

### **(20<sup>th</sup> Annual) Competition Summary** **2008 Category-Winners and Finalists:**

This year's Jury selected 3 Winners and 3 Finalists from 81 New Canadian Plays in Theatre BC's 20th Annual Canadian National Playwriting Competition

The identities of the Winning and Finalist Playwrights were revealed on Sunday, October 19th, 2008 at the OctoberFest One-Act Play Festival's Awards Lunch in Prince George, BC, following the Jurors' Meeting to make the final selections. The results were as follows:

#### CATEGORY WINNERS

##### **Full Length Winner (\$1000 Cash Award)**

**"The Death of Sir Arthur Currie" by Jeff Pitcher, North Vancouver, BC**

Synopsis: *The Death of Sir Arthur Currie* is based on the trial of Sir Arthur Currie, commander of the Canadian Expeditionary Force during World War 1 when he sued the owner of a small town newspaper in Ontario for libel in 1928 and his subsequent death.

**Bio:** Jeff has been working as an actor, director and playwright in Canada for the past 25 years. He is the author of over a dozen plays, including "Ed & Ed – Trapped," "Sound & Fury" and "Elvis & Mavis" and "Scandal – The Robert Sommer's Story." He's also adapted for the stage J.M. Barries' "Peter Pan" and Dickens "A Christmas Carol." His latest play, "The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood" will premiere at Alberta Theatre Projects in Calgary in December 2008. He currently splits his time between his writing base in Vancouver and his home in Newfoundland, where he is the Artistic Director of Theatre Newfoundland Labrador.

##### **One Act Winner (\$750 Western Canada Theatre Cash Award)**

**"The Big Polka Dot" by Joel Janisse, Windsor, ON**

Synopsis: Ivan has written a play satirizing the new religion de jour, Polka Dotology. It is the hit of the New York Fringe and Ivan and the lead actor Scott "Skinny" Ridowski are approached about adapting it for Hollywood. The catch is, they must meet with Polka Dotology's religious head (or is it cult leader) first.

**Bio:** Joel Janisse grew up in Windsor Ontario but currently resides in Vancouver BC. His undergrad education was a long drawn out affair that finally landed him a double majored degree in Creative Writing & Sociology. A few of his plays were performed in Windsor by Monkey's With a Typewriter Theatre Company and his other writings have appeared in *Adbusters* and *Kitchen Sink Magazine* where he won their Second Annual Short Fiction Contest. Joel is currently completing his MFA in UBC's Optional-Residency program. He believes he got into writing for the right reasons and that the fame, fortune, and celebrity is a minor bonus.

##### **Special Merit Winner (\$500 City of Kamloops Cash Award)**

**"Pox" by Harold Rhenisch, Campbell River, BC**

Synopsis Two incorrigible gamblers from 1871 return to the grasslands to settle a bet, only to reenact (and bungle) a crime that saw six Shuswap girls mysteriously dead during a treaty negotiation. To enliven their bet, the gamblers exchange roles halfway through.

**Bio:** Harold Rhenisch has been writing poetry, fiction, and nonfiction for thirty years. He translated Shakespeare's sonnets into English (*Living Will*, 2003), and restaged many of his plays in the poems in *Free Will* (2005). He has won the 2008 CBC literary prize and the 2007 George Ryga Prize for Social Responsibility in BC Literature, for his nonfiction book *The Wolves at Evelyn: Journeys Through a Dark Century*. A native of BC's Similkameen Valley and a long-time resident of BC's Cariboo, where *Pox* is set, he now lives in Campbell River, on Vancouver Island.

FINALISTS (alphabetical order by title)

**"A Dying Family Tradition" by Dianne Lococo, Toronto, ON**

Synopsis: Cadence arrives home from her mother's funeral. She is all alone in the world—until her dead mother appears. Then her dead father. Then an Australian bashes into Cadence's home and life, insisting that she is Cadence's long-lost sister. A mean yogi further disrupts the family by staking claim to Cadence's inheritance. People die. It's a family tradition.

**Bio:** Dianne Lococo has written seven plays in seven years and had over a dozen productions and staged readings. The Globe and Mail has published several of her humorous essays. Dianne's husband asked her to stop writing plays about dead husbands. She is currently working on RANDOLPH: THE UNIMAGINABLE DOG, a memoir of her life in London, England, with an incorrigible dog and a perfect husband. Richard and Dianne live in Toronto and Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. [www.diannelococo.com](http://www.diannelococo.com)

\* "A Dying Family Tradition" was also a finalist in the Samuel French playwriting competition.

**"A Year of Winter" by Scott Sharplin, Edmonton, AB**

Synopsis: A brilliant artistic partnership between a painter and her schizophrenic friend becomes strained when financial success threatens their intricately constructed private world.

**Bio:** Scott is a playwright, director, actor, and dramaturge. After being introduced to playwriting through Victoria Composite High School and the Citadel's Teen Festival of the Arts, Scott co-founded the Carnival of Shrieking Youth theatre festival in 1993, and Sound & Fury Theatre in 2000. Scott has had his scripts workshopped and/or produced by Lunchbox Theatre, Theatre Network, Workshop West, Sound & Fury Theatre, Theatre Squared, Alberta Playwrights' Network, Playwrights' Theatre Centre, Theatre BC, The National Theatre School, and Playwrights' Workshop Montreal. He has had plays published in three anthologies: *Staging Alternative Albertas* (Playwrights Canada Press, 2002) and *Three on the Boards* (Signature Editions, 2008), and the upcoming *Hot Thespian Action!* (Athabasca University Press, 2008). He is also a previous finalist in Theatre BC's Canadian National Playwriting Competition: in 1998 for his script, "Touch" and in 2003 for "The Truth Factory".

**"Dream for Upirngaq" by Tanya M.Gadsby, Victoria, BC**

Synopsis: In a time long before Europeans arrived in the north, bleak starvation has gripped a small family of Inuit living on the land. The youth in the family are losing faith in the traditional ways while their elders still tell the old stories and believe the starvation will pass. When four young lovers become lost on the tundra at night, they fall prey to the whims of the gods and spirit world. *Dream for Upirngaq* follows the basic plot of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but emphasizes the rich culture and traditions of the Inuit.

**Bio:** Tanya Gadsby was born in New Zealand, and shortly thereafter she and her parents moved to British Columbia. When she was three they moved to Iqaluit, Nunavut and lived there for four years before moving to Whitehorse, Yukon where they have lived ever since. Those four years in Iqaluit left quite the impression on Tanya, and, along with her many years in Whitehorse, have served as inspiration for her creative writing. Tanya moved to Victoria, BC in 2003 and recently completed her BFA at the University of Victoria where she studied creative writing and theatre (stage management, costume design, acting). The inspiration for *Dream for Upirngaq* came from a class assignment to design full costumes for Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her one-act play, *Flealess*, was produced at the Uvic Phoenix Theatre's FIND Festival 2007. Her stage management credits include *The Ugly Duchess*, and *Crackpot*. She is currently working on her first novel

**JURORS:**

**Nathan Medd of Vancouver, BC**

**Bio:** A graduate of the Theatre Department at UVic (acting focus), Nathan co-founded the Metro Studio in Victoria - now one of the busiest theatre venues in the province - during his time as Operations Manager at Intrepid Theatre. Nathan enjoyed three seasons as the Belfry Theatre's Front of House Manager, and a further three at the Victoria Fringe, as Development and Volunteer Coordinator. In 2007 he joined the BC Arts Council in the Ministry of Tourism, Sport, and The Arts, as BCAC's Theatre Program Coordinator, and now lives and works in Vancouver as Producing Manager of Electric Company Theatre. Nathan has also worked professionally as an actor, technician, production manager, and designer, and was an adjudicator at the 2006 Vancouver Island One Act Play Festival. He credits his hometown community theatre - the Village Theatre in Qualicum - with sparking his passion for the arts. This is

Nathan's second turn at dramaturgy for the playwriting competition, having also served as a juror in 2006 (18<sup>th</sup> Annual).

**Nicolle Natrass** of Nanoose Bay, BC

Bio: Nicole is honored to have been selected to jury Theatre BC's Annual National Playwriting Competition. Nicolle is an actress (CAEA/ACTRA) & playwright (full member of the Playwrights Guild of Canada). She is a graduate from the University of Victoria in 1991 (Acting Specialization). She has performed across Canada in theatre, radio, commercials and film. In between performing for many regional theatres across Canada, she began writing sketch comedy and monologues which evolved into her successful one woman show, *Brownie Points*, *Boldly Going Where No Brownie Has Gone Before*. *Brownie Points* received nominations for Outstanding Original Play and Outstanding Performance at the Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards. *Brownie Points* received an American theatre premiere as well as being adapted into an award winning short film which garnered Best Comedy Award in 2003 and Best Performance in 2008. Her plays include: *Good House-keeping* (full length), *The Kindness of Kevin Barteski* (one act), *The Drama Queens* (one act comedy) and *Dot in the City*.

**Barbara Wheeldon** of Delta, BC

Bio: Barbara is a successful film, television and theatre actor as well as an experienced director and playwright. She has appeared in everything from *Anne of Green Gables* as Marilla and *Oklahoma* as Aunt Eller onstage to roles on *Queer as Folk* and *Street Legal*. Barbara has directed many of her own plays, including "*Santas's Ho Ho Ho*" and "*Is It Lunch Yet?*", both of which were performed and aired on television in Delta. She also has a long list of other directing credits, highlights include: "*Guys and Dolls*"; "*An Evening of Cabaret*"; "*The Play 1949*"; and "*Amazing Gracie*". She worked for many years with the Huron Country Playhouse and St. Mary's Community Players in Ontario as a director, writer and actor. She is also the author of a popular how-to book called *The Camera and You!!* Barbara adjudicated for Theatre BC's Okanagan Zone Drama Festival in May 2008 and for the ACToberfest One-Act Play Festival in Prince George in October 2008.

**Summary of Entries:**

- **81** entered scripts
- **50** Full-Length plays;
- **31** One Act plays;

All Winners and Finalists will be invited to Theatre BC's New Play Festival, April 10<sup>TH</sup> - 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2009 at the Pavilion Theatre in Kamloops, BC, home of our event partner, Western Canada Theatre, the largest professional theatre company in BC's Southern Interior. Details regarding this year's Competition are posted to the Theatre BC website at [www.theatrebc.org/playcomp/](http://www.theatrebc.org/playcomp/).

**Breakdown of Entries:**

Province	FL	1-Act	Total
BC	26	18	44
AB	3	2	5
SK	1	-	1
MB	-	-	-
ON	17	10	27
PE	-	-	-
PQ	-	1	1
NB	1	-	1
NS	2	-	2
NWT	-	-	-
YT	-	-	-
Subtotals	50	31	81

Congratulations to this year's Winners and Finalists. Thank you to all entering playwrights and to the Competition Jurors for their many hours of reading and careful consideration. Any artistic directors wishing to read winning and/or finalist scripts from this year's Competition, please contact Theatre BC.

For complete Competition and event details on juror & winning playwright profiles, ***Theatre BC's New Play Festival, April 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009*** in Kamloops, please visit our web site: [www.theatrebc.org/playcomp](http://www.theatrebc.org/playcomp) or [www.theatrebc.org/NPF](http://www.theatrebc.org/NPF)

We invite Canadian resident playwrights to enter their new works in Theatre BC's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Canadian National Playwriting Competition. Entries will be accepted between April 15, 2009 and Monday, July 20, 2009. If you would like to be added to our mailing list for a Competition "How To Enter" brochure, please send your contact information to Theatre BC at PO Box 2031, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 6X6 or email us: [pwc@theatrebc.org](mailto:pwc@theatrebc.org)

Postmarked Deadline for  
***Theatre BC's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Canadian National Playwriting Competition (2009), Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009.***