



# CONTACT

The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild



Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre



@TAGHalifax

@tagtheatrehalifax

@TAGTheatre

info@tagtheatre.com



**The Pond Playhouse**

6 Parkhill Rd. Halifax, NS.

www.tagtheatre.com

(902) 477-2663

## FEBRUARY/MARCH 2024

### UP NEXT AT TAG

### MURDER TONIGHT

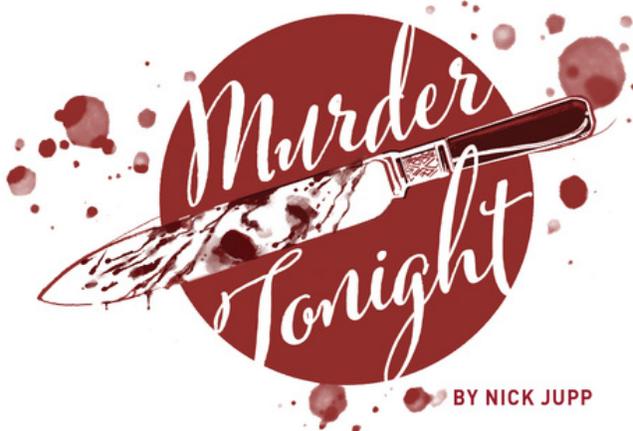
by Nick Jupp

Director: Nick Jupp

Producer: Lorne Abramson

Stage Manager: Angela Butler

Asst Stage Manager: Philip Borg



BY NICK JUPP

DIRECTOR  
NICK JUPP

PRODUCER  
LORNE ABRAMSON

STAGE MANAGER  
ANGELA BUTLER

**MARCH 7 to  
MARCH 23,  
2024 WITH ONE  
MATINÉE**

**TICKETS**  
TAGTheatre.com  
no processing fees!



THE POND PLAYHOUSE • 6 PARKHILL RD.

Poster Design by Kerry Hodgson

Tickets on sale February 8th for members and general public February 15th at tagtheatre.com

*Caution: Murder Tonight includes adult themes, adult language and loud noises.*

Step into a world where family ties tangle with dark secrets in the captivating play, *Murder Tonight*. This enthralling murder mystery unfolds the complex lives of three sisters - Mia, Sophia and Olivia. Witness their journey from ambitious young adults, grappling with careers and romantic entanglements, to seasoned women confronting the harsh realities of time and change.

STARRING

Erin Niedermayer

Jocelyn Covert, Laura MacMillan,  
Deanna Graham, Rayna Smith-Camp,  
Kristin Ross, Calum MacLean and

Rob McIntyre

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone has begun this new year on a positive note.

Our recent production, *An Evening with Gilbert and Sullivan*, was a sold-out event. It was a walk down memory lane for many of us who used to perform with the former G&S Society, and for those who enjoy the operettas. Thank you to the very talented performers and to the crew for an enjoyable two nights of music.

Next up is *Murder Tonight*, written by Nick Jupp. In this story we meet three young sisters, who have a complicated relationship with each other. Twenty years later, they reunite to celebrate a husband's birthday, however we soon learn this is no ordinary reunion. Tickets will be on sale starting February 15th for the general public.

You may have noticed our play schedule for the rest of this season is not included on our website. We had to make some changes and we are currently collaborating to bring you some alternative events. We will release all the details in the coming weeks.

*Rayna Smith-Camp*  
President



## Sneak Peek into Our Newsletter

- *Up Next at TAG (front page)*
- *President's Message*
- *Coming Soon*
- *TAG Online*
- *Valentine's Day 50/50*
- *Support TAG*
- *Featured Volunteer*
- *Being a Volunteer at TAG*
- *Gilbert & Sullivan~ TAG sing-a-long*
- *Membership ~ added Benefit!*
- *TAG Executive Board*
- *Memories of... Santa Claus the Panto*
- *The History of TAG-  
90 Years and Counting*

## SEASON FINALE EVENTS

STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE

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

# TAG ONLINE

TAG Digital, The Theatre Arts Guild virtual stage, started as a response to the COVID-19 lockdowns in June 2020, in collaboration with The Telescope Theatre Project. Its aim is to share new, familiar, and obscure works of poetry, prose, and plays, and provide an educational, relaxing, and creative process for participants who desire to take part in a production, but are unable to commit to the demands of a live production. Since September 2020, they have released audio and video productions, made primarily available on YouTube.

The Telescope Theatre Project was a creative, collaborative cooperative of storytelling enthusiasts, with interests in poetry, prose, and plays. Formed in 2013 by Kaylon Fraser, Melinda Antle, and Joshua Law, their ultimate goal was to explore new, familiar, and lost works, and share them with artists and audiences. Following the amalgamation with TAG in 2021, the Project dissolved, but Telescope remains as a producer within TAG.

TAG Digital welcomes your submission of poetry, prose and plays

[https://tagtheatre.com/tag\\_digital.html](https://tagtheatre.com/tag_digital.html)

*Note: Submitted pieces must be either original work or fall within the public domain  
(70+ years after death of author)*

Stream TAG's digital content for free!

## STAY TUNED FOR UP AND COMING AUDIO PLAYS



### Valentine's Day 50/50 Draw

DRAW DATE: February 14, 2024, 11 am @ the Pond Playhouse

TICKETS: 1/\$2, 3/\$5, 10/\$10, 25/\$20, 100/\$50

SHOW YOUR LOVE FOR THE THEATRE

Winner takes half the 50/50 jackpot!

[rafflebox.ca/raffles/tag](http://rafflebox.ca/raffles/tag)

License No. AGD-335427-23





## Join Hands to Support TAG's Resilience Against COVID-19 Financial Strain!

Dear Valued Supporters,

In the face of unprecedented challenges brought about by the Covid pandemic, the Theatre Arts Guild (TAG) is reaching out to you for a helping hand. We believe in the power of community and together, we can overcome these hurdles and continue to bring the magic of theater to our audiences.

Here's an Opportunity to Amplify Your Impact:

Throughout the month of March, *CanadaHelps* has generously pledged to contribute an additional \$20 for each new monthly gift of \$20 or more, or an extra \$10 for existing monthly donations increased by \$10 or more when made to TAG through *CanadaHelps*. Your support can make a significant difference, and *CanadaHelps* is doubling down to ensure your contributions go even further.



### How You Can Make a Difference:

1. **Create a New Monthly Gift:** Pledge a monthly donation of \$20 or more through *CanadaHelps* in March, and *CanadaHelps* will make a one-time extra \$20 donation to TAG.
2. **Increase Your Existing Monthly Donation:** If you're already a monthly donor, consider increasing your donation by \$10 or more through *CanadaHelps*, and *CanadaHelps* will add an additional \$10 to support TAG's mission.

Act Now to Make an Impact Visit our *CanadaHelps* page at

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/the-theatre-arts-guild/>

to make your contribution and take advantage of this incredible opportunity to maximize your support for TAG.

Terms & Conditions:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/make-it-monthly-terms-and-conditions/>

### Why Theatre Arts Guild?

TAG has been a pillar in the arts community, bringing laughter, tears, and unforgettable moments to audiences for over 90 years. Your contribution ensures that we can continue to inspire, entertain, and uplift spirits through the transformative power of theatre. Thank you for standing by us during these challenging times. Together, we can weather the storm and emerge stronger than ever.

With heartfelt gratitude

Bill VanGorder

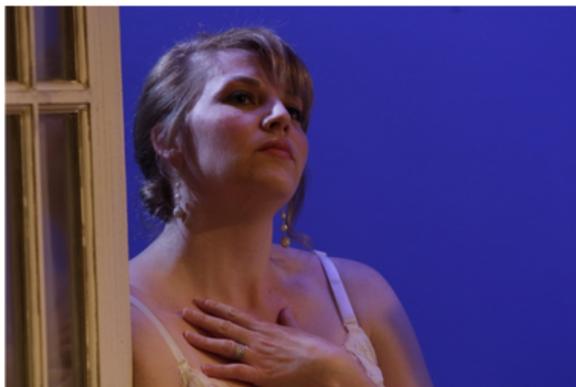
Fund Raising Chair

for the

Theatre Arts Guild Board of Directors

## Featured Volunteer

## Rayna Smith-Camp



**It all began when I was in high school. I was invited to join the Gilbert and Sullivan Society. After that, I was hooked. I eventually began to audition and volunteer with other community theatres. It influenced me to earn my Honours in Theatre from Dalhousie University.**



**I do love performing, but I also really enjoy the opportunity to work backstage. Each production comes with an opportunity to learn something new.**



**I am the current President of the Theatre Arts Guild Board and I will be performing in the next production, Murder Tonight, as Sophia (the elder!).**



# BEING A VOLUNTEER AT TAG

Louise Renault and Cheryl Theriault, the Volunteer Coordinators for TAG, are eager to get you involved so they are hosting a

## **THEATRE ORIENTATION!**

They will provide a tour of the theatre, backstage, painting and workshop areas, props and costumes as well as our rehearsal hall and the booth.

TAG's wonderful Bar Manager, David Williams, will also give you an overview of the Front of House (FOH) routine, where we check tickets and sell refreshments  
FOH is often a great place to start volunteering at TAG.

**Saturday, February 17th from 1-2:30 pm at  
The Pond Playhouse, 6 Parkhill Road.**

Attendance is limited to 10, so we can all have a chance to really get to know one another.

Email Louise/Cheryl at [tagvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:tagvolunteer@gmail.com) if you are interested and able to attend, or if you're interested but can't make that date.

Finally, there will be snacks and an informal question and answer session.



## An Evening of Gilbert and Sullivan - The TAG Sing-Along

TAG triumphantly brought Gilbert & Sullivan back to Halifax with Sold-Out shows that enchanted audiences with a revival of the timeless classics. The two sold-out performances, masterfully produced and directed by Jolene Pattison, have reignited a passion for traditional musical theatre at TAG. With the brilliant accompaniment of Yoko Nishiguchi and the efficient stage management of Esther VanGorder, TAG has truly outdone itself.

The amazing voices of the soloists filled the TAG auditorium with songs primarily from *The Mikado*, *HMS Pinafore* and the *Pirates of Penzance*.

Soloists were: JC Douglas, Duncan Miller, Lise Renault, Jolene Pattison, Michele Gaudet, Sheila Davis, Carol Grimmett, Brian Hart, Ron Pelot, Ralph Urquhart, Vanessa Buhr-Rountree, Kimberly Charron and Brad Filippone Augmented with Mary Anne Bohaker, Gisela O'Brien, Roger Bowman and Jacqui Good to create the chorus.

The productions were more than just shows; they were a celebration of musical heritage, bringing to life the whimsical and witty world of Gilbert & Sullivan. The audiences, a delightful mix of devoted fans and new admirers, were visibly thrilled by the return of these iconic composers to Halifax's cultural scene. The stars of the night were the cast members, a lineup of incredibly talented singers who dazzled the audience with their vocal prowess and expressive performances. Each actor brought a unique flair to their role, perfectly embodying the spirit of Gilbert & Sullivan's memorable characters.

In a delightful twist, the audience was not merely spectators but became part of the show. The TAG team involved the audience by encouraging them to sing along to the beloved choruses. These were projected on a new video screen at the back of the stage, adding an interactive and communal dimension to the experience.

As the final curtains closed, the feedback was unanimous – the audience members were not just entertained; they were deeply moved. Many expressed that it was a night to treasure, a sentiment that speaks volumes about the impact of these performances.



# Unlock Exclusive Benefits with a TAG Membership

## Membership Has Its Benefits

Not only do members receive a discount on tickets, but a Theatre Arts Guild membership is also the ideal way to help your community theatre thrive while developing your own theatrical skills, interests, and making new friends. Now there is a *NEW BENEFIT* to membership - *EARLY ACCESS TO TICKET SALES!* Members can choose their performance dates and seats before tickets are available to the public.

**Become a member today!**

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

## TAG Executive Board 2023-2024

**Rayna Smith-Camp, President**

**Vacant, Vice-President**

**Patrick Charron, Treasurer**

**Stephanie Demedeiros Ouedraogo, Secretary**

**Jennifer Robbins, Artistic Director**

**Angela Butler, Executive Producer**

**Bill Barnaby, Technical Director**

**Bill VanGorder, Building Manager**

**Louise Renault & Cheryl Theriault, Volunteer Development**

**Valerie Dubois, Web Director**

**Lorne Abramson, Publicity and Marketing Director**

**Angela Butler, Newsletter Editor**

**Bill VanGorder, Fundraising Director**

**David Williams, Bar Manager**

**Valerie Dubois, Membership**

**TAG Costumes and Props Team**

**TAG Archives**

**Michele Moore – TAG Phone Line**



# MEMORIES OF...

## Santa Claus the Panto

DIRECTOR ~ KIMBERLY CHARRON

PRODUCER ~ BILL VANGORDER

by Diane Kimpton

STAGE MANAGER PATRICK CHARRON



CAST & CREW  
SANTA CLAUS  
THE PANTO

📷s by Katherine Gartner-Kepkay

### Episode 14

### Murder(ous) plays at TAG!

It would seem that, despite our love of pantomime, musicals, romantic comedies and other genres, the supporters of TAG also love a good murder, not every season, but our list of productions (on the website, look under 'On Stage' for complete details) shows that we dip into mystery and mayhem every three years or so. And there's no brownie points for guessing who is our favourite author in this category – the "Queen of Crime" herself, Dame Agatha Christie. We've presented six of her stories, including *The Mousetrap*, staged in 1952 in England and now the longest-running play anywhere in the world. Surprisingly, TAG has only presented this piece once, in October of 1972. Time perhaps, to give it another airing before a younger audience whose members won't already know the ending!

In my opinion, one of the reasons Agatha Christie is so popular results from her being a writer of both novels and plays who is dependable. As the audience, we know that a crime has been committed or is about to be committed, we have been introduced to all the characters and know something about their background and their relationships - to sum up, we possess all the clues. The onus is then on us, the audience, to work out who the murderer is, and Mrs. Christie is very good at withholding that knowledge until the last moment - "Oh, so it was her! Well, I didn't see that coming."

We needn't delve very far into the TAG murderous list before coming up with the reason for all the evil-doing – it's either love or money and very likely both. *Murder Mistaken* by Janet Green which played in October 1954, revolves around a successful businessman who marries for money (first to an older woman and there's another staple of a murder tale). However, after wife number one is dispatched, he marries again, only to discover that wife number two keeps a tight hold of the purse strings. Planning to repeat the process, he plots a second removal, only to meet a prospective third bride, with no cash, but a much prettier face. Decisions, decisions ...

Just where all the money is kept often forms the basis of a plot. In *Night Must Fall*, presented in both 1969 and 1998, the cash is in a safe in the middle of the room, but it's not only the safe which catches our attention. There's also a hatbox, kept under the servant's bed which might (or might not) be connected to the disappearance of a young woman last seen in the woods which surround the house. A variant on this theme is *Rope* (an oldie but goodie, having been written by Patrick Hamilton in 1929 and at TAG in 2019), in which two university students murder a classmate and store the body in a chest in their apartment. Wanting to take matters further, they then invite friends to a party and use said chest as a buffet, on which the food is displayed.

We might be doubtful as to the content of the chest, of course, but TAG has presented an equal number of plays in which we have no doubt who killed whom. *Dial M for Murder* by Frederic Knott (written in 1952, but at TAG in 2004) makes us a witness to the murder scene – the catch here is that the woman wielding the weapon is supposed to be the victim, not the villain and the question then becomes whether or not before the end of the play the real culprit will be caught. It's complex, but hubby is eventually led away in handcuffs. We get to witness another murder - by an ingenious strategy – in *Deathtrap* by Ira Levin (2011) and (another golden oldie) *Double Indemnity* by James M. Cain, in which an attempt to claim a double insurance payout (which will result if the holder of the policy dies as a result of an accident), doesn't go quite as planned.

### Episode 14

### Murder(ous) plays at TAG!

continued ....

In murder mysteries there are plays, and this holds good for all genres, which don't fit the norm and make us follow an uncommon path to arrive at the truth. *Suddenly Last Summer*, a one-act play by Tennessee Williams (April 1973 at TAG) has the main character placed in a mental institution by her aunt. Catharine's cousin has mysteriously disappeared the previous summer and though she witnessed how this happened, she is too traumatized to give out any information. The truth is eventually 'shocked' out of her, and it's what no one wants to hear. Elizabeth Taylor played the lead in the film of 1959. *Blood Relations* (1994 TAG production) by the New Brunswick playwright Sharon Pollock has Lizzie Borden as one of its characters. She is befriended by an actress interested in what really happened in August of 1892 in Fall River, Massachusetts. The narrative is turned on its head by then having Lizzie and the actress change places – and a confession is still not forthcoming, but we perhaps understand what motivated the brutal slaying of Lizzie's father and stepmother.

I hope that this brief survey has shown you that perhaps there is no such thing as a 'typical' murder, certainly not in the theatre anyway and its sometimes quite the test for the audience, when they're not anxiously gripping the side of their seat! I wonder what motives are lurking in *Murder Tonight* by longtime TAG member Nick Jupp and what the outcome will be? You have the opportunity to find out March 7-23, right here at TAG!

Judy Reade, TAG's Archivist

