



The News Letter

The Newsletter of Theatre Newfoundland Labrador

From the Board Secretary

Well, I'm thrilled to pinch hit for TNL chair Katrina Basha for this instalment of The News Letter (TNL). I'd like to share on her behalf a little bit of what we've been up to at TNL over the last couple of months.

First and foremost, a huge welcome to our new Artistic Associate (Youth and Outreach), Mr. Adam Brake (*see p3*). Of course Adam is no stranger to TNL, having worked through the ranks from Youth Theatre student to member of the *Gros Morne Theatre* company, and now full circle to artistic associate and the Sara...h McDonald Youth Theatre program. Adam's been busy-busy with program development, including October's Zombie Walk, the new adult drama lab, and planning for the upcoming winter and spring productions, as well as teaching 80 students in weekly classes. Have a look at Adam's report (*p4*) to learn

more about all the great things he's working on!

The next TNL production of course will be *Ed & Ed's Newfoundland Christmas Concert* (Dec. 1-4) at the Corner Brook Arts and Culture Centre.

Perhaps the biggest pot we're boiling at TNL is the Gros Morne Theatre Festival (GMTF) new facilities initiative. This is moving forward quickly; we have seconded Ms. Denise Dolliver, our production/company manager at GMTF, as the project manager for this initiative. Fundraising is ongoing, and you can expect to hear much more about our progress in the days ahead. Very exciting!

In closing, I'd like to say thank you to our TNL staff and Board of Directors (*see p4*). These folks work so very hard to keep professional theatre alive and well on the west coast of Newfoundland and beyond. Bravo!

Pamela Gill,
TNL Board Secretary

What's On at TNL?

01-04 December: *Ed & Ed's Newfoundland Christmas Concert*, Corner Brook Arts & Culture Centre

2017

11 February: *February Fundraiser* - details to come

25 February: *Winter Carnival Dinner Theatre*, The Palace Theatre, Broadway (1 pm & 4pm)

11 March: Sara...h McDonald Youth Theatre *March Hare* performance

More details at www.theatrenewfoundland.com, or call 709-639-1006

TNL is a registered charity (BN: 126589910RR00001). If you would like to make a donation please contact the TNL office at 709-639-7238 or visit the TNL website at <http://www.theatrenewfoundland.com> and click on "Donate Now."

Contact us:

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Who's Who in Theatre?

The Assistant Administrator

The Assistant Administrator (AA) of a professional theatre company provides administrative support to the General Manager, Artistic Director, Artistic Associate, Board of Directors and all other company staff, supporting the practical, day-to-day, smooth running of the company as directed by the General Manager.

The AA is the first point of contact at the TNL office for all phone calls, inquiries and visitors, making her the central point of information for both patrons and the public. I have to represent TNL effectively and professionally at all times and have good relationships with patrons and the community. Communication skills are essential.

As TNL's AA, I am guided by, and work closely with, TNL's General Manager, Gaylene Buckle, assisting her with such things as marketing, collecting marketing and media

materials for grant reports, and organizing fundraising programs. (TNL is a registered charity and fundraising is a crucial part of the company's activities). The AA is responsible for the bi-annual mail out to patrons, and to corporate sponsors for TNL's community production and *Festival of Youth* production, as well as the organization and logistics of TNL's *February Fundraiser*. The last requires working closely with TNL's Board of Director's Fundraising Committee to secure auction items.

The AA is responsible for all daily administrative tasks that enable the TNL office to function effectively. There are a range of duties that include, but are by no means limited to: handling the mail; dealing with phone inquiries; preparing for meetings; managing the website; maintaining office supplies and equipment; tracking inventory of merchandise; preparing and/or creating the show programs; and coordinating and assisting with costume rentals. From

October to May the AA also manages the GMTF reservations and assists with Youth Theatre registration; schedules auditions; assists in marketing performances; and anything else to support TNL in its activities, productions and operations.

Working at a professional theatre company with a small staff, being the AA often includes tasks outside the title. There are times when I have been a photographer on a show photo shoot, the office cleaner, painted set pieces, helped move sets; sold 50/50 tickets and/or chocolates; served pizza at fundraisers; and looked for costumes for costume designers.

Being Assistant Administrator of a theatre company requires an interest in the arts and a love for what you do. It's all about the play and it is very gratifying to play a role in making something so creative happen.

Natasha Butt, Assistant Administrator, TNL

Behind TNL

Office staff:

Artistic Director, Jeff Pitcher
General Manager, Gaylene Buckle
Artistic Associate, Adam Brake
Administrative Assistant, Natasha Butt
Project Manager, Denise Dolliver

Board of Directors

Katrina Basha, chair; Pat Higgins, vice-chair; Sherry Moulton, treasurer; Tarragh Shanahan, co-secretary; Pamela Gill, co-secretary; Jane Brewer; Jerry Etienne; Kelley Packwood; Carol Payne; Kelly Anne Pelley; Rhoda Reardon; Nora Shears; Trina Simms and David Smallwood

Welcome, TNL's New Artistic Associate, Adam Brake



Adam Brake, who has a twenty year history with TNL, is our new Artistic Associate. He first worked with TNL in 1998 when he joined the Youth Theatre Program (YTP) that he now co-

ordinates and teaches. TNL ignited his passion for theatre then, and they have since been at every step of his career.

Adam graduated from the YTP and then, with TNL's support, applied and was accepted into the theatre program at Grenfell, graduating in 2005 with a BFA in theatre (focusing on acting).

After graduation Adam worked throughout the province as an actor and director with companies such as *Rising Tide Theatre*, *C2C theatre*, *The Open Actors Studio*, and *Hard Ticket Theatre*.

In 2011 Adam received his Bachelor of Education from MUN, and began teaching acting and theatre in High Schools, while also working closely with Sara...h McDonald, whom Adam regards as one of his great role models. Together, they collaborated on many projects, including the *Stage Head Academy*, *Leif the Unlucky* and *With Cruel Times In Between* (Al Pittman/Sara...h MacDonald).

In 2013 Adam joined the Grenfell Faculty as an acting professor and began teaching 1st year acting, and now he is thrilled to be a full time member of, "the company that raised me, fostered my love for the arts, and served as a place for me to experiment creatively throughout my career."

Adam went on to say, "Making theatre is a journey, and while we are all excited to make it to production day, in the end it is the journey to that day that will be meaningful in twenty years' time. It's been a long journey for me to this position, and I'm very excited to finally be here. Now the next journey begins, for me and for our students. We can't wait to show you everything we have learned together."

Bringing *Fanny* Home

Creating plays that honour and highlight the people and culture of Newfoundland & Labrador is part of TNL's mandate and we believe it is important not only to tell those stories in our Warehouse Theatre in Cow Head, but to take them to rural parts of the province, especially to the communities where they are most relevant.

TNL's premiere production of *Our Fanny*, commissioned by Theatre Newfoundland Labrador, written by Berni Stapleton and directed by TNL Artistic Director Jeff Pitcher, was inspired by the book *Your Daughter Fanny – The War Letters of Frances Cluett, VAD*, edited by Bert Riggs and Bill Rompkey. After a successful 41-performance run (seen by nearly 2,000 patrons) at it's *Gros Morne Theatre Festival* in Cow Head, the production hit the

road for a three-week, twelve-performance tour to Royal Canadian Legion halls, community halls and schools around the province, including, of course, Belleoram (see map). A special performance at *The Rooms* in St. John's, in the presence of Fanny's niece-in-law and two grand nieces, was especially moving.

After performing in the Belleoram town hall, just steps away from where Frances Cluett lived, listening to stories of "Fanny Teacher" from the people who knew her was an emotional experience.

TNL will continue to tell these stories and get them out to the communities where they are most relevant.

Gaylene Buckle,
General Manager, TNL



Left: Map of *Fanny* tour
Created by: Sarah White

Right: Robyn Huxter
(centre), Craig Haley
(left) and Matthew
Wheaton

Photo: PB Productions



Youth Theatre

The Sara...h Macdonald Youth Theatre is back in full swing for the 2016/17 season! With a new youth theatre co-ordinator students are jumping in, having fun, and getting ready for an exciting year of productions to come. Already this year, our students have been busy showing off their work at this year's *Atlanti-Con Sci-Fi Convention* at the Civic Centre, walking the floor as "Aslan" the lion from last spring's production of Rachael Joffred's *Narnia*. Students joined us at *Swirsky's* in their best zombie costumes, and helped with getting donations for local food banks. As the weather turns cold, our students will

begin getting ready for productions in the New Year. Up first will be the Annual *Winter Carnival Dinner Theatre* at the Palace Theatre on Broadway. Our dinner theatre by kids, for kids, has been a favourite for years, and our students will be back on 25 February with some zany fun for all ages. On 11 March, our students will participate again in the *March Hare* with their very own *March Hare* show. We'll round out our season with the final show in April, which we will have a lot more info about in the near future. It's going to be a great season with TNL, so come out and see what our students are doing!

Adam Brake
Artistic Associate



SMYT students
try their poses for
"Wizards, Giants
& Goblins"

Photo, Adam Brake

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