

GABRIOLA PLAYERS



Spring 2024 newsletter

Note from the directors

Well, what can we say? Four SOLD OUT performances of **ART**. Wow!

Written by Yasmina Reza and ably directed by **Jean Wyenberg**, this play about the meaning of art and friendship really struck a chord here on the Isle of the Arts. There were well deserved kudos (and standing ovations) for the three actors involved: **Ray Appel**, **Jeff Malmgren** and **Tom Radcliffe**.

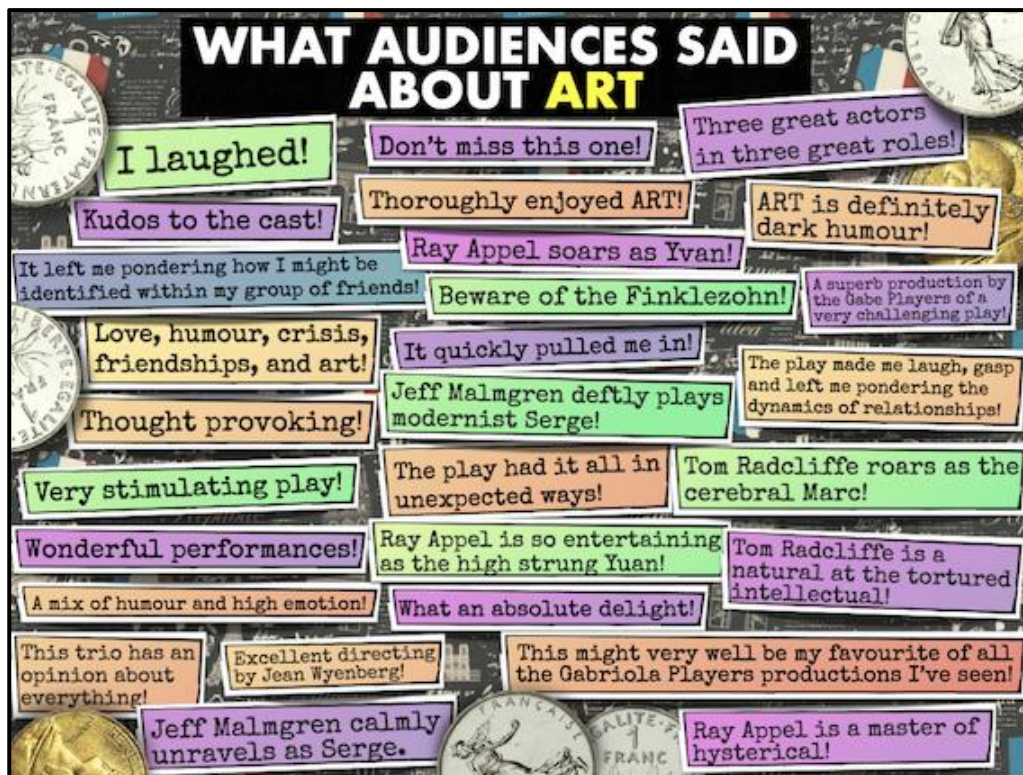
Our thanks, as always, to **Bill Pope** for his wonderful production photos, some of which can be seen on the cover and following pages, and more of which can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

We have some exciting news for those who were unable to get a ticket for one of the performances *and* for the many audience members who said they would happily come to a second show if there were any tickets available. We have been invited to mount an encore presentation of the play at **Cultivate** this summer. The performance will be on Sunday, July 14 at 1pm at the Commons Reservoir Stage.

Thanks also to everyone who came out for the auditions for our **2024 One-Act Play Festival**. The roles have been cast and rehearsals are underway for what we are thrilled to say will be an **ALL GABRIOLA** show, featuring new works by three local writers. Details about the plays to be performed at the end of May can be found on page 5.

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Honour Among Thieves*. As we reported in our last newsletter, they took the play to Qualicum to compete in the Vancouver Island One-Act Play Festival. They did not come home empty handed! See page 6 for more information.

As always, a big thank you to our season sponsor, **Tina & Guy** of Royal LePage, and all the other businesses and organisations supporting us this year. There is a full list on page 8. Next time you are shopping, please consider telling them you appreciate their support for theatre on Gabriola. We honestly could not do what we do without them.



The ART of friendship

ART proved to be one of our most popular productions ever. On this page and the next we'd like to share some of the highlights of this amazing play.



As he says in his opening [monologue](#), Marc (Tom Radcliffe) simply cannot fathom how his friend Serge (Jeff Malmgren) could have spent 200,000 francs on an all-white painting.



Nor can he make their friend Yvan (Ray Appel) understand why he finds this painting so deeply disturbing.

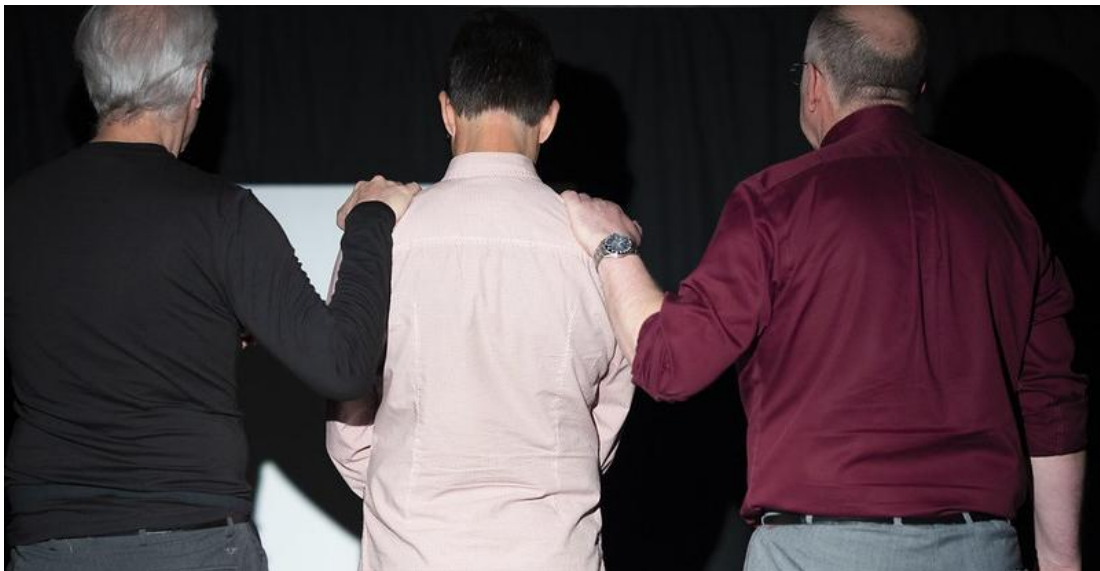


Yvan thinks he can play peacemaker.



Instead, they turn on him. And a fight breaks out.

But the bonds of friendship hold.



To paraphrase the Bard, all is indeed well that (uneasily) ends well.

2024 One-Act Play Festival

In 2014, as we approached our 10th Anniversary, Gabriola Players decided we wanted to feature works by local writers the following year in our popular One-Act Play Festival. The call went out and [three new plays](#) were performed in 2015 – one of which, [Lemon Yellow Laces](#), went on to win best original script at the Vancouver Island One-Act Play festival later that year. Every year since then we have endeavoured to include at least one new play by a Gabriolan.

We are thrilled to say this year we will be staging another ALL GABRIOLA festival.

<p>THE CARE AIDE VISITS By Dave Innell</p> <p> THE WAITING ROOM By Anne M. Holmes</p> <p>SHADES OF GREEN By Carol Fergusson</p>	<p>GABRIOLA PLAYERS</p> <p>ONE-ACT PLAY FESTIVAL 2024</p> <p>ROLLO CENTRE May 30, 31 and June 1 at 7pm Sunday, June 2 at 2pm</p>
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In *The Care Aide Visits*, Elise, a wealthy, self-centred divorcée, is annoyed to discover her cheerful young care aide has been replaced by Grace, a woman her own age, who is made of very stern stuff indeed. A battle of wills ensues, dredging up dark secrets from the past. Is it true that no one comes through adolescence unscathed?

In *The Waiting Room*, two men meet in a waiting room at Vancouver General Hospital. Ernie and Frank are both there awaiting news about their wives. While they make conversation to pass the time, they are unaware of being observed by a woman. As time passes, these strangers discover they have more in common than they thought.

Shades of Green is a contemporary commentary on love, marriage, jealousy and social media, described by author Carol Fergusson as “an urban couple’s journey through accusations, heightened emotions, professed love and the harsh realities of life”.

Gabriola Players on YouTube



The Care Aide Visits will be the second play written and directed by Dave Innell to be performed by Gabriola Players. The first, last year, was [The Trouble with Trees](#). *The Waiting Room* will be the sixth play we’ve performed by Anne M. Holmes, beginning with *That’s Nice* in 2015, followed by [An Unhelpful Complication](#) (a finalist in the 2018 Canadian National Playwriting Competition), the short online Christmas play [Waiting For Nick](#), [A Divine Comedy](#) and, last year, [Ruby Red Lipstick](#).

Click on the links to enjoy these plays again on YouTube.

Gabriola Players at Qualicum



Donna Deacon, Wendy Phillips, Tammy Mueller and Dave Innell celebrating after their well-deserved wins in Qualicum.

It's been a while since we've entered a play in the juried Vancouver Island One-Act Play Festival and we clearly chose the right play for our return.

Donna Deacon was awarded an honourable mention for directing. Wendy Phillips, who played Dorothy in *Honour Among Thieves*, came away with the award for best actor in a female lead role. (This could not have been an easy decision for the judge, as both Wendy and Tammy delivered mesmerising performances.)

Wendy says of the experience: "Getting to inhabit the character of a tormented mother and friend in this play put me in touch with parts of myself I didn't know were there. Working with Tammy, Donna and Dave on this excellent script was a joy, and our success at Qualicum belongs to everyone."

And this from Donna: "This was my first time taking a play to a festival competition and all I can say is it was an exhilarating experience! As a director, you hope that all your own hard work and the actors' dedication will pay off, but until the final curtain comes down, you're on the edge of your seat waiting for that final adjudication. With Wendy and Tammy putting their heart and soul into this project and Dave Innell in charge of lighting and sound, I knew we had something special and we did. With bells on! I couldn't be more proud of and pleased with our success."

CONGRATULATIONS to everyone involved!



Oh, and, FYI, Tammy and Wendy will be appearing together again in *The Care Aide Visits* at this year's One-Act Play Festival.

Still with us

Halfway through our One-Act Play Festival in March 2020, the Covid pandemic put the world into lockdown and we had to do this.



Almost exactly four years later, following a positive Covid test by a member of the cast, we had to do this.



Fortunately, no one else was felled and we went on to four very well-received performances, but it was a reminder that, as much as we would love it not to be the case, Covid is still very much with us.

As we've said before, we take the safety of cast, crew and audiences extremely seriously. A number of our regular cast and crew members, despite being fully vaccinated, have health issues that make them particularly vulnerable. Covid would not be "just like the 'flu or a bad cold" for them. Equally, we have audience members for whom a bout of Covid could prove very serious indeed.

Following a super spreader event at one of our rehearsals in the spring of 2022, we developed and implemented our health and safety policy, which requires masks to be worn by cast and crew during rehearsals and by audience members during performances.

We've taken some grief (online and at the door) for being the only performing arts group on the island still making the health of all a primary concern, but we've also received the grateful praise of many.

No one hopes more than we do that at least one venue on the island will invest in sufficient ventilation, air filtration and upper-room UV to make masks unnecessary. (If one does, it will certainly get our business!) Until then, our mask mandate will be in place. We do thank you for your co-operation.

Gabriola Players would like to offer a huge thank you - for the third year running - to our season sponsor:



Another huge thank you to Mid Island Co-op for their \$1000 grant given to us to support of our 2023/24 season.



We would also like to thank the following businesses and individuals whose program ads support our season. We could not do what we do without them. Please let them know that you, too, appreciate their support of theatre on Gabriola.

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