

**THEATRE NEW  
BRUNSWICK**  
**SEASON 24/25**





# BLUEBIRDS

WRITTEN BY  
VERN THIESSEN

TNB.NB.CA



**tnb** theatre  
NEW BRUNSWICK

THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK SEASON 24/25

**Set in Étaples, France, 1918. Nurses Christy, Maggie, and Bab have crossed oceans to care for wounded Canadian soldiers in the Great War. Despite the terrible injuries they must deal with, they manage to stay hopeful as the dangers of the front draw closer to their hospital. Through it all, the three women find friendship, independence, power, and influence in a place where men, once again, are trying to destroy the world.**

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Canada





**Theatre New Brunswick is one of Canada's oldest running professional regional theatre companies. Through our mainstage productions we strive to highlight and celebrate the best New Brunswick and Maritime talent on and off the stage. Each year, our Young Company delivers the magic of live theatre to thousands of elementary, middle, and high school students province-wide. The shining star of TNB is our Theatre School which trains and mentors nearly 400 K-12 students annually in musical theatre, acting, and playwriting.**

**TNB is an integral part of New Brunswick's rich cultural landscape. We pride ourselves on a legacy of diverse programming and community partnerships.. Through the power of art we support Maritime voices and are committed to producing transformative content, fostering the imagination, and awakening New Brunswick audiences.**

**Theatre New Brunswick is an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT).**

**We engage under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Candian Actor's Equity Association.**

# Message from Artistic & Executive Director Natasha MacLellan



**We are beyond excited to launch our 2024/2025 season with the return Bluebirds! Back in 2022, we were proud to present and tour its world premiere to New Brunswick audiences and we were absolutely blown away.**

**There was so much buzz around this show at the time, that we started getting interest from theatre colleagues outside of New Brunswick. Fast forward to 2024, we have reassembled the Bluebirds team and here we are embarking on our first Nova Scotia in many years!**

**Bluebirds was workshopped during our first Fall Festival of New Plays back in October of 2020 when no one knew what the future held for live theatre and I'm so incredibly proud of what it has turned into.**

**As we begin this new season of theatre, with new and old audiences alike, I couldn't be more excited.**

# Message from Chair, Board of Governors Deborah Burns

**History is littered with attempts to glean glory from the unspeakable horrors of war. This is how we cope. This is how we heal. And sadly, this is how we forget. This is also what makes Bluebirds unique among war stories. This play is not about brave soldiers, cunning generals, or ignorant politicians. It's a story about how our mothers, our grandmothers, and our great grandmothers were able to find community and share comfort with the injured, the sick, the dying and each other.**

**Vern Thiessen is a master of his craft. Using one of the greatest tragedies in world history as inspiration, he has found light where little exists; humour in the face of unspeakable horror; and in crafting three distinct characters, he offers us both a new perspective and a truly original take on the war stories we have grown accustomed to hearing. Bluebirds is a story about love and tragedy and caring and loss and hope. I believe each of us here in the theatre tonight will find a connection in our own lives to these characters and this story. My hope is that you leave the theatre richer than when you arrived.**







#### **Vern Thiessen - Playwright**

**Vern Thiessen is one of Canada's most produced playwrights. His plays have been translated into five languages and have been seen around the world. Vern is the recipient of the Dora Mavor Moore and Elizabeth Sterling Haynes awards for Outstanding New Play, the Carol Bolt Award, the Gwen Pharis Ringwood Award, and the Governor General's Literary Award for Drama, Canada's highest honour for a playwright. He has served as president of both the Playwrights Guild of Canada and the Writers Guild of Alberta and was artistic director of Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre for six seasons. He is married to acclaimed screenwriter and novelist Susie Moloney.**



#### **Natasha MacLellan - Director**

**Natasha MacLellan's love of new scripts was fostered through Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre where she mentored with Jenny Munday. From there she started Forerunner Playwrights Theatre, which produced new works in Halifax for a decade followed by six seasons as the Artistic Producer of Ship's Company Theatre. Before she became a full time producer, Natasha worked as an actor, director, teacher and dramaturge, and she still does those things, when she can.**



#### **Kirsten Alter - Maggie**

**Kirsten (she/her) was born and raised in Quispamsis, N.B. She is super excited to step back into Maggie's shoes with this beautiful cast and crew. Recent theatre: Dance Nation (Keep Good Theatre Company/HEIST), Intimate Apparel (Thousand Islands Playhouse), Wildly Romantic (The Foster Festival). Bluebirds; All I Want For Christmas (TNB). From Marvel to PBS Kid's, Milk Bone to NOOM, to being the voice of Easy Financial, when she's not on the stage, she's happy to be in the studio with her headphones and mic.**



#### **Mélanie LeBlanc - Bab**

**Mélanie is a versatile performer who has played many well-loved characters over the years, such as Marry Poppins, Pierrette Guérin, The Wicked Witch of the West, Lady Macbeth, Patsy Cline, Anne of Green Gables, and the notorious pirate Ann Bonny. For seven years, she crooned in Vietnam, Japan, the Maldives and India, and has toured her one-woman show Hommage aux femmes de la guerre (Women in Wartime) across Canada and in France. Mélanie is a recipient of the Robert Merritt award. This winter, she will be performing in a Christmas show at Le Pays de la Sagouine in Buctouche, NB. Mélanie is grateful to be part of the telling of this important story with this remarkable team.**



#### **Sharisse LeBrun - Christy**

**Sharisse LeBrun (she/her) is a theatre educator, director, and performer based in New Brunswick where she works as Theatre New Brunswick's Theatre School and Young Company Director. Training: University of Toronto, MA in Drama, Theatre, and Performance, St. Thomas University. Directing: Beneath Springhill: The Maurice Ruddick Story, Sidewalk Chalk, S.T.O.P, Altar (TNB YOCO) and The Spongebob Musical, Romeo & Juliet, Rose, The Little Prince, Anne & Gilbert, Little Women (TNB Theatre School). Acting: Cath-Ann & Gloria in The Company Store (Theatre Baddeck), Jane Bingley in Miss Bennett: Christmas at Pemberley and Christy in Bluebirds (TNB). Sharisse has been part of the development of Bluebirds since 2020 and is grateful to be bringing Christy back to life once again with this incredible team.**





**Chelsea Dickie - Stage Manager**

**Chelsea Dickie (she/her) is a multifaceted arts manager and educator based out of Kjiptuk/Halifax (originally from Sipekne'katik / South Maitland, NS). Chelsea has worked all across Mi'kma'ki for the past 10 years, with different theatre companies in a wide array of roles. Stage and production manager, arts administrator/manager, drama educator, and outreach coordinator. She is also a founder and producer for her own indie theatre company Matchstick Theatre, which has staged 14 major productions since 2017, all of which Chelsea stage managed. When not producing her own shows, Chelsea has been a go-to stage manager around Kjiptuk/Halifax, having worked with such companies as 2b theatre, Neptune Theatre, Nestuita'si Storytelling, Villain's Theatre, Workshirt Opera, The Doppler Effect, and Festival Antigonish. She is incredibly excited to add TNB to that list, and join up with such a beautiful team and production!**



**Sherry Kinnear - Costume Designer**

**Sherry Kinnear is a Costume Designer-Maker who has worked with Theatre New Brunswick as their Head of Wardrobe to create and coordinate costumes for TNB's main stage, theatre school, and Young Company shows since 2007. As Costume Designer, she's designed several of their stage and touring productions—such as Wood Buffalo, Christmas at Pemberley, Heroine, A Christmas Carol, The Snow Queen, A Sunday Affair, Hilda's Yard, Rocky Horror Show. It would be hard for her to pick just one favourite production that she's had the pleasure to work on but Bluebirds is definitely at the top of the list!**



**Christian Ludwig Hanson - Projection Designer**

**Christian (He/Him) is a theatre creator and performer with special focus in collaboration, puppetry, stage combat, and projection design. He is from Northern Friesland by the German-Danish border and now lives in Kjiptuk/Halifax. He is a recent graduate from the Acting program at Dalhousie.**



**Stewart Legere - Sound Designer**

**Stewart Legere is a multidisciplinary artist situated between Kjiptuk/Halifax and Tkaronto/Toronto. He is the Co-Artistic Director of Live Art company The Accidental Mechanics Group and Associate Artistic Director of ZUPPA. His performances have been presented at theatres and festivals across Canada and the internationally. He is a vocalist with orchestral pop outfit The Heavy Blinkers, and a solo singer/songwriter ("Quiet the Station" - 2017, "To the Bone" - 2020). He composes music and sound for theatre and film. An avid and passionate collaborator, his work is fascinated with vulnerability, intimacy, the destruction of persona and the celebration of performance. He is currently an artist-in-residence at The Theatre Centre in Toronto.**



**Chris Saad - Lighting Designer**

**Chris is very pleased Bluebirds is being presented again. Chris has been working as a lighting designer since the mid-nineties and has accumulated many credits. His latest credit is Waiting for Godot at the BMO theatre in Saint John. Break a leg everyone.**





**Andrea Evans - Set Designer**

**Andrea Evans proudly holds a BFA with Honours from York University where she studied Theatre Production and Design. With nearly 20 years' experience, she has worked as a set designer, scenic painter, and props builder for numerous theatres throughout Ontario and the Atlantic provinces. Andrea has worked for theatre companies such as the National Ballet of Canada, Saint John Theatre Company, the Chester Playhouse, Tarragon Theatre, and many others. For two seasons, Andrea worked as an assistant designer at the Stratford Festival. She has also been a guest artist / instructor at numerous high schools teaching stagecraft and design. Andrea has been nominated two times for Toronto's Dora Awards and the proud recipient of a Dora Award for Outstanding Set Design.**



**Sarah Power - Choreographer**

**Originally from Saint John, Sarah has been working as a professional independent dance artist and teacher since graduating from Toronto Metropolitan University in 2001. She is a founding member and current Artistic Director of Connection Dance Works. Her career has included collaborations with musicians, dancers, filmmakers, play writes, designers and visual artists. She has received grants for Professional Development, Residencies and Creation projects through the Canada Council for the Arts and artsnb. Sarah continues to learn and develop work through her practice of Authentic Movement, a way of discovering movement inherent in the body instead of inventing it.**



**Finnley Boehm - Production Assistant**

**Finnley Boehm (he/him) is a multidisciplinary theatre artist living in Fredericton, NB. He works as an Assistant Technical Services Manager at the Fredericton Playhouse. Some of his recent credits include Claudio in Much Ado About Nothing (Bard in the Barracks), Stage Manager and Technical Director of Salt-Water Moon (Non-Stop Theatrics), and Stage Manager and Technical Director of Baltimore Waltz (Smuggler's Theatre). When he's not in a theatre, he's camping, rock climbing, or chilling with his favourite furball, Magnus.**



**Nicole Flynn - Production Assistant**

**Nicole is a maker, carpenter, and problem-solver. She has pursued studies in visual arts, graphic design and theatre/entertainment design in Winnipeg and Toronto. Nicole has worked as a scenic carpenter and technical director with Ships Company Theatre, Neptune Theatre, Matchstick Theatre, Eastern Front Theatre, Keep Good and Heist as well as a prop builder/stylist in advertising, and as a teacher with the Chang School for Continuing Education. When she's not rolling around in sawdust, Nicole is most likely sleeping, eating ice cream or doing both at the same time.**

**Special Thanks to:**

**St. Thomas University  
University of New Brunswick**

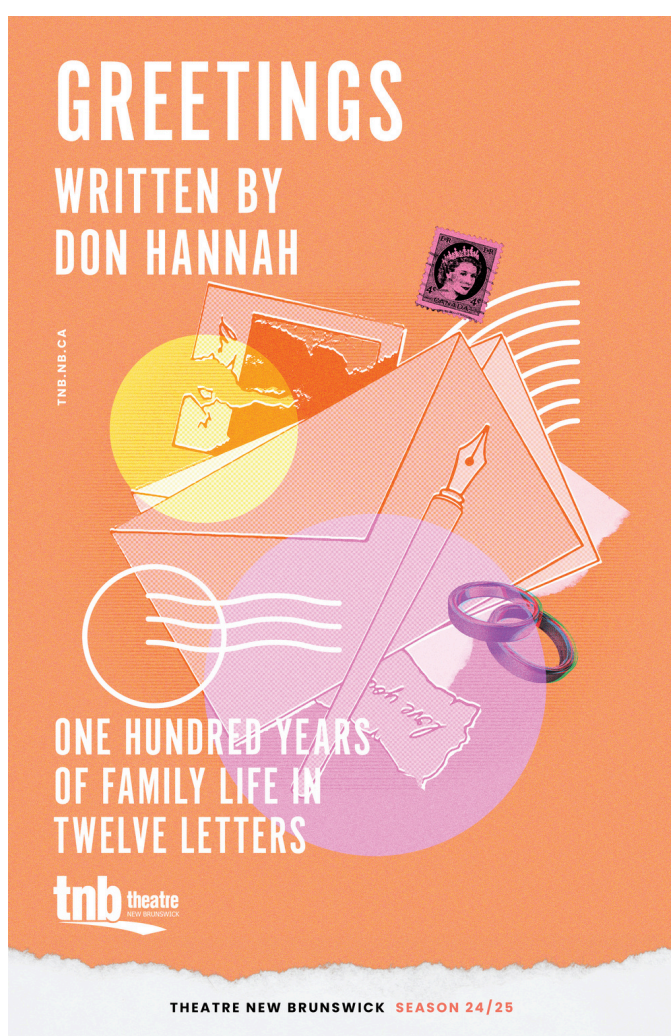
# TRIUS

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# Truck Centre

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**COMING SOON FROM TNB**



**Greetings is a story told entirely through letters between a New Brunswick family from 1924-2024.**

**When you purchase a ticket on the TNB website, you sign up for 12 deliveries. Over several weeks, you will receive 12 pieces of mail delivered directly to your address. Shipping available anywhere in Canada. Purchase by Oct 28!**

**One Hundred Years of Family Life — birthdays, funerals, wars, and feuds; engagements, breakups, elopements, elections, school days, and holidays; tears, queers, debts, and secrets; I love yous, I hate yous... and all the news in between — in Twelve Letters.**



# MORE FROM TNB THIS SEASON

## SONGS FROM FINDING WOLASTOQ VOICE

NOV 7-10 | TNB Open Space Theatre | Fredericton NB

## TNB FUNDRAISING BRUNCH & AUCTION

FEB 16 | Fredericton NB

## O'BRIEN

MAR 5-8 | TNB Open Space Theatre | Fredericton NB

MAR 9 | Imperial Theatre | Saint John NB

MAR 11 | Riverview Arts Centre | Riverview NB

MAR 12 | Carrefour Beausoleil | Miramichi NB

MAR 13 | LER Theater | Dalhousie NB

MAR 14 | Carleton North High School | Florenceville-Bristol NB

MAR 15 | W.C. O'Neill Arena Complex | Saint Andrews NB

MAR 16 | TNB Open Space Theatre | Fredericton NB

## HADESTOWN

APR 19 | Fredericton Playhouse | Fredericton NB

## CLUE

MAY 23-24 | STU Black Box Theatre | Fredericton NB







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