TAGHalifax tagtheatrehalifax TAGTheatre info@tagtheatre.com

CONTACT

The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

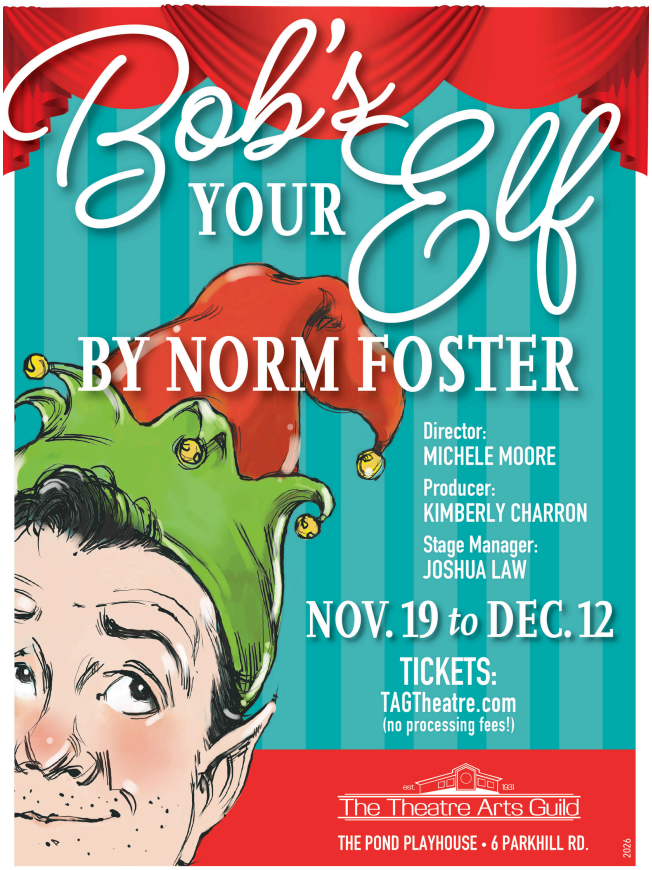
Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre

est. 1931 The Theatre Arts Guild

The Pond Playhouse
6 Parkhill Rd. Halifax, NS.
902 477-2663
tagtheatre.com

OCTOBER 2026

UP NEXT AT TAG



Starring:

Jesse Robb as Gord

Lise Renault as Fiona

Jacob Wilson as Bob

Mike Taylor as Santa/Howard

Natalie Fournier as Amber

Ryan Pulsifer as Les

Bob's Your Elf is a delightful holiday comedy by Norm Foster that brings together holiday magic, small-town charm, and plenty of laugh-out-loud moments.

When Bob, an elf with a less-than-perfect attitude, is sent away from the North Pole to learn the importance of teamwork and cooperation, he finds himself helping a quirky amateur theatre group prepare their annual Christmas pageant. What follows is a series of hilarious mishaps, unexpected friendships, and heartwarming discoveries as Bob learns that the true spirit of Christmas is about more than getting things right.

Perfect for audiences of all ages, *Bob's Your Elf* is a heartwarming celebration of the holiday season that combines laughter, magic, and an uplifting message about the importance of working together and embracing the true meaning of Christmas.

Tickets on sale for TAG Members starting Thursday October 15th and for the general public on Thursday October 22nd.



Perfect Wedding
by Robin Hawdon

Perfect Wedding is a rip-roaring, fast-paced comedy of mistaken identities, last-minute cover-ups, and wedding day chaos. When a groom wakes up with a stranger on the morning of his wedding, a hilariously tangled farce unfolds that will keep audiences laughing to the very end!

Director: Dom MacKinnon
Stage Manager: Esther VanGorder
Producer: Louise Renault

Sunday November 22, 1 - 3pm
Monday November 23, 7 - 9pm

Location: Pond Playhouse,
6 Parkhill Road, Halifax NS

Performance Schedule
11 Performances:
March 4th - March 20th 2027

Roles:

Bill – (25+) A groom-to-be whose wedding morning spirals into chaos after an unexpected wake-up call. Charming but increasingly desperate, he scrambles to keep everything from falling apart.

Rachel – (25+) Bill's bride-to-be, excited for her perfect wedding day. Smart and sincere, she's at the centre of the whirlwind whether she knows it or not.

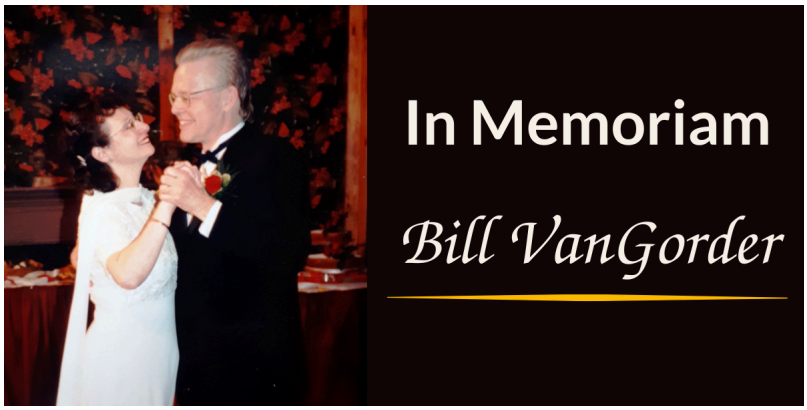
Judy – (25+) A young attractive woman who unexpectedly complicates Bill's wedding plans. Quick-witted and independent, she becomes an essential player in the unfolding confusion.

Tom – (25+) Bill's loyal best man and reluctant co-conspirator. Good-natured and resourceful, he's constantly pulled into outrageous cover-ups.

Julie – (25+) The hotel chambermaid with a knack for being in the wrong place at the right time. Her sharp observations and kooky, volatile nature add fuel to the farcical fire.

Daphne – (50+) Rachel's mother, eager to ensure the wedding goes smoothly. Strong-minded and emotional.

What to Prepare
No preparation is required; a cold reading from selected script pages will be provided.
Everyone is welcome!
Drop-In Auditions (no appointment needed)



After 28 years, the longest running show at The Theatre Arts Guild has closed. Matrimonial Magic – The Real Wedding of Esther Green & Bill VanGorder opened at TAG on June 6, 1998. Bill VanGorder, who played The Groom, passed away on September 6, 2026.

Without one of the principal characters, this show cannot go on. But other shows will, as Esther, who played The Bride, will continue to work in the theatre she calls home.

Bill was a fixture at TAG for nearly 35 years. He served in almost all the positions on the Board, directed (his first love) *Summerland*, *Sherlock by Wireless*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Office Hours*, *The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes*, *Lone Star*, *Bell*, *Book* & *Candle*, and *I Hate Hamlet*.

He was also an actor in *Twelve Angry Men*, *Pride* & *Prejudice*, and *The Wizard of…Oz*?

Bill produced numerous productions and loved the technical side of theatre. He was an accomplished lighting and sound designer.

Bill VanGorder will be greatly missed by all of us here at TAG. Every player has their exit, but some leave an indelible mark upon the stage. You can view Bill VanGorder's obituary here:
https://www.dignitymemorial.com/en-ca/obituaries/halifax-ns/william-vangorder-13029077

The coveted "Order of the Grey Squirrel" was established in December, 2001 by the TAG Board of Directors as a reward for excellence.

Congratulations to **Mike Barnaby**
winner of the award for 2025-2026

Thank you for your outstanding dedication and contribution!



TAG needs you in our lobby!

Louise Renault here, Volunteer Coordinator at TAG.

Do you enjoy talking to people? Do you want to share the fun of being at the Pond Playhouse?

If the answer is yes, please consider volunteering for what is called Front of House during the run of our shows. We just don't have enough people to help with what is a fun and low time commitment way to volunteer at TAG, so I'm looking for new recruits!

Front of House crew come in before the show to make sure the theatre, lobby and bathrooms are clean, stock the bar with drinks and snacks, stack up the programs so we can give them out to patrons, and welcome folks to the theatre when the doors open.

Ticket checkers can finish their shifts once the show begins, and bar folk after intermission, so it's not a long-time commitment. AND, if there are empty seats during your shift, you can watch the show for free!

It's also easy to do a shift even if you have tickets to see the performance. That's a great way to help out.

People who come to our shows are always in a good mood, so it's a very pleasant customer service experience! We can't put on shows without folks checking tickets and/or working the bar!

Please set in touch if you are interested or just curious and have questions at volunteer@tagtheatre.com

See you at the Pond Playhouse!

Louise Renault
Volunteer Coordinator



Give the gift of theatre with TAG's e-gift cards, allowing loved ones to enjoy live performances with ease.

Perfect for any occasion, these cards can be used for online and in-person ticket purchases, making every theatre visit special.

Visit tagtheatre.com today!

Directors & Plays Wanted for 2027–2028!

Theatre Arts Guild is looking ahead to our 2027–2028 season, and we want to hear from you! We're on the hunt for exciting new productions and enthusiastic directors to bring them to life.

Do you have a family-friendly holiday show that will fill the theatre with festive cheer? A mystery or thriller that will keep audiences guessing whodunit? Or perhaps a laugh-out-loud comedy or a Canadian gem that deserves to be shared with our audiences?

We'd love to hear your suggestions!

Send your ideas to: artistic-director@tagtheatre.com

If you're interested in directing the play you're suggesting, please include DIRECTOR in the subject line. If you have a copy of the proposed script, please attach it to your email.

Send your ideas to: artistic-director@tagtheatre.com

If you're interested in directing the play you're suggesting, please include DIRECTOR in the subject line. If you have a copy of the proposed script, please attach it to your email.

Submission deadline: December 31, 2026

Help us make the 2027–2028 season one to remember.

We can't wait to see what you have in mind!



Membership Has Its Benefits

Your Theatre Arts Guild membership comes with many benefits, including:

- early access to ticket sales
- a discount on tickets
- eligibility to participate in productions
- and more!

Memberships are $15.00. JOIN ONLINE TODAY!
Visit tagtheatre.com/membership for more information.

TAG's Mailing List

TAG sends out regular email bulletins about productions, auditions, special events and other local community theatre news. Emails from your contacts are considered trustworthy and are less likely to be flagged as spam, ensuring they reach your inbox instead of the junk folder.

Please add communications@tagtheare.com to your contact list
to ensure delivery of TAG emails to your inbox.

THE HISTORY OF TAG – Heading Towards 100 Years (1931/2031)
Episode 26 – TAG's writers in collaboration

Remembering a Joyful Writing Collaboration, with Legumes

Brenda Tyedmers

IMAGINE, if you will, two balding, moustachioed and middle-aged male actors in green face paint and green shirts, adorned with Mexican hats, bolero vests, and colourful sashes. They are spotlit at centre stage, doing an awkward interpretive dance. Their starry-eyed focus, jittery nerves and toothy joy are apparent to all, as they try to win over three skeptical celebrity judges at the edge of the sparkling "Fairy Tale Idol" audition stage. Nearly twenty years later, I still hear people recall aspects of this scene and the giggles, gut-bursting laughter, or sheer joy it induced.

The actors were Lorne Abramson as "Pinto Garbonzo," and Lowell Shore as "Lima Garbonzo," the titular beans in TAG's 2007 holiday production of *Jack and the Beans Talk – A Genetically Modified Fairy Tale*. The play was co-written by me (Brenda Tyedmers) and Cheryl Theriault, and was directed by Cheryl, produced by Bill VanGorder and stage-managed by Esther VanGorder. Bunny Shore was musical director and keyboard accompanist, Melanie Dumaresq (Abramson) was choreographer, and Judy Reade was Costume Team lead. The scene described above could not have happened without the creative and effective collaboration of all those just named, together with the other actors and dozens of people behind the scenes.

Collaboration is the act of working together with other people to create or achieve something. In the context of TAG, the creation will ideally be an entertaining show that covers its costs, puts a little extra money in the coffers, and doesn't fray everyone's nerves in the process. When writing *Jack and the Beans Talk,* our goal was to write a strong script with a good plot, memorable characters, and great lyrics, a story that would be engaging and funny for both the young and not so young. Oh, and most importantly, to have fun while writing it.

Great collaborations require people who "play well with others in the sandbox." You know them when you meet them, at least, I did. I had encountered Cheryl in 2002 during my first season as a TAG volunteer, had painted a couple of sets with her, and had designed and painted the set for 2004's *Red Riding's in the Hood*, which was adapted and directed by Cheryl and Lorne Abramson. I could tell from our first brainstorming session, at her kitchen table on Edward Street, that we were going to get on just fine.

As described in the Writers' Notes in the *Jack* programme, we *"started planning Friday morning 'coffee' visits, filled with brilliant ideas, agonizing head-scratchers, brainstorms, and tug-o-wars… Brenda's frequent business trips meant lots of captive time with her computer, hence the fantastic song lyrics… The experience was made more interesting as Cheryl's 'dive and go' approach was melded with Brenda's 'plot it out, chart it out, here's our destination' style. The common denominator: A warped and corny-to-the-max sense of humour. We laughed a LOT…and hope you will too."*

Once we had finished writing, submitted *Jack* for consideration by TAG's Artistic Director, and heard that it had been selected for the next season, the writing collaboration had one last phase. As a co-writer, I participated in the initial cast read-through, made some minor changes and then—as was wise—backed off…because *there was only one director, and Cheryl was it!* If there was need for a significant change, like a brand-new song or some different dialogue, I'd be brought in, but otherwise, my job was to execute the set design and engineer the "giant's hand" puppet. My job was also to TRUST the director with our script,

trust that she would bring it alive through her own collaborations with the actors, musical director, choreographer, costume team, stage manager, and just about everyone else involved in the production.

For me, some of the most memorable results included: a barnyard line dance, "Looking for Meat in All the Wrong Places," involving a cow, a sheep and a chicken; "Feelin' Good," sung by a newly freed bovine, Lotty/Latte (Kate MacDonald); a hungry lament, "These are a Few of My Favourite Meats," sung by Jack's mother (Darrel O'Neil); and a magnificent "Climb Up My Beanstalk" belted out by a newly germinated Lima Garbanzo (Lowell Shore).

Our experience with *Jack* led to a deepening friendship and teaming up on many productions over the next two decades, including co-writing *The Frog Prince* and painting countless sets. And Cheryl's cheerleading and direction of my two one-act plays gave me the confidence to publish my first historical fiction novel, *Mrs. Walford,* last year.

There were many magical beans involved in that *Jack* collaboration, and sadly, we've had to say permanent goodbyes to three of them in the past two years: Lorne Abramson (June 2024), Cheryl Theriault (April 2025) and Bill VanGorder (September 2026).

But I'll let you in on a secret: they've each left a little magic behind with the rest of us here at TAG.

Photograph is of Cheryl and Brenda in the Lobby at TAG on the Opening Night *of Jack and the Beans Talk*.



Memories of *Let Me Go*
Written by Nick Jupp
September 17 to October 3, 2026

Director: Angela Butler | Producer: Joshua Law
Stage Manager: Esther VanGorder | ASM: Palma Heming | Technical Director: Bill Barnaby

Starring:
Jeff White as Ryan Kate Brooks as Emily Jocelyn Covert as Sonia
Casey Gray as Mike Emma Ross as Ashley

