



CONTACT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD



TAG BOX OFFICE
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477-2663

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

TAG PRESENTS *Marie Antoinette: The Colour of Flesh*

by Joel Gross, directed by Nick Jupp

Marie Antoinette: The Colour of Flesh is an exciting trip through the twenty years leading up to the French revolution and the time of the American War of Independence. Politics, social unrest and class struggles were occurring on both sides of the Atlantic at a time through which the Austrian Princess Marie Antoinette became the Queen of France.

Three characters; Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, Elizabeth Louise Vigee Le Brun, a famous portrait painter and Count Alexis de Ligne tangle in a three way relationship that evolves from fanciful lust to secret encounters and on to true love and dedicated friendship. While the turmoil of the times swirls around them these three passionate characters bond in every way you can imagine while trying to survive one of history's most tumultuous periods.

To say Marie Antoinette's life was challenging would be an understatement. Playwright Joel Gross first introduces us to a nineteen year old Marie Antoinette who has been married to the Dauphin of France since she was fifteen. By the age of twenty two she had become Queen of France but had yet to provide her husband with an heir to the throne. As an Austrian outsider and a childless Queen, Marie's life was not easy. Through the handsome but penniless Count Alexis de Ligne, Marie meets and becomes friends with the artist Elizabeth Louise Vigee Le Brun. The three characters begin a twenty year tangled relationship that ends for some at the guillotine.

Marie Antoinette: The Colour of Flesh has an adult theme and content that may not be suitable for children.

Theatre arts guild presents



Marie Antoinette: *the colour of flesh*

Written by Joel Gross

Directed by Nick Jupp

June 25th - July 11th

Pond Playhouse

For tickets/info:

(902) 477-2663 | www.tagtheatre.com

presented through the kind permission of Dramatists Play Service

Opening June 25th

Reservations
www.tagtheatre.com

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Send your newsletter
submissions to
newsletter@tagtheatre.com

Support the
Pond Playhouse
Make a Donation Today!

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

AUDITION CALL

Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)

by Anne-Marie MacDonald

TAG's 2009-10 season opener, *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)*, by Anne-Marie MacDonald will run from September 24th through October 10th. The play explores Constance Ledbelly's hypothesis and attempts to prove that Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet* were actually derived from comedies by an earlier author. Shakespeare is taken for a joy-ride when she unravels the plots and interacts with characters from each play.

Audition Dates: June 14 & 15

Time: 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

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

We are looking for five energetic actors who are comfortable with Shakespearean diction and are eager to do justice to this wonderful comedy. There will be some preliminary readings in July, (while actors work on memorizing their lines), before full rehearsals commence on Sunday August 2nd through September. (Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings, most likely.) The cast consists of:

- Female 1: *Desdemona, Ramona, Mercutio, Servant*
- Female 2: *Juliet, Student, Soldier of Cyprus*
- Lead Female: *Constance Ledbelly*, (an assistant professor at Queen's University)
- Male 1: *Othello, Professor Claude Night*, (a professor at Queen's University, and boss to Constance Ledbelly), *Juliet's Nurse, Tybalt*
- Male 2: *Romeo, Chorus, Iago, Ghost*

Those auditioning will be asked to read extracts from the script and will be provided the opportunity, should they desire, to read a few lines from a Shakespeare play of their choice. For additional information please contact the director, Phil Reid, at 455-0045 or phil.reid@ns.sympatico.ca

DRINKING ALONE LEAVES THEM LAUGHING



Director Frank MacLean speaks to the cast of *Drinking Alone* at a rehearsal. (left to right: Frank MacLean, Kyle Gillis, Jody MacArthur (standing), Cynthia Myers, Shirley Dixon (standing), Scott Murphy)

May 2009 CONTACT

Closing to a standing ovation, *Drinking Alone*, the Norm Foster comedy, was another success for Foster and the Pond Playhouse.

Audiences and critics were laughing with delight at the antics of the deeply dysfunctional Todd family.

Unfortunately, the run was cut short when the April 30th performance was cancelled as a result of the Springfield fire.

Renew Your TAG Membership Today!

Not yet renewed your membership for the current 2008-9 season? Renew or join as a new member, during the run of the final show, *Marie Antoinette: The Colour of Flesh*, and your membership will automatically be extended to include the 2009 -10 season!

COMMUNITY NOTES

Dartmouth Players presents "ART" by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton and directed by Bryn Rowlands. The play will run from June 10 to 27, 2009.

Winner of the 1998 Tony Award for Best Play, and the 1996 Olivier Award for Best Comedy, this is a fast paced comedy with a few twists.

It ostensibly reviews the concept of ART as it relates to individual perception and interpretation, but it also examines the impact of varying degrees of personal growth on relationships over the course of time. It makes for intense and hilarious interpersonal patter among three very different gentlemen played by Phil Reid, Terry Coolen and Frank MacLean.

A BIG THANK YOU
TO ALL OF OUR
VALUED
TAG VOLUNTEERS

TAG Announces 2009-10 Season

The Theatre Arts Guild is pleased to announce its 2009-10 season lineup:

Fall/Opening show (Sept. 24- Oct. 10 2009) *Good Night Desdemona, (Good Morning Juliet)* by Ann-Marie MacDonald, directed by Phil Reid

Christmas show (Dec. 3 -19, 2009) *The Legend of the Char Princess (A Cinderella Story)*, written and directed by Eric Rountree

Winter Show (February 11- 27, 2010) remounting *Thirteen Hands* by Carol Shields and directed by Louise Renault. This is a dramatic comedy with a cast of 12 women.

Spring Show (April 22 - May 8, 2010) *How it Works* by Daniel MacIvor and directed by Michele Moore. This is a drama with a cast of 3 women and 1 man)

Summer Show (June 17 - July 3, 2010) *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose and directed by Angela Butler. This is a thriller/drama/blockbuster with a cast of 12 men.

Mark your calendars today!



Are You On Facebook?
So is the
Theatre Arts Guild!

Join TAG on
Facebook Today!

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

Your contribution is tax deductible.

All proceeds to the TAG Capital Campaign.

Visit www.tagtheatre.com or email seatsale@tagtheatre.com for more information about this exciting fundraiser!

IMPROVED ONLINE RESERVATION SYSTEM

Not only was TAG's production of *Drinking Alone* a hit with audiences, it was also a test of the Theatre's improved web reservation system. Developed by Ben Hunter at North East Web, the system provides patrons with an e-mail confirmation of their reservation.

"The system immediately adds the reservation to the database and keeps an accurate count of the seats booked" said Valerie Dubois, producer of *Drinking Alone*; "so there were no missed reservations or overbooking. As an added benefit,

the system reduces the workload of volunteers who maintain the reservation system."

"The more patrons book online, the more efficient the system becomes," said Valerie; "so book with confidence!"

Patrons may book online at www.tagtheatre.com. For those who do not use a computer, you can still reserve by calling 477-2663. Please note that phone reservations are not called unless the seats requested are unavailable.

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!

May 2009 CONTACT

THEATRE OF THE BAROQUE

Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary - the 27th in a continuing series...

In 1770, at the tender age of 15, Maria Antonia Josepha Johanna von Habsburg-Lothringen, daughter of Francis I, Holy Roman Emperor and Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, travels from Vienna to Paris to become the wife of the heir to the French throne. As Joséphe-Jeanne-Marie-Antoinette, she becomes Queen of France in 1774. The journey from Austria to France is but the start of a troubled life permeated by scandal, pitiless criticism, outright enmity and intense scrutiny of action, thought and behaviour – a journey which ends only at the guillotine of the Place de la Révolution, on the 16th of October, 1793.

But let me assure you, this atmosphere of doom and gloom will not continue through this piece, because the marriage of 1770 brought about one good thing – the building of a theatre in the Royal Palace of Versailles! It was not that theatrical activity was lacking in court circles in times past – the French monarchs who were the predecessors of Marie-Antoinette's husband, Louis XVI, were renowned for their support of plays, music and the arts in general. It was just that, prior to this date, there had been no proper 'salle de spectacle' in which to present plays - instead performances were held in halls, or before the grand 'Ambassadors Staircase' and if the weather was suitable, in clearings in the woods surrounding the palace. There are records which show that, during the reign of Louis XIV (1682-1715), over a thousand tragedies and

comedies were performed at court, with the works of Molière, Corneille and Racine being the favoured choices. And the term 'plays' really doesn't accurately describe what was presented – better the terms 'spectacle,' 'divertissement,' 'extravaganza,' in which the spoken word was allied with music (Molière often collaborated with the composer Lully), sports contests, dance, poetry recitations, illuminations, banquets and balls, all climaxed with displays of fireworks over the palace buildings.

Joel Gross, the author of our upcoming play "Marie Antoinette: the Color of Flesh," actually includes a scene set in the Versailles theatre, with the Queen playing the role of Mariane in Molière's comedy "Tartuffe". Marie was certainly a strong supporter of the theatre in general, increasing the number of sites in the royal homes where plays could be performed and encouraging the writing and performance of new works (even such controversial works as "The Marriage of Figaro" by Beaumarchais, with its criticism of the aristocracy, a piece which had actually had public performances banned by the King!).

The theatre at Versailles still exists and was restored in 1993. There are however Baroque theatres in Europe which have survived intact, with all the original fittings. The Ekhof Theatre in Gotha, Germany, has a stage which was constructed between 1681-1683 and retains the original rapid mechanisms for changing scenery. Multiple grooves run along the floor of the stage,

into the right and left wing spaces. Each one of these grooves has room enough for three pieces of scenery to be stacked one behind the other. When the set is to be changed, an elaborate system of axles and ropes draws back the front flat of each set and – voilà – it's on to the next scene! It was at Gotha too in 1775 that the first German court theatre was founded, a group of actors in the pay of Duke Ernest II, who performed exclusively at the Castle. The theatre scenes for the Miloš Forman film, "Amadeus," were shot in the Baroque Count Nostitz theatre in Prague (now called The Estates Theatre), the actual site where Mozart's operas "Don Giovanni" and "La Clemenza di Tito" had their first performances. Another fine Baroque example, the theatre of the Castle at Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic, actually has a connection to Dalhousie University. For the past five years, students in Dalhousie's Theatre programme have had the opportunity of taking a course there in Baroque Culture. Like Lunenburg in Nova Scotia, Český Krumlov is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Not only is its stage and auditorium preserved, but the orchestra pit, machinery, props and costumes. Unfortunately the costumes are now so fragile that they had used for display and study purposes only, so you won't get a chance to see them in "Marie Antoinette: the Color of Flesh!" ~

Judy Reade

