

# Your COMMUNITY Voice

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## 'Nunsense' voted top production of theatre's 50th season

BY ANIL JHALLI

The Kanata Theatre's 50th season was filled with comedy, drama, history and even some tragedy.

But there was one production that members felt stood above the rest.

The popular and award winning musical 'Nunsense' was brought to life by a talented mix of behind the scenes players, actors and actresses. Almost half of subscribers who responded to a poll voted it their favourite production of the 2018-2019

season.

"We try to cater to the tastes of all our patrons," said Cameron Bishop, the Kanata Theatre's director of publicity. "The 2018-2019 season had something for everybody."

An adaptation of 'Silent Sky' and 'A Man for All Seasons', and a radio play version of 'It's A Wonderful Life' were also fan favourites.

"I think people responded so well to 'Nunsense' because it was light hearted and made people laugh," Bishop added. "It was blissfully silly and the energy on the stage was

infectious. That's a recipe for a great show every time. It was a fun launch into the summer months and a fine cherry on top of our 50th season."

The premise of 'Nunsense', the long running Off Broadway musical, is that a few nuns from the convent of the Little Sisters of Hoboken are organizing a fundraiser in order to properly bury four colleagues who are being stored in their school cafeteria's freezer after they were mistakenly given a fatal dose of botulism.

Ron Gardner, who directed

the Kanata theatre's version of the popular musical, was happy to bring it to life for local theatre enthusiasts.

"I'm really proud of what we were able to accomplish," said Gardner, who lives in Dunrobin and has been an active member of the Kanata Theatre for the past six and a half years. "When amazing people come together, we can create amazing things."

The 51st season of the Kanata Theatre kicks off September 17 with the production "A Comedy of Errors."

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# Dunrobin director's 'Nunsense' voted top production

BY ANNE JARVIS and  
DORIS BRACKEN

There was one production that stood out among the comedies, dramas, histories and tragedies on stage during the Kanata Theatre's milestone 50th season.

The popular and award-winning musical 'Nunsense' was brought to life by a talented mix of behind-the-scenes and on-stage talent, and Dunrobin resident Ron Gardner, who directed the Kanata Theatre's version of the popular musical.

"They were just very thankful that we'd finally brought a musical back into the theatre," he said of the response during the 10-show run over two weeks in May. "People love musicals and the response from everyone was just

overwhelming."

Almost half of the theatre's subscribers who responded to a poll voted 'Nunsense' their favourite production of the 2018-19 season.

That was evident in the ticket sales.

"Normally in Kanata Theatre, we don't sell out our first week," Gardner said. "But we had record sales for that whole week too."

The premise of the long-running Off Broadway musical is that a few nuns from the Little Sisters of Hoboken convent are organizing a fundraiser to properly bury five colleagues who are stored in their school cafeteria's freezer after they were mistakenly given a fatal dose of botulinum.

It was a smart, dark comedy that featured touching



Dunrobin's Ron Gardner directed Kanata Theatre's 'Nunsense' earlier this year, which was a fan favourite this season, according to poll members.

and motivating music.

"When you have religion on stage in a comedy setting, people laugh at things and dancing and singing

and getting high. People loved it, every minute of it," said Gardner.

He is an experienced actor and director and has tried his hand at various behind-the-scenes roles over the years, including producing and stage managing.

He first started acting in the mid-1980s in Alberta. He resumed his passion

12 years ago with Rural Root Theatre Company in Constance Bay, where he currently serves as president.

'Nunsense' was Gardner's fourth time directing a musical.

"It's very challenging because people have to sing, they have to act, they have to dance, be acrobatic sometimes," said Gardner.

who is also vice-president of the Kanata Theatre, which has its home at the Ron Maslin Playhouse on Terry Fox Drive.

Often time actors sing to recorded music but Gardner wanted live music, which meant a 14-piece orchestra, a conductor plus five actors. He worked with the show's musical director, Tobin DuMoulin, who he had also collaborated with last fall on "Leader of the Pack" for the Rural Root Theatre Company.

"That adds a whole other complexity," Gardner said of directing a musical. "There's a lot of things going on all at once."

He will next act in Rural Root Theatre's production of "12 Angry Hours" for six shows from Oct. 20 to 26 at the North Wind Wireless Fibre Centre in Constance Bay. He is co-producing that show.

And he will stage manage a comedy-drama for the Kanata Theatre called "Quarter" from March 24 to April 4, 2020.

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## We, the record keepers, are taking notes



THE ACCIDENTAL HUSBAND  
STAHANA FINNER

I have always been a record keeper. As a young girl, I had those hard-covered daily journals with their little locks

on them. I kept some of the day-to-day writing down good and bad things that happened as I attended school. Later, in my teen years, I made lists of the things I liked and didn't like about each boy I suddenly found myself attracted to.

As I matured and developed a love of writing, my journal was more about recording meaningful quotes and beautiful sayings that I had discovered. I copied the verses I loved from song lyrics, dialogues from favourite movie scenes and unique descriptions of people and places as penned by my favourite writers.

I took a suitcase of my journals with me when I left home and got married. I started a new set of journals when I began having children – recording every detail of their care and feeding for my future reference – or theirs.

When I moved to Asia in 2003 and began writing a column, that weekly serial became my new journal. I continued to record details of our daily family life when I remained in 2007. I find the practice of writing about my life to be cathartic and therapeutic. It's my life record.

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