

# CONTACT

Canada's oldest continually operating community theatre. 76 years and growing.

APRIL, 2007

The Official Newsletter of



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

[info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com)

The Theatre Arts Guild

The Pond Playhouse 6 Parkhill Rd. Halifax, NS

Next at TAG

## Office Hours

A Comedy by Norm Foster

Office Hours is a marvelous comedy by Norm Foster which will be directed by Bill VanGorder, produced by Ann Miller and stage managed by Esther VanGorder.

The production will run from Thursday Apr 26 to Saturday May 12.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights at 8 p.m. with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday May 6th

The play: Ah, the office! Politics, romance, intrigue. This brisk comedy skewers them all, revealing six stories in six offices, all somehow connected. After you have seen Office Hours, your Friday afternoons will never look the same again! Foster is one of Canada's most popular playwrights and Office Hours is one of his funniest plays filled with snappy dialogue, witty repartee, hilarious predicaments, and lots and lots of laughs.

The cast: This production has assembled a fine cast consisting of many of the most popular actors seen on the TAG stage. The cast includes: Carolyn Boyer, Angela Butler, Valerie MacKenzie, Rayna Smith-Camp, Beth VanGorder, Vanessa Walton-Bone, Lorne Abramson, John Bullock, David Chambers, Frank MacLean, Rob McIntyre, Darrel O'Neil, and Kevin Pierson.

Brenda Tyedmers has created the set that is being built by a team lead by Duncan Miller. Lighting design will be by Gayle Saybo and sound design by Carl Anderson. Cathy McAuley is the assistant stage manager.

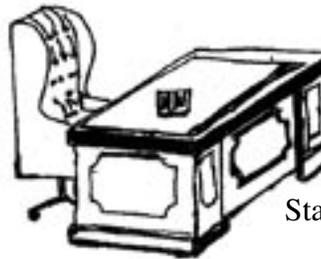
Comedies by one of Canada's most respected and prolific play-writes, Norm Foster, are always very popular with our audiences, so book early on line at [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com) or phone 477 2663. The box office will open April 5th.

**TAG Parking Tips:** Parking for our TAG audience is available in our parking lot as well as in the lot behind the Sikh Temple, two driveways past the theatre. As well, cars may park (carefully) along the SOUTH side of Parkhill Road (the opposite side of the street from the Pond Playhouse). Cars are not allowed to park on both sides of Parkhill, so the north side (close to the Pond Playhouse) does not have parking. If cars park on both side of the street, it provides significant obstruction to through-traffic and may block emergency vehicles altogether. Thank you for observing the parking rules.



## OFFICE HOURS

A COMEDY BY NORM FOSTER



Directed by

**Bill VanGorder**

Produced by Ann Miller

Stage Managed by Esther VanGorder

**April 26 to Saturday May 12, 2007.**

Thursday, Friday and Saturday Evenings at 8 p.m.  
with a Matinee on Sunday May 6 at 2:00 p.m.

At the Pond Playhouse

6 Parkhill Road

(Off Purcell's Cove Road, just past the Frog Pond)

**FOR RESERVATIONS, CALL 477-2663**

or visit [www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com)

Ticket Prices: Non-Members, \$15

Members, Seniors and Students \$12

Ecology in action: Switch to an electronic version of our newsletter and do your part to save a tree.

Contact us at [info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com) to have your newsletter sent by email.

**TAG Box Office**  
**477-2663**



## Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary

# CANADIAN CONTENT

(The eighteenth in a continuing series)



**N**orm Foster (the writer of "Office Hours") is now a name which should be familiar to TAG audiences. Of all the Canadian authors featured on the TAG stage in recent years, he is the best represented – starting with "Opening Night" (staged in 1999), followed in 2005 by "The Melville Boys" and "The Affections of May." Mr. Foster is enjoying great popularity in Canada at present, with thirty-eight plays written and published, all of which have been performed nationally.

Sharon Pollock takes second place as regards recent performances – her historical drama "Walsh" was presented in 1984, and "Blood Relations," an inventive look at the story of Lizzie Borden had performances in 1981 and 1994. Pollock has a Maritime connection, being born in Fredericton, the daughter of physician and MLA Everett Chalmers. Ms. Pollock is now living and working with theatres in Calgary.

Many other Canadian writers have been featured at TAG, but with only one example of their work – sometimes this can be attributed to the writer having only a small body of work, or being primarily devoted to some other aspect of theatre. Carol Shield's success was as a novelist and short story writer and "Thirteen Hands" (TAG, 1998) was one of only five plays she created. Allan Stratton, the author of the popular "Nurse Jane Goes to Hawaii" (done in 1995) has been concentrating on novel writing, for both adults and young people. John Murrell, whose "Waiting for the Parade" (TAG, 1997) about a group of five Canadian women

during World War II, has become a staple around the country for both amateur and professional groups, is now the Artistic Director/Executive Producer for Theatre Arts at the Banff Centre. Lorne Elliott (represented by "Culture Shock" in 2002) has many strings to his bow as musician, writer, radio personality and comedian.

It's a little puzzling however to know why John Gray is represented only by "Better Watch Out, Better Not Die" (the Christmas production of 1992, since it involves several Santas!), though his best-known work "Billy Bishop Goes to War" has had numerous performances locally. David French too is only represented by "Jitters," though his plays set in Newfoundland - "Leaving Home," "Of the Fields, Lately," and "Salt-Water Moon," have all received productions at Neptune.

And sometimes the author is newly-launched into a career, as is the case for Josh MacDonald, the writer of "Halo," which launched our 2004/2005 season. However, unlike all the writers named above, Josh has a definite connection to TAG. As a local high school student in 1989, he made his Guild debut as a very appealing Linus, in "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown!"

*Judy Reade*

*Props/Costumes Mistress*

## Annual TAG Variety Night and silent Auction

**May 19, 2007 8 p.m. at TAG's Pond Playhouse**

This annual event, a special treat for members, is one of the highlights of the TAG season.

If you would like to be a performer with a 6 minute, maximum, performance

contact the Variety Night producer,

Bill VanGorder at [bill.vangorder@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:bill.vangorder@ns.sympatico.ca)

or leave a message at 453-4077

If you can donate an item for the Silent Auction in support of the Building Expansion Fund, please contact the Auction Chairperson, Cheryl Theriault at [stheriault@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:stheriault@ns.sympatico.ca)

**Cheryl Theriault**

## TAG Reservations

Spurred on by the upcoming reveal of our beautiful new lobby and rehearsal space, TAG is taking measures to ensure that our Reservations system is as beautifully efficient as possible. We have recently discovered that our antiquated message system is no longer sufficient for our needs, so the Board is exploring different "communication systems". We are also on the search for new volunteers. If you would like to be part of a Reservations Team and have "nice" phone manners and "basic" computer skills (and a computer!) contact Cheryl Theriault, TAG's Volunteer

Coordinator (492-0838). Our current Reservations Master, Mark Monk, is going to be busy backstage the next two upcoming productions...and, oh yes, his full time job! A new Reservation Team would receive training by an experienced reservation person, have the chance to meet other volunteers and would always be adored by the rest of the TAG membership.

So if you seek the undying devotion of millions, call Cheryl now!  
(Even if it's just to ask a few questions...no pressure!)

Rebecca Humphreys and Eric Rountree

# Auditions for "Night School" and "The Lover"

## Two One-Act Plays by Harold Pinter

Directed by Rebecca Humphreys and Eric Rountree

Produced by Christine Comeau

Auditions will be held at Theatre Arts Guild's Pond Playhouse,  
6 Parkhill Rd.

**Sunday, April 1st 6:30-9:30 P.M. and  
Monday April 2nd 7:00-9:30 P.M.**

No preparation necessary. Readings will be provided when you arrive. No appointments necessary. Come early and be prepared to stay and read with various others as your time and ours permits.

Rehearsals will be held Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sundays until the final two tech weekends, when Saturday rehearsals will be held.

### Roles:

**4 males, age 25-60**

**5 females, age 25-65**

Backstage and production crew volunteers also needed.

For information re auditions or crew positions call Rebecca at 877-6879 or Eric at 448-6507. Or email Rebecca at [ian\\_reb@hotmail.com](mailto:ian_reb@hotmail.com) or Eric at [eric@routree.com](mailto:eric@routree.com)

"Night School" and "The Lover" are two thought-provoking plays by Harold Pinter. "Night School" will be directed by Rebecca Humphreys, and "The Lover" will be directed by Eric Rountree. The show will be produced by Christine Comeau.

The production will run from

**Thursday June 21st to  
Saturday July 7th**

with Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night performances at 8:00 P.M. and a 2:00 P.M. matinee on Sunday July 1st.

Synopsis:

How does one synopsise a Pinter play? Nothing is ever what it seems in the worlds Pinter creates. In "Night School," a perpetually-incarcerated young man returns home to his eccentric aunts only to find that they've rented out his room to a young schoolteacher. He's naturally annoyed, and he sets out to find out more about this young woman. Does she really teach night school? And is she really as sweet and unassuming as she lets on? In "The Lover," a husband and wife are quite frank with each other about their extra-marital relationships. While their frankness might seem shocking and even funny, it's nothing compared to what is revealed later in the story. The play contrasts humdrum domesticity with sexual yearning and explores where they might lead.

Rebecca Humphreys and Eric Rountree

Directors Night School and The Lover

Nick Jupp

# Scotland Road

For those of you that saw Scotland Road we hope you enjoyed the tense mystery and exciting turn of events. This show was structured in an unusual way with time skipping ahead very frequently, sometimes in just a half a page of script. The conventional way to do this, and the way suggested in the script, is to "go to black" meaning shut down all the lights while actors rearrange themselves for the next scene. We wanted to try something quite different and designed the opaque set, special lights and sounds. Hopefully the transitions from scene to scene became part of the show and you enjoyed the experience.

The opening and closing sound effects were produced through a new computer driven surround sound system and very much added to the mystery of the show. We heard many theories about John, The Woman and exactly what happened; one couple reported they stayed up so late after the show devising different interpretations, some sleeping aid was required! If you would like a list of audience theories, e-mail [njupp@dymaxion.ca](mailto:njupp@dymaxion.ca) and we'll send them out to you.

For those who did not see Scotland Road, you may get another chance. We have been invited for a short run at The Studio, Neptune Theatre in June. All the details are not complete yet, but if all goes well you can visit Scotland Road downtown in June.

THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD	
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Past President	Esther VanGorder
Treasurer	Carolyn Boyer
Secretary	Cathy McAuley
Technical Director	Austin Reade
Props/Costumes Mistress	Judy Reade
Building Manager	J Carruth
Executive Producer	Rebecca Humphreys
Artistic Director	Nick Jupp
Publicity	Michele Moore
Volunteer Coordinator	Cheryl Theriault
<b>BOARD 2006 -2007</b>	

## Membership Dues

TAG membership dues run from September 1st to August 31st every year so don't forget to add us to your new year check list. Call 477-2663 for more information about your membership status.



Deb Post

# The President's Message

*Our Board has had many exciting challenges to respond to this year here is your current:*

## Lobby Extension

From the sod turning ceremony last spring, we have gone from ground zero to a weather-tight, two storey addition to the theatre.

This initial phase was energetically led by Rich Knowles and involved the recruitment and assistance of a host of friendly professionals. For the next round, Building Committee member Austin Reade has created a Phase II Task list which helps the group to systematically plan and budget the building project. An interior design subcommittee and a sign subcommittee have come onstream. Each week, at 7am, the committee holds a working breakfast meeting to review our progress, update the task list and assign volunteers to upcoming jobs.

Any time you add to an existing building, you create or uncover work that needs to be done in the old structure, and we have recognized details that need our attention in the old TAG once we have finished the lobby extension and opened it to our patrons. We will never turn down a pair of willing and capable hands! The contributions in time and expertise of both TAG members and other professionals throughout this process are inestimable and too numerous to list here; all of these individuals have the Board's undying gratitude.

The TAG Board has directed the committees not to operate in a debt situation, so our purchase of goods and services is done only when we have the money. Our fundraising group continues to work hard and gratefully accepts all donations to the cause. John Gratwick reminds our patrons to save those Sobeyes receipts and bring them to TAG. Every little bit helps!

If all goes according to plan and we get the funding, we hope to finish the requisite work, get the occupancy permit and have the formal opening of the new lobby for the first show of next season. What an exciting day that will be!

## TAG's Normal Operations

Meanwhile, we have a theatre to run. Our Lobby Extension group joins the larger Board in running the theatre on a day-to-day basis. Our Board was restructured at the beginning of my term by streamlining the Board itself and creating a group of managers who perform essential tasks but are not Board members per se. One new Board position, volunteer coordinator (recruitment of new volunteers and matching them to suitable jobs), was created and Cheryl Theriault (492-0838) took on this position. Volunteers are the heart and soul of TAG and we thank each and every one. This newsletter is produced by our new editor, Terry Coolen, who asks that you please contact us if you wish to receive your newsletter online rather than by snail mail (saves the postage). As you enjoy our current season and the friendly and familiar faces at TAG, our Artistic Committee is hard at work selecting a new season of plays designed to provide the audience with five stellar and unique productions in 2007/2008.

As president, I wish to assure our faithful patrons that we will be seeking an updated telephone system, website and reservations policy during the remainder of the year. Your patience and understanding will be most appreciated, considering we are operating in exceptional circumstances this year. After all, you are our most valuable asset.

Deb Post

President

## COMMUNITY THEATRE NEWS

Dartmouth Players Presents

**BUS STOP** A Comedy by William Inge Directed by Ian MacDermid.

**April 11 – 28, 2007**

In the middle of a snowstorm, a bus from Kansas City stops at a roadside diner. Four weary travelers are going to have to stay until morning. Cherie, a nightclub chanteuse, has the most to worry about. She's been pursued, made love to and kidnapped by a young cowboy with a ranch of his own and the romantic methods of a headstrong bull. He is ready to sling her over his shoulder and carry her, screaming and kicking, all the way to Montana. Even as she's ducking out from under his clumsy but confident embraces, she pauses to muse, "Somehow deep inside of me I got a funny feeling I'm gonna end up in Montana."

As a counterpoint to the main romance, the proprietor of the cafe and the bus driver at last find time to develop a friendship of their own, a middle-age scholar comes to terms with himself, a young girl, who works in the cafe, gets her first taste of romance and the sheriff tries to "protect the innocent." "BUS STOP is Mr. Inge's most popular play and his one out-and-out comedy!"

For either per show tickets or subscriptions, you must reserve your seats for the night of your choice by calling our reservation "hotline" at 465-PLAY (465-7529)

Ecology in action: Switch to an electronic version of our newsletter and do your part to save a tree. Contact us at [info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com) to have your newsletter sent by email.

## APPRENTICES WANTED!

TAG is looking for people who would be interested in learning about the technical side of theater, in all its facets. You would be volunteering to work on TAG's summer productions of "The Lover" and "Night School", two one act plays by Harold Pinter which will run from June 21 to July 7. You would be learning about the area of your choice from TAG members who have honed their craft working on many shows over the years.

If you would be interested in exploring this opportunity, please contact Cheryl Theriault at 492-0838 with your name, contact information and the area that most interests you.

### THE THEATRE ARTS GUILD

Mailing Address:

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Halifax, NS B3M 3Y7

Telephone: (902) 477-2663

[www.tagtheatre.com](http://www.tagtheatre.com) [info@tagtheatre.com](mailto:info@tagtheatre.com)

Submissions for **CONTACT** can be emailed to **TERRY COOLEN** at [trcool@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:trcool@ns.sympatico.ca)

**Contact** April 2007