

GABRIOLA PLAYERS



Autumn 2019 newsletter

Director's message

Our 2019/20 season got off to a great start on September 1st with **Special Delivery**, our well-attended and very well-received workshop at the Cultivate Festival. Our thanks to everyone who attended.

Before the workshop began we were delighted to present a cheque for \$1500 to our lovely **Luisa Handford**, winner of the 2019 **Don Whitton Memorial Bursary**. There's more on both the workshop and the bursary presentation in the following pages.

Coming up next in the season.... They're back! The playwriting and directing duo of **Robin Bailes** and **Miranda Holmes**, who brought you *Will Shakespeare The Panto*, *Robin Hood and His Merry Men* and *The Return of Robin Hood*. Fans of Mr Bailes (and there appear to be many on Gabriola) can expect the same combination of mirth and mayhem in **Ali Baba**, which we will be performing at the Community Hall next month. For a sneak peek at the rehearsals, click [here](#). (See the ad on page 6 for performance times and ticket information.)

Before and after the panto we are inviting our members to two events: an assessment reading of various plays (including a new play by **Lesley Hazeldine**) later this month and a theatrical improvisation workshop led by **Tom Radcliffe** in early December. For more information about these events, see page 5.

A new Gabriola Players board was elected at our annual general meeting last month. Returning members of the board are **Donna Deacon**, **Joe DiCara**, **Lesley Hazeldine**, **Miranda Holmes**, **Brenda Joy**, **Marshall Mangan** and **Tom Radcliffe**. We'd like to offer our thanks to retiring board members **Jean Wyenberg** and **Charlie Cheffins** and a warm welcome to returning board member **Dave Innell** and new board member **Ray Appel**.

And last, but certainly by no means least, we'd like to offer a huge thank you to **Robert's Place** for once again sponsoring our season. If it weren't for Robert's Place and the island businesses that assist us by taking season ads in our programmes, we really couldn't do what we do. For a full list of those advertisers, see page 7. Please let them know you appreciate their support of theatre on Gabriola.



Jean Wyenberg, who directed Luisa Handford in her first appearance with Gabriola Players, looks on as Sue Whitton prepares to present a cheque to Luisa Handford, the 2019 Don Whitton Memorial Bursary winner.

Gabriola Players at Cultivate

Gabriola Players kicked off its 2019/20 season at the Cultivate Festival with **Special Delivery**, a workshop designed to illustrate how many different interpretations there can be for the written word. One scene played three different ways.



Here's the scene: Two people (gender unspecified) at an airport. Person A is leaving. Person B doesn't really want Person A to go. They talk. The flight is called. The scene ends.

Who are these people? What's their back story? Answering these questions was the challenge for three directors and six actors. That and figuring out who "Ellie" was.

In the first version, directed by Donna Deacon, Janina Stajic and Ray Appel (top photo) were an on-again-off-again couple who were about to be off again permanently. If she can't get him to stay for her, perhaps he'll stay for Ellie, their cat. In the end he stays, although it's not for the cat.



In the second version, directed by Lesley Hazeldine, both characters were male. Dave Innell and Marshall Mangan (centre) were lifelong best friends, driven apart by the affair one has had with the other's wife Ellie. Exactly the same words, but a completely different situation.

In the third version, directed by Jean Wyenberg, Susan Yates and Jeff Malmgren (bottom) are brother and sister. She's come to stay to help him and his daughter Ellie out after his wife abandons them. Now she needs to get back to her own family. He doesn't want her to go, but she does. Exactly the same words.



After the three versions were performed, audience members were asked to suggest a fourth scenario. Someone asked for Person A and Person B to be bank robbers and voila Dave was making his getaway at the airport. Exactly the same words.

We've had very complimentary feedback on the workshop, both from the festival organisers and from audience members, one of whom wrote to tell us:

"We found the presentation by Gabriola Players at the Cultivate Festival informative and entertaining. One scene done three ways with three sets of actors and directors gave us real insight into how the words on the page can be interpreted. It was the highlight of the Cultivate Festival for us. Please do more of this!"

Our thanks to everyone who came out to the workshop. We think it's safe to say we'll be back at Cultivate next year.

Don Whitton Memorial Bursary



Sue Whitton presenting a cheque for \$1500 to Luisa Handford.

Before our presentation began at Cultivate, there was a very special task to perform: the awarding of the 2019 **Don Whitton Memorial Bursary** to our lovely **Luisa Handford**. Lu, who has appeared many times in Gabriola Players productions, has now begun the Acting for Stage and Screen Program at Capilano University. We're so happy to help her out with the costs of her studies.

The Bursary was created in 2010 to assist Gabriolans pursuing education or training in some aspect of theatre arts. It is funded through the sale of refreshments at our performances and through donations, including generous gifts from the Whitton family.

As there was no applicant last year, we decided to offer two bursaries this year of \$1000 each. When Lu's was the only successful application, we opted to increase the award to \$1500 (if Lu looks as if she's about to burst into tears in the photo it might be because she received \$500 more than expected) and offer another \$1500 bursary in 2020.

Lu, below, in her three performances during the Gabriola Players 2016/17 season. From left to right, as Romaine Patterson in The Laramie Project, as Jill in The Return of Robin Hood and as Celia in As You Like It.



Members only

Play readings

Gabriola Players is inviting members to help us assess plays for future production. As we've said before, plays need to be *heard*, not just read on the page. (None of us realised quite how funny Will Eno's play [The Realistic Joneses](#) was until we heard it read at the April play readings and it is now our full production in May 2020.) So we are once again looking for some volunteer readers to help us look at other possibilities.

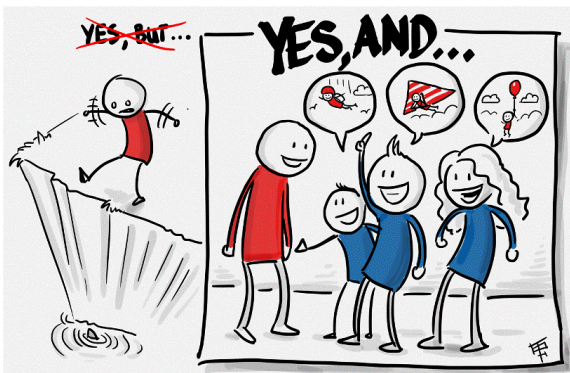
The Roxy

Monday, October 28 from 7pm to 9pm

Members are invited to come and read one or more scenes from *Life on Mars*, a one-act comedy about life on Earth by Elliot Hayes, *Café Amore-eh*, a new play by Lesley Hazeldine, and *The Art of Remembering* by Adina L. Ruskin.

Absolutely no theatrical experience is required. (Although we can't guarantee you won't get the bug.) Or you can just come, listen and provide feedback. Did you enjoy the play? Do you think it's something Gabriola Players should stage? We want your opinion!

Improv workshop



Gabriola Players is thrilled to be offering members an introduction to the wonderful world of improvisation in an afternoon workshop led by Tom Radcliffe.

Improv is a theatrical form where the actors make up their lines and actions as they go along based on the characters they are playing, whilst co-operating with each other to tell a (hopefully interesting, moving, or funny) story.

This workshop will introduce theatrical improv and lead the participants through a series of exercises to show how characters

with problems can be turned into interesting stories that audiences can follow and enjoy, all on the spur of the moment and without the benefit of a script, director, rehearsal, or the rest of the boring bits of scripted theatre. Skills introduced will include making mistakes, listening, spontaneity, building and staying in character, and creating simple stories.

The workshop will be held at the Rollo Centre on Sunday, December 8 from 1pm to 4pm. Spaces are limited and will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis. If you are interested, please send an email to gabriolaplayers@gmail.com with the subject "Improv".

Tom Radcliffe is an actor and improviser who has trained at the Improv Comedy Institute (associated with Vancouver Theatre Sports) and other improv schools in Vancouver, including Blind Tiger, Instant Theatre, Second Storey Theatre, and independent instructors such as Jennifer Peilak's improvised musical theatre programme. He has performed at various venues in Vancouver as part of 180 Improv, the Treble Makers, and others. His primary interest as an improviser is long-form story-telling. Tom will be assisted by Hilary Farmer, who has studied improv in Montreal and Vancouver.

PLEASE NOTE

These are members-only events. If you're not a member, but would like to attend the readings or the improv workshop, we'd be happy to sell you a membership (\$15 individual, \$25 family) at the door. Cash or cheques only. Or you can purchase a membership on our website: gabriolaplayers.ca.

GABRIOLA PLAYERS

ALI BABA!



BY ROBIN BAILES

PERFORMED WITH PERMISSION OF SPOTLIGHT PUBLICATIONS

COMMUNITY HALL

FRI & SAT NOV. 29 & 30 AT 7 PM

SAT & SUN NOV 30 & DEC 1 AT 2 PM

TICKETS \$17 (ADULTS) \$5 (12 AND UNDER)

AT NORTH ROAD SPORTS OR ONLINE AT

GABRIOLAPLAYERS.CA

Sponsored by Robert's Place

Business not as usual



In our opinion, the sweetest thing about **Robert's Place** isn't the desserts. It's the restaurant's ongoing support of the arts (and so many other things) on Gabriola. For the sixth year, Robert's Place has taken on the role of season sponsor for our 2019/20 season. Thank you so much!

We are also blessed to receive the support of a number of other local businesses who take out season ads in our programmes. We honestly could not do what we do without their help.

The next time you frequent one of these businesses, **please** tell them you appreciate their support of theatre on Gabriola.

Nester's Market Gabriola

Arbutus Home Building Centre

Surf Lodge

Pages Resort & Marina

The Haven

Mid-Island Co-op

New Society Publishers

North Road Sports

Gabriola Fitness Centre

**Coastal Community Credit
Union**

Coming in 2020

March



Our always-popular one-act play festival will feature three works:

Life on Mars, written by Elliott Hayes and directed by Donna Deacon,

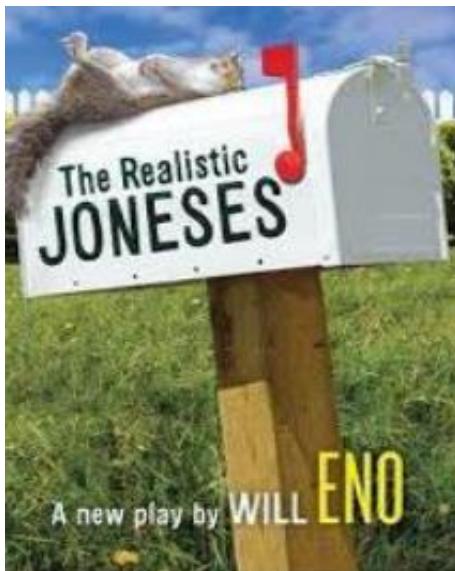
Mimi and Me, written by Kitty Dubin and directed by Jean Wyenberg, and

The Way to a Man's Heart, written by David Weir and directed by Jenn Feenan.

Auditions: Sunday, January 5 from 2-4pm at the Rollo Centre

Performances: Thursday-Saturday, March 12-14 at 7pm and Sunday, March 15 at 2pm at the Rollo Centre.

May



Will Eno's absurdist suburban play introduces us to two sets of Joneses: Bob and Jennifer and their new neighbours, John and Pony. As their relationships begin to irrevocably intertwine, the Joneses must choose between their idyllic fantasies and their imperfect realities.

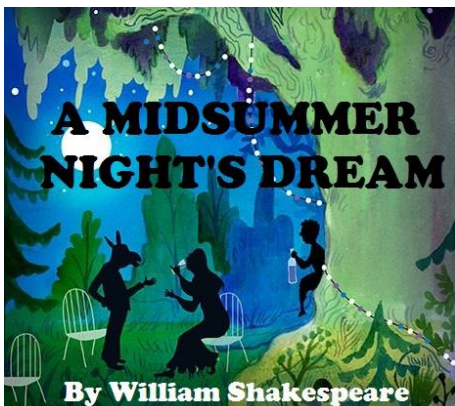
According to the *New York Times*: "Plays as funny and moving, as wonderful and weird as **The Realistic Joneses**, by Will Eno, do not appear often on Broadway. Or ever, really."

Directed by Miranda Holmes.

Auditions: Sunday, February 23 and March 1 from 4 to 6pm at the Rollo Centre

Performances: Thursday-Saturday, May 21-23 at 7pm and Sunday, May 24 at 2pm at the Rollo Centre.

July



Back by popular demand. Audiences wanted an encore of our first Bard in the Garden, so we've asked Garry Davey to bring back one of William Shakespeare's most beloved comedies.

Why not make 2020 the year you get involved?

Auditions: Tuesday, June 2, 7-9pm at the Rollo Centre

Performances: Friday & Saturday, July 10 & 11 at 6pm and Sunday, July 12 at 2pm at the Commons.