

# CONTACT

The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre

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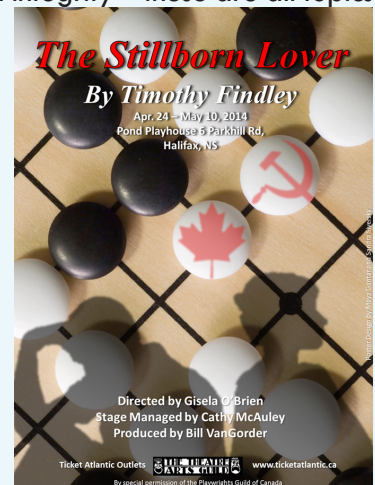


## NEXT AT TAG

### The Stillborn Lover April 24th to May 10th

Timothy Irving Frederick Findley, or Tiff, as he was fondly known, wrote many novels, novellas and short stories – but he also, and this may come as a surprise to many of us who know his work - wrote plays. Of these, *The Stillborn Lover*, written in 1993, is perhaps the most performed. I had read several of Findley's novels and appreciated his rhythmic style, deft diction, telling settings and well placed words; however, it wasn't until I started out on the production of this play that I became fully aware of just how much of Findley's own experience as an actor informed him as a playwright. Bill Whitehead, his partner of more than 40 years, puts it this way: "Tiff calls being an actor the best apprenticeship a writer can have." He adds, "Scene structure, dialogue, rhythm, cadence, language, the interplay between action and words ... he approaches character the way an actor does, by looking into himself for feelings."

In journeying through this play we have felt the force of the creative spirit of this man who took on huge themes: the vulnerability of the individual versus the institution, the passion of interpersonal conflict, the miasma of mental illness, the limitlessness of love, the search for self in terms of emotional and sexual integrity – these are all topics addressed by the playwright. How fortunate we are to be the recipients of his thoughts and to be challenged to bring them to life on the stage.



**Tickets on Sale NOW!**

### TAG Ticket Prices

**\$13 Members/Seniors/Students**  
**\$16 Non-Members**

Note: TAG prices include all Ticket Atlantic service fees except where tickets are purchased online (\$2 per online session)

### 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 2014 Contact

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Is spring here yet? Boy, it has been a long winter! I have to say I will not miss the snow. On a positive note, things at the Theatre Arts Guild have been busy despite the weather.

**N**oble Pursuit by Douglas Bowie a witty, farcical play that pokes fun at the world of literature, just closed. It was a gem of a play. Lots of fun had by everyone involved in the production. It was sad to see the set come down.

With every set we disassemble, another one takes its place. But before the construction starts for our next production, we paused for a "One Night Only" event... Comedy Times Three! An evening of three comedies; two from the TAG @ the Library group and Department of Common Sense by Ryan Van Horne, Liverpool International Theatre Festival, TAG's entry play. It was a wonderful evening of

entertainment and socializing with all those who attended.

Next up, *The Stillborn Lover* by Timothy Findley, a politically charged drama and then the musical comedy, *The Full Monty* to round out the season.

Before long we will be announcing our next season. Stay Tuned!

- Angela Butler, President

### 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!



Have a suggestion for a play you would like to see on the TAG stage? If so, the Artistic Committee would like to hear from you. We are also looking for Producers for the upcoming 2014/2015 season! Interested members should contact Artistic Director, Rayna Smith-Camp at the email below!

Email: [artistic-director@tagtheatre.com](mailto:artistic-director@tagtheatre.com).

Suggest  
a  
Play

Our most recent show was *The Noble Pursuit*, a witty farce full of missing manuscripts and mistaken identities! It closed to great reviews from the media and audiences!



### Community Notes

**Dartmouth Players presents:**

Harvey (Apr 9th to 26th 2014)  
Visit [www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca](http://www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca) or call 465-PLAY for more info

**Bedford Players presents:**

Arsenic and Old Lace (Mar 27th to Apr 12th 2014)  
Visit [www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca](http://www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca) or call 832-3300 for more info

### Coming Soon

**The Full Monty**

(June 26th to July 13th) Six unemployed steel workers from a Cape Breton town find themselves unemployed. Desperate for work, anxious to prove themselves and in need of quick cash, they decide to stage a striptease. However, they take it one step further and promise to go for "the full monty".

Directed by Rebecca Humphreys



## PLEASE TAKE YOUR SEATS

### Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary The 51st in a Continuing Series

Once upon a time, that was all that was necessary to say to an audience. These days, unfortunately, we have to add..."and please turn off the ringer on your phone or set it to vibrate. You might also want to consider that the glare from your phone/ipad/tablet, etc. could prove distracting to the actors and those around you." Ah me – technology once again shows itself to be both a blessing and a curse, since it now enables everyday life to intrude upon the previously sacrosanct theatrical experience.

You might think that disruptions in a performance are a new phenomenon, but what I've described above is simply another turn of a very old wheel! Conventions regarding how audience members behave in a theatre have surged and waned with the centuries and what today we would consider respectful – keeping noise to a minimum, not bringing food and drink into an auditorium, not singing along with the musical numbers - are points of recent origin.

Those who formed the audience of Ancient Greek tragedies and comedies expected to be at the theatre for hours, even days, in the open air and sitting on seats carved out of stone. Since many of the performances were also part of religious festivals honouring Dionysius, the god of wine, there was alcohol in abundance - even the actors got drunk! Sitting still and concentrating were not requirements of the experience.

Moving forward by centuries, audiences in Shakespeare's time felt that they could voice approval (or the reverse) if touched by a particular passage or point in the action. It was easier for those who were standing in the open area surrounding the stage (the 'cheap seats') – those who could afford to pay more had seating under a canopy, an indication that more attention was starting to be paid to the comfort of the

buying public.

Parallel to the development of completely enclosed theatre spaces, yet more attention begins to be paid to ticket-buyers. The enclosed canopy of Tudor times evolves into tiers of accommodation, with appropriate seating from luxurious to sparse. For the really wealthy there are private boxes, then private boxes with dining space on the side and promenades where audience members can mingle, flirt and gossip (with people of their own status) during acts. The social aspect of the evening becomes more important than the theatrical one - albeit without the technology! There is so much chatter at the opera that no one pays attention to the overture. And if you would rather bring your mistress to the performance instead of your wife, you can pay for a box that is discreetly screened!

The raucous behaviour that is typical of the Restoration and Georgian eras does abate when Victoria comes to the throne – although there is a counter. Performances of pantomimes and melodramas encourage and even depend on the participation of the audience, to boo and hiss at the villain and cheer along the hero and heroine. Our TAG Christmas pantomime follows this tradition (though not the tradition of throwing rotten fruit or bottles at actors who fall below expectations!). Otherwise, we hope that our audience members will regard their time in our theatre as a listening and learning one. Our casts have worked for six to eight weeks in advance of Opening Night and have committed themselves to providing you with a night of entertainment. You, on your part, have signified your interest and commitment by purchasing a ticket. It seems a shame to interrupt that commitment by having other things intrude on the experience – whether it's someone talking loudly, checking e-mails, or unwrapping candies. For us, there's a mystery to the theatrical experience and we'd like to invite you into that mystery – without the interruptions!

I hope that you will join us for *The Stillborn Lover*.

- Judy Reade