



# CONTACT



The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre

 @TAGHalifax  
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**The Pond Playhouse**

6 Parkhill Rd. Halifax, NS.

www.tagtheatre.com

(902) 477-2663

**AUGUST 2022**

## Up Next at TAG

## MARION BRIDGE By Daniel MacIvor

September 15 to October 1, 2022

Directed by Elaine Casey

Produced by J. Clayton Law

Stage Managed by Carolyn Boyer



**THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD**  
 Proudly Presents  
**MARION BRIDGE**  
 By Daniel MacIvor  
 Directed by Elaine Casey  
 Produced by J. Clayton Law  
 Stage Managed by Carolyn Boyer

**SEPTEMBER 15<sup>th</sup> to OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup>**  
 POND PLAYHOUSE  
 6 PARKHILL ROAD  
**TICKETS**  
 TicketAtlantic.com (902) 451-1221  
 TAGTHEATRE.COM  
Marion Bridge is Performed by Arrangement by Pam Winter, GGA, www.ggagency.ca

Three women come "home" to Cape Breton to be with their dying mother. Each in her own way tries to deal with the painful loneliness of their lives. Each is trying to reconcile what they have become with what they thought they wanted out of life and with what they thought their parents wanted for them. Nothing, of course, has turned out exactly the way anyone imagined it would.

Marion Bridge was nominated for the Governor General's Literary Awards given annually to the best English-language and the best French-language published play.

**Tickets on sale August 19, 2022 at [ticketatlantic.com](http://ticketatlantic.com).**

**\*\*Subject to Change\*\***

# President's Message

## Happy Summer!

I hope everyone is enjoying these beautiful summer days. We all know how quickly our Nova Scotia weather can change on us, so make hay while sun shines!

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Dracula: The Bloody Truth* on finally being able to finish what was started in March 2020! It was a long road, with several stops and starts, but the show made it back to the TAG stage and successfully completed a three week run. It was certainly worth the wait.

The rehearsals for *Marion Bridge* have been ongoing since the end of June. This touching and humorous story about three sisters who return home to Cape Breton will open September 15th and tickets will be available mid August.

The next audio presentation, *Behind the Beyond*, is now streaming free via our TAG website. Please note the date for our Annual General Meeting, which is Monday September 19th, at 7:30pm. All members in good standing are welcome to attend. The audition dates for our Pantomime - which returns after a two year hiatus - have been announced and we hope to see many of you there for this family favourite production.

There are plenty of live performances happening this summer throughout the province, so please show support as these groups and organizations return a new normal.

We are excited about our upcoming season at TAG and hope many of you will feel comfortable returning.

Rayna Smith Camp  
President

## Newsletter Highlights

- *Up Next at TAG (front page)*
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## Theatre Arts Guild

### Annual General Meeting

Monday, September 19, 2022 7:30 PM

Pond Playhouse, 6 Parkhill Road, Halifax

Zoom details to follow. Check website for updated details.

[tagtheatre.com](http://tagtheatre.com)

Theatre Arts Guild invites all members in good standing to attend the Annual General Meeting. The current Executive Board will present annual reports, including the financial statements. Elections will take place for the 2022/2023 Executive Board. A Nominating Committee will present a slate of officers. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.



# TAG Online



## TAG is Digital

Stream TAG's digital content  
for free.

Check it out!

<https://tagtheatre.com/AudioPlays.html>  
<https://tagtheatre.com/VideoPresentations.html>

## Now Featuring

Based on the book, *Behind the Beyond*, and *Other Contributions to Human Knowledge* by  
**Stephen Leacock, 1913.**  
An Audio Presentation  
Produced by John O'Brien  
and  
Directed by J. Clayton Law

Join humorist Stephen Leacock for a night at the theatre with a production  
of the scandalous Problem Play,

### *Behind the Beyond*

Lady Cicely is deprived of life, and seeking a way out of her languishing existence  
with her husband, Sir John Trevor, a politician in the House of Commons. With Jack  
Harding, Sir John's secretary, she plots a way to run away with him. Meanwhile,  
Jack's mother, Margaret, has sent a letter to Sir John saying she is on her way,  
reminding him of his past deeds.

How long can one run from reality? Can one truly hide from truths and revelations  
behind the beyond?

#### STARRING

Mark DeWolf as Sir John Trevor

Hannah Blizzard as Lady Cicely

Charles Bull as Jack Harding

Heather Mills as Margaret Harding

Featuring Phil Reid as Prof. Stephen Leacock

And special appearances by Jenny Martynshyn, coordinator of the Stephen Leacock  
Museum, and Bill VanGorder

Recorded over Zoom via Mariposa and at The Pond Playhouse  
[YouTube and tagtheatre.com/AudioPlays.html](https://tagtheatre.com/AudioPlays.html)

## Coming Soon



### The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

#### TAG's sixth digital play

A young woman is whisked away to a summer  
home where she is encouraged to rest and  
recuperate upon being diagnosed with a "slight  
hysterical tendency". Entreated by her husband  
to stay indoors she fills her days with journaling  
of her newfound fixation: the papered yellow  
walls.

Directed by Hannah Blizzard  
Produced by Joshua Law

# Featured Volunteer

## Bill VanGorder

Bill VanGorder got involved with the Theatre Arts Guild in 1996 when Nick Jupp asked him to help with publicity on California Suite. He joined the Board a year later and Publicity Director. He has held many positions on the TAG Board including President, Executive Producer and Publicity Director.

Bill has directed a dozen productions at TAG and worked as Producer, Publicity Lead, Sound or Lighting Designer and other behind the scenes roles on over 50 TAG productions. He enjoys all the activity at the theatre because of the scores of wonderful, talented volunteers many of who have become very close friends.

He has appeared as an actor in *Twelve Angry Men* (2010), *A Man for All Seasons* (2013), *Pride and Prejudice* (2017) and *The Wizard of ... Oz?* (2019) but he says his most important performance on the Pond Playhouse stage was *The (real!) Wedding of Esther Green and Bill VanGorder*, June 6, 1998 and *Angel Street*, Playhouse - June 26-28, July 3-6, 10-12, 2003,

He directed *Bell, Book and Candle* (2002), *I Hate Hamlet* (2004), *Office Hours* (2007), *The Lone Star half of Laundry and Bourbon/Lone Star* (2011), *The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes* co-directed with Rene Hartleib (2012), *The Diary of Anne Frank* (2018) and a number of special productions such as *The Long-Delayed Return of The TAG Variety Show* (2019).

One of his best memories is of working with his wife Esther (Stage Manager) as Producer of *Angel Street* Directed by their daughter Beth VanGorder.

Other memories:

Most fun cast and show – *Office Hours*

Best Comedy – *I Hate Hamlet*

Most important and memorable play – *The Diary of Anne Frank* which had an entirely sold-out run.

This year Bill is doing the publicity for *Marion Bridge* which opens in September and is Producer of the Annual Pantomime, *Red Riding's In the Hood* By Cheryl Theriault running in November – December.



**Playing together**



# AUDITION NOTICE

Auditions for TAG's Annual Pantomime

***RED RIDING'S IN THE HOOD***

by Cheryl Theriault

Adapted from the 2004 script by Cheryl Theriault  
and Lorne Abramson

Music Director, Wayne MacIntyre  
Stage Manager, Esther VanGorder.

Tuesday and Wednesday August 30 and 31 from 7-9  
Pond Playhouse 6 Parkhill Road Halifax (off the  
Purcell's Cove Road, just past the Frog Pond).

The show will run from November 24-December 10, 2022  
Rehearsal start date September 7th, 2022

Rehearsals will be on Sundays 1-5 and Mondays and  
Wednesdays 7-9:30

**Auditions Requirements:** We are looking for people of all ages  
(minimum age 18), sizes and colours who love to play and sing  
(a bit) and laugh. And who will learn their lines...

At the audition, you will be provided with written scenes from  
the script and will be asked to read for various parts. You may  
certainly request to read for a particular part. Also you will be  
asked to sing a short song of your own choice ...or "Oh  
Canada". For our Musical Director.

For more information, contact the Director: Cheryl Theriault  
at [cjoytheriault@gmail.com](mailto:cjoytheriault@gmail.com)



**PANTO  
IS BACK**



**SO, MARK YOUR CALENDARS  
NOW!**

***RED RIDING'S IN THE HOOD***  
by Cheryl Theriault

November 24-December 10, 2022

Tickets will go on sale in  
mid-October.

Here is what you can look forward to:

It's someday, sometime deep in the dark lush woods of Haligonias and there's a rumour of a rumble. Red Riding is reluctantly helping her mother, The Widow R, sell the family wares but Red has plans to launch herself in a more creative direction.

When two tiny strangers enter the woods and decide to hang around for a bit they find themselves witness to a battle for hidden secrets and a fight for true love. And there's a witch!

Watch for tickets on sale in mid-October.

# TAG's 2022-2023 Season

## ***Marion Bridge***

September 15 - October 1, 2022

By Daniel MacIvor

Director: Elaine Casey

Three women in their thirties come "home" to Cape Breton to be with their dying mother. Each in her own way tries to deal with the painful loneliness of their lives - each is trying to reconcile what they have become with what they thought they wanted out of life and with what they thought their parents wanted for them. Nothing, of course, has turned out exactly the way anyone imagined it would.

## **Red Riding's in the Hood**

November 24 - December 10, 2022

By Cheryl Theriault and Lorne Abramson

Director: Cheryl Theriault

Panto Resurrected from the early years of the 21st century (2004), Red Riding's In The Hood will grace the TAG stage this November and December. The gnome and the toad are still there as are the fuzzy forest creatures and the terrifyingly wolfish wolves. But a few characters have a shiny new look and are humming some fresh tunes. Join us in the deep dark woods of Haligonia as we witness the age old battle between good (hurray!) and bad (boo). Mwa-ha-haha-ha!!!!

## **TAG Variety Show**

January 28, 2023

Tickets at the Door

Enjoy the variety of talent at TAG. The Variety Show is an informal evening of variety entertainment by TAG members and friends.

## **The Glass Menagerie**

March 16 - April 1, 2023

By Tennessee Williams

Director: Angela Butler

A son longs to escape from his stifling home, where his genteel mother worries about the future prospects of his lame, shy sister.

## **6th Biennial Playwrights @ TAG Festival**

April 27-29, 2023

The evening will feature one-act plays written by local playwrights who will see their words come to life at the Pond Playhouse.



## **Mystery Musical**

June 8 - 24, 2023

Director: Jocelyn Leblanc

Music Director: Ralph Walton-Bone Urquhart

We will not make a habit of keeping you in suspense ...  
details coming soon.



## TICKET INFO

### How to Purchase Tickets

TAG tickets are sold through Ticket Atlantic:

- Charge by Phone at (902) 451-1221 (\$2 transaction fee)
- Online at [www.ticketatlantic.com](http://www.ticketatlantic.com) (\$2 transaction fee)
- Ticket Atlantic Scotiabank Centre Box Office
- At the door (subject to availability)

*Please do not be fooled by online ticket resellers. Ticket Atlantic is the ONLY legitimate online seller of tickets for Pond Playhouse productions..*

### Ticket Prices

**\*\*NOTE CHANGES\*\***

Regular \$20

Seniors (60+) and Students \$18

Members \$15

*Ticket Atlantic will charge a \$2 transaction fee for online and phone orders. Note: this fee is per transaction, not per ticket.*

### Season Tickets (Best Deal)

TAG Season Tickets will be available for a limited time before the start of each new season.

**2022-2023 Season Tickets on sale August 12, 2022**

**\*\*\*subject to change\*\*\***

Regular \$60

Seniors (60+) and Students \$54

Members \$45

TAG Season Tickets may be purchased from Ticket Atlantic by phone 902-451-1221 or in person at Scotiabank Centre Box Office downtown. They are NOT available online or, at the Pond Playhouse.

*Ticket Atlantic will charge a \$2 transaction fee for phone orders. Note: this fee is per transaction, not per ticket.*

## TAG PRIZE DRAW

Join/Renew your TAG membership by Sunday, September 4, 2022 and you will be automatically entered to win a draw for

**Season Tickets**  
for TAG's  
2022-2023 Season



Visit our website to Join Online or complete your Membership Form  
All memberships are \$15  
[Renew/Join today!](#)

[tagtheatre.com/membership.html](http://tagtheatre.com/membership.html)

## TAG Executive Board 2021-2022

*Rayna Smith Camp- President*

*Shannon Nudds- Vice-President and Volunteer Development*

*Patrick Charron- Treasurer*

*Stephanie Demedeiros Ouedraogo- Secretary*

*Jennifer Robbins- Artistic Director*

*Joshua Law- Executive Producer*

*Bill VanGorder- Publicity, Marketing and Fundraising Director*

*Lorne Abramson- Building Manager*

*Valerie Dubois- Web Director and Membership*

*Angela Butler- Newsletter Editor*

*David Williams- Bar Manager*

*TAG Technical Team*

*TAG Costume and Props Team*

*TAG Archives*

*Michele Moore- TAG Phone Line*

## TAG MEMBERSHIP

**Become a TAG Member Today**

**A TAG membership is the ideal way to help your community theatre thrive while developing your own theatrical skills & interests and making new friends.**

**Join or renew your membership today.**

<https://www.tagtheatre.com/membership.html>

**THAT'S A WRAP!**

**DRACULA-  
THE BLOODY TRUTH-  
A COMEDY**

**BY LE NAVET BETE AND JOHN NICHOLSON**

**DIRECTED BY NICK JUPP**

**OPENED MAY 12 - 28, 2022**

**AT TAG'S POND PLAYHOUSE, 6 PARKHILL RD HALIFAX**

**STARRING:**

**CATHY CAMERON**

**EILEEN CAREY**

**HEIDI HODGKINSON**

**JOLENE PATTISON**

**WITH:**

**PHILIP BORG**

**NICOLE FIGUEIRA**

**PALMA HEMING**



**PRODUCED BY GERALDINE McDONALD  
STAGE MANAGER - ESTHER VANGORDER**

**"...A SILLY BELLY LAUGH :) IT IS FUN AND ENTERTAINING :)"**





### Episode 8: Vying for the Prize – TAG and the Dominion Drama Festival

Sometimes the stars really do align, as in 1932 when the announcement was made at Rideau Hall in Ottawa by the Governor General (at that time the Earl of Bessborough) that a competitive festival was to be established for amateur theatre organizations. Lord Bessborough was one of a group of four luminaries who proposed and financed this project. One of the other members was Vincent Massey, himself a future Governor General, brother of the Hollywood actor Raymond Massey and uncle to two more actors Daniel and his sister Anna. The motivations for founding the festival were several - members were concerned about the scarcity of professional theatres in the country, about the lack of opportunities for training for those who wished to make theatre their career and the decline in the number of touring companies (coming primarily from England) visiting Canada and introducing Canadian audiences to new plays.

The festival was formed of two levels. Entrants had to enter the regional competition first and the winners of this stage then moved on to the national final. The inaugural festival in April of 1933 consisted of eight regional rounds, but by 1937, this had expanded to ten. Nova Scotia was paired with Prince Edward Island (as “the Maritimes”), then there was New Brunswick, Eastern and Western Quebec, Eastern and Western Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and finally British Columbia. Groups paid a registration fee of \$20.00 and there were cash prizes for the regional finalists, depending on the population size of the province! Apart from the expansion in the number of groups, the associated structure of the festival also expanded, due to its popularity. The venue for the finals was the nation’s capital for the first five years, but then moved to other cities. Regional competitions also moved to a new venue each year. Only one-act plays were accepted at first, but this soon expanded to full-length plays. From the outset groups were expected to be at their very best and, at least until after the Second World War, the adjudicators at the regional level had to be bilingual and from England or France. To avoid any hint of favouritism, the adjudicator of the final presentations was a different person altogether!

As well as the training opportunities which the festival was intended to provide (a goal which was certainly achieved), there was the chance for amateur enthusiasts to meet similar folk from other parts of the country (also well satisfied – too well satisfied in the opinion of some, since various social events were added to fill out the week’s performance schedule, including balls with required evening dress from all attendees!). What was not so successful was the goal of introducing Canadian or original material into the mix of plays. One of the criticisms levelled at the organization was that, while all the participants were Canadian, the plays selected were both ‘elitist’ and supportive of ‘Colonial’ values. In defense of all those cast and crew members of TAG’s entries from 1933 to 1970, with the emphasis on meeting high standards, the Guild chose what it could do best – and therefore didn’t take many risks! These choices ranged from Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night* in 1937) to George Bernard Shaw (*Candida* in 1959) to popular English and American comedies (*A Lady Mislaid* by Kenneth Horne in 1953 and *The Lady’s Not for Burning* in 1958 and *Second Threshold* by Philip Barry in 1952, just a year after its highly successful debut in New York). As an aside here, Kenneth Horne was a popular comedian and writer of comedy shows as well as a playwright, and I remember as a teenager listening to his weekly radio programme *Round the Horne!* *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Bertolt Brecht – not an easy piece to pull off – was somewhat more adventurous for 1963 and with all participants having to produce a piece with a Canadian theme for the Centennial Year of 1967, TAG’s choice fitted beautifully, with scenes dramatized from Neil MacNeil’s 1948 book *The Highland Heart* in Nova Scotia.

After a break for the war years, the early success of the 1930s proved hard to recover. The expansion of the festival meant that funding was a problem, amateur groups from Quebec formed their own association and withdrew, professional activity was growing and in 1957, the federal government brought into being the Canada Council, dedicated solely to supporting professional actors and theatres. The Dominion Drama Festival limped along until 1978, when the money ran out and the headquarters in Ottawa closed. On the festival circuit however, TAG was still active, participating in a Provincial Theatre Festival in June of 1978 and an Atlantic Drama Festival the next year.

But, I hear you saying, DID TAG WIN! At the regional level, yes, collecting many acting and directing trophies (see the 1947 example below). But winning at the regional level in these categories did not mean advancement to the finals – the best production was the piece which moved forward. And that did happen for TAG in 1939, with *Love from a Stranger*, but alas, no national award. I think however, that TAG’s record of competing in the festival from the first year onwards is definitely cause for a celebration and of course, TAG audiences got to see each festival piece, usually a month in advance of the competition. Though the Dominion Drama Festival did not survive, it was a worthy undertaking and its legacy lives on in the community theatres of every province.



*Judy Reade, TAG’s Archivist*