

BLUEBIRDS

By Vern Thiessen

October 30 – November 14, 2026

BLUEBIRDS is produced by arrangement with Kensington Literary Representation, 34 St. Andrew Street, Toronto, ON, M5T 1K6, kensingtonlit@rogers.com.

PETERBOROUGH THEATRE GUILD
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MARION GRIFFIN
President of the Board

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

We, at Peterborough Theatre Guild, are excited to have you return for our 2026 / 2027 season. Our production forecast is very exciting with thought-provoking themes, a fun-loving musical, drama and comedy. We strive to include Canadian content as much as possible. In fact, our family play, *Which Witch is Which* is written by our very own Beth McMaster, music and lyrics by Monica Palmer.

Peterborough Theatre Guild is supported by a number of organizations which help us fund many of our pressing issues such as technical equipment for sound and lighting, as well as company development such as Staged Play Readings and Workshops. The programs offered educate not only our volunteers, but our community who wish to attend. These organizations are mentioned further in the program and we are grateful for their involvement in the Peterborough Theatre Guild. Our volunteers are our most valuable asset, as are you, our patrons. Without your and their support, we would cease to thrive. So, our most heartfelt appreciation is extended to all as we move forward through the 2026 / 2027 season.

Regards,
Marion Griffin
Your President



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When *Bluebirds* was being considered for production at the Guild, Gaza hospitals were being bombed. I had to ask myself if we have learned anything at all from history! The anger I felt was mixed with hope that the effervescence, joy and persistence of the three young women in this play would make us think and act to put an end to such waste of lives.
Working through rehearsals with talented and committed actors and crew was a task filled with joy. Their fervent desire and expectation of fulfillment reminded me of how the three women upon whose lives this play is based must have felt all the while they were under wartime duress. Vern Thiessen gives us a complex and challenging script, one that has moved us to tears and laughter, joy and sorrow, discovery and incredulity. He illustrates how a whole generation of men AND women were lost to such insane waste. The expectation is that when we are aware, we might take preventative action so none of this is ever repeated in the future.

Bea Quarrie

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Peterborough Theatre Guild respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg. We honour their enduring relationship with this land and water and recognize them as the original stewards of what is now known as Peterborough/ Nogojiwanong.
We express our gratitude for their care of Mother Earth, past and present, and commit to ongoing learning, meaningful relationship, and action toward reconciliation.

SETTING

No.1 Canadian General Hospital, near Étaples, France, 1918.
Please be advised that this production contains flashing lights and loud sound effects.

CAST

Bab	Rebecca Birrell
Christy	Emily Kelly
Maggie	Laura Lawson *Appearing by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association*

CREATIVE TEAM

Director	Bea Quarrie
Production Manager	Diane Théberge
Stage Manager	Lyn Braun
Assistant Stage Manager	Brandi Duke
Costume Designer	Gwen Hope
Hair and Makeup Designer	Hayley Griffin
Lighting and Projections Designer	Nate Axcell
Properties	Kathy MacMillan-Jones
Set Designer	David Geene
Sound Designer	Esther Vincent
Set Construction	John MacMillan-Jones & David Geene (Co-Leads), Barry Kramer, Brad Rumsey, Ray Gregg, Ben Taylor
Set Painter	Joyce McLean (Lead), Jayne Martin, Kaye Gregg, Helen McFadden
Technical Operator	Kelly Campbell
Director Mentees	Kory Gavin, Francine Kelly

CAST



REBECCA BIRRELL - BAB
Rebecca is a Peterborough-based actor/vocalist and is thrilled to be back on stage at the Guild! She holds a B.A. from the University of Waterloo and an M.A. from Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance. Select theatre: *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz: The Farmerettes* (4th Line), *Pumpkin Time* (The Theatre on King), *The Tilco Strike* (4th Line), *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* (Burloak Theatre), *Waiting for Godot* (Knockout Theatre), *Present Laughter* (Knockout), *Macbeth* (Potluck Collective), and *Taming of the Shrew* (Shakespearience Group).



EMILY KELLY - CHRISTY
Emily is excited to make their Peterborough Theatre Guild debut as Christy in *Bluebirds*. After moving from their hometown in Kingston to Peterborough a year ago to study Forensic Anthropology, they are delighted to continue pursuing their longtime passion for theatre. Recent credits include Caiomhe in Blue Canoe's *Find Yourself* and Daphne in Domino Theatre's *Mumberly Inheritance*, with earlier roles in *Noises Off* and *The Mousetrap*. They love the opportunity theatre provides to share stories, explore new perspectives, and bring creative visions to life.



LAURA LAWSON - MAGGIE
Laura is thrilled to bring Maggie to life in *Bluebirds*. Her path began dancing with the National Ballet School, deepened while completing her BFA in Theatre Performance at TMU, and carried her from the Canadian Opera Company to Paramount Pictures - before leading her home to the PTG, appearing in *Silent Sky* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. By day she trades footlights for a stethoscope, practising medicine, teaching Queen's University residents, and serving on Public Energy Performing Arts' board. She dedicates this show to all the beautiful Bluebirds.

CREATIVE TEAM



NATE AXCELL - LIGHTING AND PROJECTIONS DESIGNER
Nate has been involved in theatre since he was six years old. With a genuine love for the camaraderie that community theatre brings, he just can't seem to say no to any projects offered to him. Nate is excited to do his part to help bring *Bluebirds* to life on stage.



LYN BRAUN - STAGE MANAGER
In 1993 Lyn's husband Roy was convinced by his voice teacher to try acting in a musical theatre production, and Lyn started volunteering backstage. She quickly found her niche as a stage manager, and since then she has been involved in many productions with the Guild, Showplace, St. James, Trinity Church and a number of other community groups. It has been a real pleasure being part of the team of talented people bringing *Bluebirds* to life.



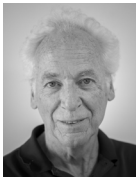
DAVID GEENE - SET DESIGNER
David has been with the Guild since 2018 when he appeared in *Real Estate*. Since then, he has been involved in many productions in various ways: actor, play readings, set design, set builds, marketing, and even a bit of stage management. David enjoys his collaborations with Bea and other directors in bringing a place or a feeling to life, supporting the work of the actors on stage, and enhancing the experience for audiences.



HAYLEY GRIFFIN - HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGNER
Hayley was raised with the PTG and truly considers the theatre her home and the community her family. She cherishes the opportunity to collaborate, grow her craft, and work with fellow passionate artists. Hayley always looks forward to her next project and the wonderful people she gets to connect with along the way.



GWEN HOPE - COSTUME DESIGNER
Gwen has been an active PTG member since 1967, contributing as an actor, director, stage manager, and makeup artist—though designing and creating costumes has been her first love. Her extensive costume design credits include *Brigadoon, Hello, Dolly!, Guys and Dolls*, and last year's *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Gwen is delighted to collaborate again with Bea and this talented cast and crew to bring the inspiring story of the courage and fortitude of Canada's Bluebirds to life for a whole new generation.



JOHN MACMILLAN-JONES – LEAD SET CONSTRUCTION
For someone with a mathematical mind, John cannot pinpoint how many years he has worked on PTG sets or how many plays that has involved. He has thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of each and every one though! John is particularly intrigued by bringing David Geene's creative set designs to life. The *Bluebirds* set recalls the *MASH** TV series, one of John's all-time favourites. With Canadian sovereignty under attack, the *Bluebirds* story is a fine example of our national commitment to doing good in a world that sometimes goes mad.



JOYCE MCLEAN – LEAD SET PAINTER
Joyce has been bringing stages to life since the 1990s. She enjoys working with talented, creative people and is happy to be working again with Bea Quarrie, after painting the *Silent Sky* set in 2025.



BEA QUARRIE - DIRECTOR
As an adjudicator, director, performer, Bea has always believed in the transformative power of the arts. She has directed, designed and performed in over 150 productions, some of which have represented Canada at international festivals in Japan, Germany, Aruba and Venezuela. She has been active in educational, amateur and professional theatre, served on regional, provincial and national committees, arts councils, theatre companies and theatre service organizations. She has adjudicated all over Ontario for Sears and Regional festivals as well as provincial Theatre Ontario Festivals, co-founded five professional theatre companies in Peterborough, taught and directed in China, and is the subject of two films (*TWELVE* by the National Film Board, *December 3rd Reflections* by Cogeco). Recent direction of *Vimy, Silent Sky, God of Carnage, Drowning Girls, Spamalot* (PTG), *Spamalot, Shrek and Vimy* (Cobourg), exemplifies the range of her interests. She has written two ten- minute plays this summer, and currently runs PTG's successful play readings and workshops.



DIANE THÉBERGE - PRODUCTION MANAGER
Diane first joined the backstage team at the Peterborough Theatre Guild in the 1990s, serving as Assistant Stage Manager (ASM) for productions such as *The Odd Couple* and *Sleuth*. After a long hiatus, she returned as ASM for *Mary's Wedding* in 2024 and stepped into the role of Production Manager last season for *Midnight Madness*. Diane finds the entire creative process a pure pleasure and is thrilled to collaborate with this talented PTG team.



ESTHER VINCENT - SOUND DESIGNER
Esther is a writer, photographer, artist, theatre technician, and mentor. She worked as a theatre technician for over 35 years, travelling across Canada and the US. Some favourite gigs include Dusk Dances multi-province summer tours, Public Energy's 50 site multi-arts festival, *Erring on the Mount* (2014), 4th Line Theatre's off season special shows, Firebrand Theatre's school tours of *Beneath Springhill*, Spiderwoman Theatre (Montreal/New Jersey), the Ode'min Giizis Festival, and Red Sky Performance. She is proud to be working as sound designer at the Theatre Guild for *Bluebirds*.

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The full-length version of *Bluebirds* received a development workshop from Theatre New Brunswick in 2020, and was first performed by them in October, 2022.

SPECIAL THANKS

Greg Burke for headshot photography.
Jordan Lyall for publicity photography.
Sullivan's Pharmacy - for their generous donation of props to this production.
Special Thanks to VOS Theatre, Cobourg, for their generous assistance with costumes and production resources.





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the performance the way it was meant to sound

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COMING UP NEXT at the
PETERBOROUGH THEATRE GUILD



THE DARK LADY
by Jessica B. Hill
Sunday, November 15, 2026 - 1:30 PM
Peterborough Theatre Guild, Main Stage



WHICH WITCH IS WHICH?
by Beth McMaster
December 4 - 13, 2026
Peterborough Theatre Guild, Main Stage

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