

# GABRIOLA PLAYERS



Summer 2024 newsletter

# A note from the directors

Yowza! In April we filled every available seat for our four performances of *ART*. And now this. Even though we managed to squeeze a few extra seats in for each performance, the **2024 One-Act Play Festival** was completely **SOLD OUT** before opening night.

Audiences *loved* this year's **ALL-GABRIOLA** show featuring three new plays by local writers. For more about the plays, see pages 3 and 4. As always, our thanks to Bill Pope for the production photos on the cover and following pages. To see more of his pics from the dress rehearsal, click [here](#).

**Good news** if you weren't one of the lucky ones who got to see the show! We recorded the performances and they are available to stream online now. You can see all three plays for just \$10. To get your streaming ticket and enjoy the show, click [here](#).

For first-time playwright **Carol Fergusson**, the journey from first draft to final performance was one of discovery and delight, as she describes on page 5.

If you feel inspired by her reflections and think you might be ready to give it a go for next year's festival, we have the workshop for you! In September, playwright and director **Frank Moher** will lead six lucky writers through the process of polishing that draft to perfection. Details on page 6.

Good news also if you were not fortunate enough to see *ART* back in April. There will be an encore performance on Sunday, **July 14** as part of **Cultivate**. To ensure you don't miss out again, click [here](#) to get your ticket.

**Did you know?** The very first Gabriola Players production was mounted in March 2005, which means, yes, we are heading into our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season! We'd love you to get involved. To find out how you can, see page 7.



# One-Act Play Festival 2024

Audiences for our four sold out performances were wowed by the talent on this island after watching three new plays by Gabriola writers.

*"The entire show was great!"*



In Dave Innell's *The Care Aide Visits*, the past catches up with Elise (Tammy Mueller) when her cheerful young care aide is replaced by Grace (Wendy Phillips), a woman her own age, who is made of very stern stuff indeed.



In *The Waiting Room* by Anne M. Holmes, the past and present collide for Annie (Christine McKim) when strangers Ernie (Shelly Green) and Frank (Neil Shilladay) meet in a hospital waiting room.





Water isn't the only thing that flies in *Shades of Green* by Carol Fergusson when artist Ivy (Donna Deacon) convinces herself that husband George (Scott Rivers) is having an affair.

## ONE-ACT PLAY FESTIVAL 2024

ONLINE

Distressed that you didn't get to see one of the SOLD OUT performances of this year's One-Act Play Festival? **Fear not, you still can!** The plays were recorded and are now available to stream online.

### THE CARE AIDE VISITS

Written and directed by Dave Innell  
Featuring Tammy Mueller and Wendy Phillips



### THE WAITING ROOM

Written and directed by Anne M. Holmes  
Featuring Shelly Green, Christine McKim and Neil Shilladay



### SHADES OF GREEN

Written by Carol Fergusson  
Directed by Carol Fergusson and Donna Deacon  
Featuring Donna Deacon and Scott Rivers



You can enjoy all three of these new plays by Gabriola writers for just \$10! Buy a streaming ticket online at [gabriolaplayers.ca](http://gabriolaplayers.ca) and you will receive an email with a link to view online.

## Oh what a feeling!



*Carol with Donna Deacon and Scott Rivers after the final performance of Shades of Green.*

One evening my partner came home and said enthusiastically, "Gabriola Players are calling for scripts for the One-Act Play Festival. I want to write a play." "Hmm," I said, "I want to write a play, too." So I did. It came pouring out of me in three hours and my partner was a tad miffed, but then he read the play and said, "Hey, this is really good." So I shared it with Miranda Holmes and Jean Wyenberg. They both said it had a lot of potential. After a few edits (writing for the stage is different from just telling a story, as I discovered) and some formatting, I picked up what they were putting down and then submitted the script to Gabriola Players to be considered for the festival. When they selected my play, I was gobsmacked.

From casting to rehearsals, designing and sourcing the set, to production meetings and learning all the ins and outs of directing from Donna Deacon, and then watching it all come together on opening night was one of the most rewarding experiences I have had. The Gabriola Players were welcoming, encouraging, patient, and tons of fun. Everyone I came in contact with was so passionate about the art form of theatre that it was contagious. I can see now why creatives are attracted to this medium, as it is overflowing with opportunities to bend your brain in different directions. Jenny Newton deserves a medal for my OCD tendencies with the set, as she was the main hero dragging it in and out of the locker. "Jenny, that chair needs to move back a bit, the picture isn't straight; oh, we have to move the vase, it is bouncing on the table." The set was perfect for every performance, and her assistant Judy Weenk was a rockstar in handling everything with such care.

I cannot say enough about working with the entire crew and especially my cast, Scott Rivers and Donna Deacon. They were true professionals and we were a team from day one. We dedicated three nights a week to rehearsing for almost two full months and their performances were a testament to the power of practice. Each of them embraced their characters full force and their chemistry on stage was palpable. I feel honoured to have had such amazing actors bring my play to life and I will treasure the experience.

You just never know if a play is lurking inside you. I highly recommend you try, as it is better than anything you could imagine. *Shades of Green* might end up having an Act One and an Act Three... time will tell. Broadway here we come! (It's good to have goals.)

*Carol Fergusson*

# Playwriting workshop

Postponed from earlier this year and just in time for Carol and others who may be working on one-act plays for next year's festival, we are very pleased to be offering a three-day workshop in September with professional playwright and director **Frank Moher**.

The workshop is designed for writers who have completed the first draft of a one-act play and want help with polishing it to perfection.

## **Saturday, September 7, 10am-4pm:**

In the morning there will be a lesson and exercise on characterisation. In the afternoon the first three plays\* will be read for the group.

## **Sunday, September 8, 10am-1pm:**

The remaining three plays\* will be read and Frank will offer general guidelines on plot development.

Participants will then be asked to work on revising their plays\*. Before they do, Frank will arrange times to meet with writers individually the afternoon of September 8 or during the day on September 9 to provide a tailored critique of their play.



## **Saturday, September 14, 10am-5pm:**

Writers will reconvene with revised scripts, which will be read again and discussed by the group.

\* **Please note:** plays should be between 20 and 30 minutes in length. If your work is longer, you will need to work on a specific scene.

## **SIX PARTICIPANTS MAXIMUM**

**Location:** ROLLO CENTRE

**Cost:** \$50 for Gabriola Players members, \$75 for non-members.

To register send an email to [gabriolaplayers@gmail.com](mailto:gabriolaplayers@gmail.com) with the subject Play Writing Workshop.

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**Frank Moher** is a playwright, journalist, director and teacher. His play *Odd Jobs* was a finalist for the Governor General's Award, won the Los Angeles Drama-Logue Award, and has been produced throughout North America and internationally. *The Third Ascent* and *Supreme Dream* (co-written with Rhonda Trodd) toured Canada, and *Big Baby*, first produced by Calgary's Alberta Theatre Projects, has also been seen widely in Europe.

Frank founded Western Edge Theatre in Nanaimo and was its first artistic director, from 2002 until 2012. His play *Run in Fields* premiered there in 2017. He also created the pioneering online scriptwriting workshop E-script, and taught scriptwriting and journalism at Vancouver Island University for 30 years. In recent years he has directed *Red* and *Grow Up Grandad* for the Cultivate Festival on Gabriola, and appeared in the musical *The Cult of Brother 12*. His latest theatre project is a one-person play,



# We need you!



As we head into our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, we are sorry to say that a number of our long-standing **board members** will be stepping down. We are incredibly grateful for the passion and creativity they have brought to their roles and look forward to their continued participation in future productions. This does mean that we have some big shoes to fill. **If you love live theatre** and want to see it continue to thrive on Gabriola, please consider contacting us about joining the board. Send an email to [gabriolaplayers@gmail.com](mailto:gabriolaplayers@gmail.com).

We'd also love to give you a **backstage pass**. If you've ever looked closely at one of our programs, you will have noticed that there are considerably more names listed under **Crew** than there are under **Cast**. The folks backstage are the backbone of every performance, the unsung heroes who ensure that everything runs smoothly. From the stage managers, who are intimately involved in every step along the way, to the person who checks your costume or makes sure you have your props before you walk onstage, they all make the actors look good and should get a standing ovation after every show. We understand that the prospect of being on stage is daunting for many, but trust us when we say being backstage isn't. And it is equally rewarding. If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering as crew, please get in touch!

And finally, we're wondering if you are a **member** of Gabriola Players? You don't have to be in order to enjoy our productions, but we'd sure be happy if you considered becoming one. Membership fees help a lot towards the overhead costs that ticket sales simply do not cover.

The cost of an annual membership is \$20 for an individual or \$30 for a family (two adults and two children). To purchase or renew a membership, click [here](#). Members are the first to know about workshops and get a discount on the cost. We also offer a discount on opening night tickets.

For those who feel they are able to contribute more, we now have a **Sustainer** category. Your monthly donation of \$5 or \$10 (or more) will include a free membership and provide you with a tax receipt. To set up a monthly donation, please click [here](#).

## Gabriola Players at Cultivate



**ART**

Written by Yasmina Reza  
Translated by Christopher Hampton  
Performed with permission of Dramatists Play Service, Inc.  
Directed by Jean Wyenberg

*"Like a marriage of Moliere and Woody Allen"*  
*Newsweek*

Tickets will be sold on the Gabriola Arts Council website.

**ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY**

at  
**CULTIVATE**  
**RESERVOIR STAGE**  
At the Commons

**Sunday, July 14 at 1 pm**

Last chance to see this amazing play featuring Ray Appel, Jeff Malmgren and Tom Radcliffe. To get your tickets, click [here](#).

## Don Whitton Memorial Bursary



**BURSARY FOR THEATRE STUDENTS**

Gabriola Players is once again offering a \$1000 bursary to an island student pursuing post-secondary education or training in the field of theatre arts and crafts.

For more information about the Don Whitton Memorial Bursary and how to apply, go to [gabriolaplayers.ca/bursary](http://gabriolaplayers.ca/bursary)

Applications must be received before August 31.

**GABRIOLA PLAYERS**

If you know a student who is heading off to study some aspect of theatre arts in the autumn, please make sure they know about this bursary set up in honour of **Don Whitton**, one of the founding members of Gabriola Players. If there is more than one successful applicant, the bursary amount will be divided equally. To find out more about the bursary, click [here](#).