mad? Is the growing awareness of her own mathematical ability threatening to overwhelm her? How can she maintain her grip on reality and what support does she have? Ophelia, Hamlet's love, did not have the strength to withstand the pressures surrounding her...

“O heavens! Is't possible a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?”  
(Act IV, scene V)

Come and experience for yourself Catherine's journey in *Proof* – the journey and its outcome. - Judy Reade

### Community Notes

#### Dartmouth Players presents:

An Inspector Calls (Apr 15th to May 2nd)  
The Game's Afoot (June 3rd to 20th)  
Visit [www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca](http://www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca) or call  
465-PLAY for more info

#### Bedford Players presents:

The Love List (May 21st to June 6th)  
Visit [www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca](http://www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca) or call 832-3300  
for more info

### Coming Soon

#### She Stoops to Conquer by Oliver Goldsmith

June 18th to July 5th 2015

A wealthy English countryman arranges for his daughter to meet the son of a wealthy Londoner, hoping the pair will marry. Unfortunately the young suitor is nervous around upper-class women while being far too comfortable around those who are members of the lower-class.