



ECT

JULY 2021

NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PG. 2-3

A Red Plaid Shirt

PG. 4-5

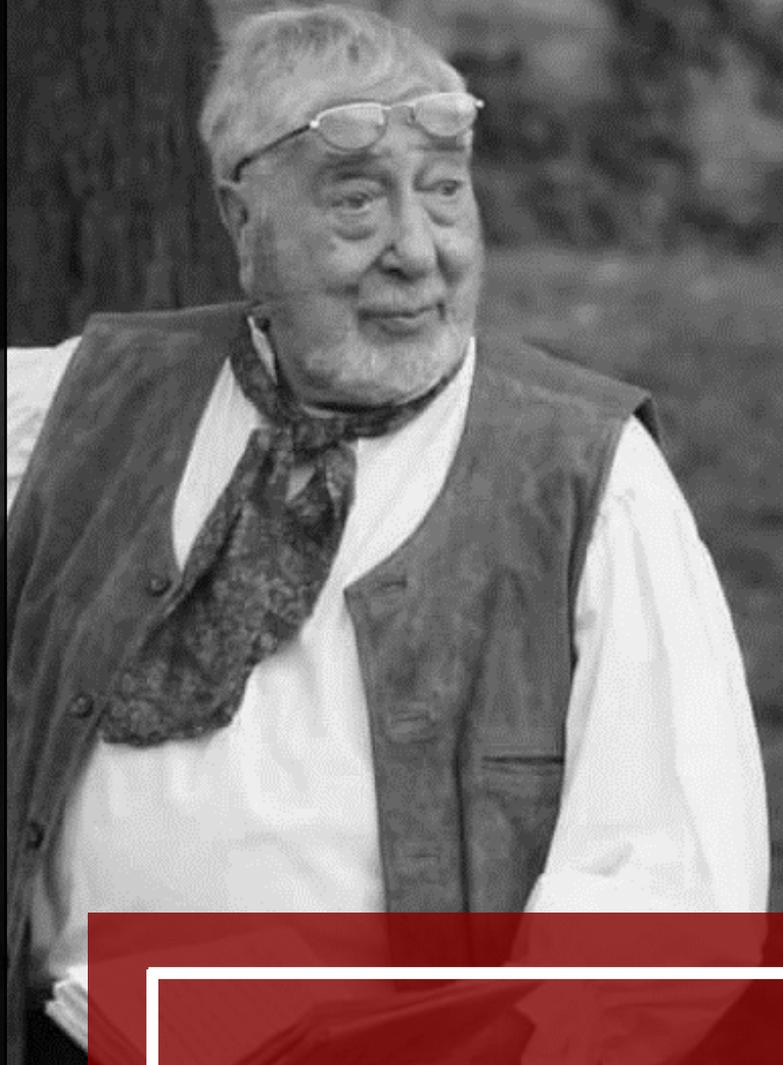
A Midsummer Nights Dream

PG. 6-8

My 25-Year-Old "Cat"

PG. 9

Monologue of the Month



**“Community
Theatre
at It’s Best”**

A Red Plaid Shirt – Live Theatre is Back!

Come join us this weekend (July 29th-Aug 2nd) for Elora Community Theatre first production of our Summer 2021 season, *A Red Plaid Shirt*.



This witty comedy, written by Michael G. Wilmot and directed by Stan Jensen, will be performed live in the yard of the Elora Centre of the Arts. Be sure to bring your own chair!

Have you planned for retirement? Marty and Fred didn't. Now Marty feels "lost" and Fred thinks he's "dying"! Initial efforts lead to failure; their wives set them straight with no uncertainty. Maybe you'll recognize some of the pitfalls? Starring Fred Brandenburg, Michelle Salmon, Harry Bishop and Nancy Baker. Come join this cast on their comedic journey to find fulfillment in their old age

Tickets are available online or at the door:

<https://eloracentreforthearts.ca/event/red-plaid-shirt/>

A Red Plaid Shirt

By Michael G. Wilmot

directed by Stan Jensen

**A Comedy About
Retirement!**



**Located at the
Elora Centre for
the Arts, Outdoor
Green Space
Bring your own
chair!**

July 29, 30 at 7pm

July 31 at 2&7pm

Aug 1, 2 at 2pm

Poster Design by Mady O'Brien

Tickets sold at **\$20**

www.eloracentreforthearts.ca

A Red Plaid Shirt by Michael G. Wilmot,
Produced by special arrangement with
PLAYWRIGHTS GUILD OF CANADA

Elora Community
Theatre

A Midsummer Nights Dream – Aug 2021

Shakespeare in the park is back! Join us this August for our 8th season of bringing classic Shakespearean plays live to our local community in Bissell Park. This year ECT will be re-telling Willam Shakespeare's most beloved comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Directed by Deb Stanson and David Tanner, stage managed by Eileen McLaughlin, and costumes by Teagan Hiller.

Katy Chapman	Helena
Alexandra Porter	Hermia
Owen Starling	Lysander
Jeremiah McCleary	Demitrius
Cory Sanders	Egeus/Philastrate
Lorie Black	Titania
Viviane Rain Jones	Hippolyta
Anthony Deciantis	Oberon
Harry Bishop	Theseus
Hayden Tallon	Puck
Acey Kaspar	Bottom
Alex Kanarek	Quince
Eli McCready Branch	Flute
Oriana Abrahamse	Snug
Ashley Goldsmith	Snout
Jess Kaspar	Starveling
Ella Davis	Moth
Megan Geddes	Cobweb
Malone Bonneveld	Mustard Seed
Hayley Watson	Peaseblossom



Photos by Teagan Hiller

Tickets are available for August 20-22th and Aug 27-29th through the Elora Centre for the Arts:

<https://eloracentreforthearts.ca/event/shakespeare-in-the-park-a-midsummer-nights-dream-presented-by-elora-community-theatre/>



Community Elora Theatre

8th Season!

Shakespeare in the Park

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

by William Shakespeare

*Directed by Deb Stanson
and David Tanner*

*Stage Manager
Eileen MacLaughlin*

*WHEN: AUGUST 20 -22
and AUGUST 27 -29*

Friday performances 8:00 pm

*Saturday and Sunday
3:00 pm and 8:00 pm*

WHERE:

Bissell Park, Elora, Ont.

*TICKETS: \$20 (including HST)
available online at
eloracentreforthearts.ca (Events)*

Bring your own chair or blanket!

Covid protocol in place

*Contact debstanson@gmail.com
for more information*

My 25-year-old "Cat"

In, what seems a lifetime ago, 1997, I was the upstart young Founder and Artistic Director of my own repertory Shakespeare company in Toronto. Six years into that venture, we had gone from staging one performance of "Midsummer" in a high school gymnasium in Scarborough, to forty performances of *The Scottish Play* at the then-Mecca of Toronto performance venues: The Ford Centre for the Performing Arts; in the City of North York... Mayor Mel Lastman's personal love child, before becoming mayor of the new MegaCity. *The Lunatic, Lover and Poet (LLP) Stage Co.* was able to slot our production between the closing of Diahann Carroll's "Sunset Boulevard", and "Ragtime" while it was still in rehearsal. By March of '97, we had closed our production to packed houses and to critical acclaim.

...and then, came the scandal...

By April, the management company the was running the Ford Centre; as well as others in Toronto; LiveEnt Entertainment, was rocked by formal, criminal charges of fraud and embezzlement against its then-CEO; Garth Drabinsky. "Ragtime" never got off the ground. The 9+ year run of "Phantom of the Opera" survived only briefly thereafter; with a non-union Paul Stanley (of KISS fame) in the title role at the downtown Pantages Theatre, but it ultimately folded, as well. The budding Toronto theatre scene had become an artistic ghost town.

With the books slammed shut until millions of missing dollars were found, I was informed that *LLP* was placed 147th on the list of entities awaiting reimbursement. Frantic to keep my name and company in good standing, I took out a personal six-figure loan; backed only by a promissory note that all would be resolved quickly, for about twice the sum of the loan's value. It wasn't.

By 2001, after years of legal suits and countersuits, I was informed by formal letter that LiveEnt Entertainment: Chicago and all its subsidiaries, including Toronto, had filed for Chapter 11: Bankruptcy in the United States. I would never see a penny. Although my loan was used to pay my cast and crew, advertisers and all third parties, to keep *LLP* in good financial standing, I was still scores of thousands in debt; with no theatre house to perform in. With no stomach to pursue anything more than to eventually payoff my loan in full, I had to fold my lovechild theatre company and venture into the real world, which had had as little as possible to do with performance theatre.

My 25-year-old "Cat"

This was a far cry from the expected trajectory of myself and of *LLP*. We had already come to an agreement-in-principal to the staging of our next production later in 1997. "Ragtime" was scheduled to go up for six weeks; with the proviso that it may be extended for a maximum of six months, before packing up and heading to the intended target: Broadway. At some point between July and October of 1997, the Ford Centre would be free again. We had first-dibs, thereafter. I had also assured theatre management that, whenever exactly that would be, we would be ready to take stage.

That next production was to be one of the gems of the Tennessee Williams cannon: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof". I was to co-direct and co-star in the iconic role of Brick Pollitt; made world famous decades before by Paul Newman, who played opposite Elizabeth Taylor in the 1958 film.

We had already completed our adapted stage play. All the major roles had already been cast. We had begun advertising while still in performance with "Mac", in January.

All for naught.

By 2007, years later, I found myself in a new life: married; children, new career, in a new city... but with a yearning to return to the stage. This is the plague of having theatre in the soul. Having lost only the desire to put my family's financial security on the line, I joined a local community theatre... and then, another... and then, another. Having been blessed over the span of more than a decade to perform in Cambridge, K/W, Guelph, and Elora to name a few; and to perform and direct from the canons Shakespeare, Agatha Christie, Neil Simon... and my own first play, I ventured to ask Elora Community Theatre's help. Not merely to allow me to act and direct in the show, but to help me rid myself of a two-decades-old demon that continues to haunt me in the form of 'unfinished business'.

They agreed.

"Cat: Take Two" was slated for production for April, 2021. The old, complete stage play was promptly dusted, and several 'play reads' were organized.

My 25-year-old "Cat"

...and then came this little thing you may have heard about... called Covid-19.

Once again, for reasons beyond the theatre company's control, production screeched to a halt. And once again, my demons mocked me.

With the tepid post-Covid re-opening of Ontario theatres, the wonderful and gracious personnel at ECT have renewed unwaveringly their commitment to my production of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"; currently, slated for February 2022. As tentative and battle scarred as I may be, I cannot contain my elation of finally having my vision of "Cat" come to life.

Is it with either the cruel hand of Karma or the redeeming one of Nemesis that I can now state that 2022 will be the year in which my twenty-five-year wait comes to an end, of what began innocently enough in 1997?

Do I curse Karma or praise Nemesis, my 50th birthday coming just months before, that I have waited literally half-my-life to play this part?

Sometimes, the old adage holds true: there is oft more drama behind the stage than on it. I thank you, for your indulgence in hearing me tell my tale.

I hold no disrespect for any actor who retells of the passionate pangs of having to wait to play any part. But I will challenge anyone to retell their story, in comparison to mine. I am more than ready to play Brick. The part is in my blood and bones. I have waited, what seems like several lifetimes to share this Williams masterpiece with a warm and receptive audience. I presume audition notices will be going up for Sept/Oct 2021, for all parts but Brick. I hope very much to see many new and old faces, but for the rest, I hope very much to see you all at the Fergus Grand Theatre in February.

My solemn vow to you all, is to bring once-more-to-the-breech, everything I've got to give to every performance.

...pray, in your own way, for us...

-Anthony Deciantis

Upcoming director of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"

Monologue of the Month

This month we bring forwards a monologue from one of William Shakespeare's less known show, *The Winter Tale*. In this scene, Paulina scolds Leontes for allowing his jealousy to overcome his love for his family. She blames him for the death of his son, his daughter, and now his wife, Hermione.

Paulina

Female (Age 30-60)

What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?
 What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?
 In leads or oils? what old or newer torture
 Must I receive, whose every word deserves
 To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny
 Together working with thy jealousies,
 Fancies too weak for boys, too green and idle
 For girls of nine, O, think what they have done
 And then run mad indeed, stark mad! for all
 Thy by-gone fooleries were but spices of it.
 That thou betray'dst Polixenes, 'twas nothing;
 That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant
 And damnable ingrateful: nor was't much,
 Thou wouldst have poison'd good Camillo's honour,
 To have him kill a king: poor trespasses,
 More monstrous standing by: whereof I reckon
 The casting forth to crows thy baby-daughter
 To be or none or little; though a devil
 Would have shed water out of fire ere done't:
 Nor is't directly laid to thee, the death
 Of the young prince, whose honourable thoughts,
 Thoughts high for one so tender, cleft the heart
 That could conceive a gross and foolish sire
 Blemish'd his gracious dam: this is not, no,
 Laid to thy answer: but the last,--O lords,
 When I have said, cry 'woe!' the queen, the queen,
 The sweet'st, dear'st creature's dead,
 and vengeance for't
 Not dropp'd down yet.