

CONTACT

The Official Newsletter of the Theatre Arts Guild

Canada's Oldest Continually Operating Community Theatre



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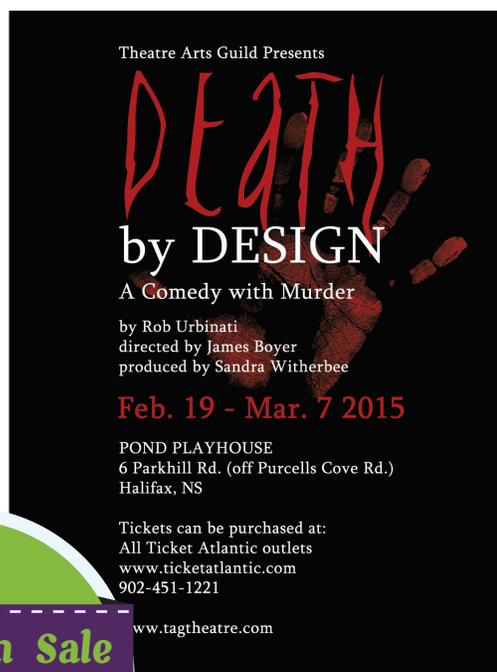
NEXT AT TAG

Death by Design
February 19th to March 7th

Enjoy an evening of theatre by laughing away the February Blues with the insightful, satirical, 'Death by Design: A Comedy with Murder', written by popular New York playwright, Rob Urbinati. Mr. Urbinati gives us a witty and topical, comedic production that keeps us laughing from beginning to end. Death by Design is a hilarious 'whodunit' in the style of Noel Coward and Agatha Christie. Set during a weekend in an English country manor in 1932, it is a delightful and mysterious "mash-up" of two of the greatest English writers of all time.

The characters are outrageous and include – an urbane playwright, a self-centered actress, a feisty Irish maid, a lusty chauffeur, a conservative politician, a fiery socialist, a nearsighted ingénue, a zany modern dancer – each with a long-held secret. Death by Design is a recipe for fun that's perfect for livening up the dead of winter. Come and enjoy the fun!

– James Boyer, Director



**Tickets on Sale
January 23rd**

TAG Ticket Prices

\$15 Members/Seniors/Students
\$18 Non-Members

Note: TAG prices include all Ticket Atlantic service fees

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
- Ticket Atlantic Box Office

January/February 2015 Contact

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! In reflection, 2014 was a busy year at The Pond Playhouse. We had started our numbered seating this season without too much resistance. It is so nice to see people now socializing before a play. There is no pressure to line up to get that seat. The key is getting the word out to all patrons, particularly those requiring special seating.

Panto at the OK Corral was another successful pantomime at Theatre Arts Guild. We ventured to a different place other than fantasy and it was

well received. A huge thank you to everyone involved in the panto. A play like a panto requires "a small village" to produce.

Moving into 2015 we are looking forward to the remaining lineup for this season. Rehearsals are in full swing for the next production *Death by Design* as *Proof* gets ready to start. In between these two plays we are re-launching our Playwright's @ TAG, a non-competitive one act play festival. This is an exciting chance to see three plays that have never been seen before.

Personally, I am so grateful to the Board of Directors of TAG for recognizing the need for this creative outlet in our theatre. We will only grow stronger as a community theatre group. For a more details on the festival and an update on the plays selected please visit our website.

With our season so full of excitement, 2015 is looking like a wonderful year already here at Theatre Arts Guild. Stop by sometime and see what all the excitement is about!
- Angela Butler, President

TAG & FRIENDS

Judy Reade, wearing her hat as the TAG Board member responsible for costumes and props
One of the more satisfying aspects of my position on the TAG Board is the work I do loaning props and costumes to other community and arts groups in HRM. Help has been given over many years to our counterparts on the community theatre scene, Dartmouth

Players and Bedford Players. You will also find details of their productions in our programmes and vice versa. Similarly, help is given to schools where TAG members are teachers (in particular Halifax West High School where Lorraine Cantwell taught drama and was heavily involved in the school musical each year) or other arts organizations to which TAG members belong. I'm always happy to support community initiatives – in November TAG costumes featured in a Downton Abbey afternoon tea organized by a group of citizens in Hantsport raising money to retain a library in the town. Yes, Mr. Carson, Lady Mary, Lady Edith and Lady Sybil were dressed by TAG! The King's College Theatrical Society was also helped in November with costumes for the 19th century characters in Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*. Sasha Pickering took this picture.

The young people's theatre group founded by Janice Cruddas – M.I.T.E. (Meaningful, Intelligent Theatrical Entertainment) has been helped on several occasions. If you've seen any of our recent pantomimes, you will have enjoyed the performances of Janice's daughters, Emma and Amelia and if you saw *The Nutcracker* at the Rebecca Cohn this Christmas, it was Emma and Amelia's older sister, Hannah Mae who danced Clara!

Through their yearly presentations, M.I.T.E. has raised thousands of dollars for such organizations as the Hope for Wildlife Society, Stephen Lewis Foundation and Doctors Without Borders. The presentations range from Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night* – Glee Style!), to Aesop and an extravaganza of Canadian folk songs and singers ----- J-Tel Presents!

In addition to the larger shows, the group tours local schools with project ARC (Action, Responsibility, Choice), a presentation which focuses on human rights and encourages young people to make responsible choices, which in turn can lead to action at the local and global levels. More information about M.I.T.E., plus project ARC can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/miteforfamilies>.

AUDITION CALL

Proof

Proof by David Auburn
Director: Deborah Pollock
Producer: Bill VanGorder
Stage Manager: Esther VanGorder
Performance Dates: **April 30th to May 16th 8pm**

Auditions: **Sunday Jan 25 1-4pm**
Monday Jan 26 7-9pm
at The Pond Playhouse, 6 Parkhill Rd.

The daughter of a brilliant but mentally disturbed mathematician tries to come to grips with her possible inheritance: his insanity. Matters are complicated by one of her father's former students, who wants to mine for gold in his 103 notebooks; a burgeoning romance; and her estranged sister who shows up to settle his affairs. *Proof* won a Drama Desk Award, a Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award for Best Play in 2001.

Characters:

Robert - father, 50s-60s

Catherine - daughter, aged 25

Claire - daughter, aged 29

Hal - former student, aged 28

No appointment necessary, auditions will consist of a cold read from the script provided.

Rehearsals: First read through after casting on Wednesday, February 11.

Thereafter: Sunday afternoons, Monday and Wednesday evenings, starting Sunday February 15th.



PLAYWRIGHTS @TAG

TAG president Angela Butler is pleased to announce the three plays selected for our second biennial Playwrights@TAG on March 20-21, 2015.

Congratulations to our three playwrights whose work has been chosen. The three plays are: *Delusions of Grandeur* by JL Allen, *Butterscotch Palace* by Ryan Van Horne, and *There Are Fewer Acorns This Year* by Nick Jupp.

We would like to offer a huge thank to everyone who submitted plays and wish we could have chosen them all.

We're looking forward to seeing these plays come to life on our stage in March. We will post more details on the shows on Facebook, Twitter, and our website as well as in our e-mail updates and newsletter. Stay tuned!

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Expanding Your Theatre Vocabulary The 55th in a Continuing Series

I sometimes envy our audience members who are seeing a particular play for the first time. I am a member of the Artistic Planning Committee for the Guild, a group of five which supports TAG's Artistic Director (Rayna Smith-Camp) in compiling the season of five plays. The members of this Committee read all the plays eventually selected so, in one sense, no piece presented at TAG is new to me. My enjoyment, therefore, comes from watching how the Director and his/her actors make live the text which with I am already familiar. And since I have been a member of TAG for some time, the reappearance of a piece in a future season means I get to witness a different interpretation under a different hand.

Those are my expectations, as I settle into my seat for the final Dress Rehearsal of each of our offerings. But as audience members, what do you expect when you attend a TAG performance? Will you enjoy the interaction between the characters, or, since our next play, *Death by Design* is a mystery, will you be listening carefully for any clues tucked into the text by the playwright? If the play you are watching happens to be by Agatha Christie, you can be

sure the clues are there, though whether you can distinguish them is not always certain! You'll notice Mrs. Christie's influence in Mr. Urbinati's piece – the setting of the country mansion, the tension which builds and is exacerbated by (gasp!) the cutting of the telephone wire. Rob Urbinati also tips his hat to the talent of Noel Coward, visible in the assembly of ill-matched house guests and visitors, all to later be revealed as having a motive for murder and not afraid of expressing welcome or unwelcome opinions to their companions.

Noel Coward has proved a particular favourite of TAG audiences over the years. *Hay Fever* was presented in the fifth season in 1936 and fifty years later in 1986. *Nude with Violin* has also been presented twice, as has *Present Laughter*. On the TAG stage, Agatha Christie is well represented with *A Witness for the Prosecution* (1957), *Unexpected Guest* (1977) and – yes – *The Mousetrap* (1972).

If you are familiar with Agatha Christie's work – whether it be novels or plays – you will know that you must wait until the last act for the murderer to be revealed. There is such a reveal in *Death by Design*, but there's a twist too, which I'm sure you don't wish me to explain – Do you?

Come with your expectations to a performance of *Death by Design* – You won't be disappointed! - Judy Reade

Community Notes

Dartmouth Players presents:

Blithe Spirit (Feb 4th to 21)
An Inspector Calls (Apr 15th to May 2nd)
The Game's Afoot (June 3rd to 20th)
Visit www.dartmouthplayers.ns.ca or call 465-PLAY for more info

Bedford Players presents:

The Fork on the Left (Mar 12th to 28th)
The Love List (May 21st to June 6th)
Visit www.bedfordplayers.ns.ca or call 832-3300 for more info

Coming Soon

She Stoops to Conquer by Oliver Goldsmith

June 18th to July 5th 2015

A wealthy English countryman arranges for his daughter to meet the son of a wealthy Londoner, hoping the pair will marry. Unfortunately the young suitor is nervous around upper-class women while being far too comfortable around those who are members of the lower-class.