

arts

The Art of Living

SPRING



Winter
2024



The Cast of Cinderella The Panto at
Hudson Village Theatre from
December 13 - January 5

Caption and Photo Credit inside front cover

arts hudson

Arts Hudson is published in spring, summer, fall and winter editions by Arts Hudson, a non-profit corporation established under the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

It is distributed by subscription (see details at right) and free through outlets in Hudson, St. Lazare and Vaudreuil.

Editor - Bert Markgraf

Contributors:

James Parry - People
Kathryn Lamb - Theatre
Clint Ward - Film Society
Steve Ambler - Chamber Music

Subscribe to Arts Hudson

Subscribe to Arts Hudson to receive each issue by mail when it is published. 1 Year, 4 Issues - \$20.00

Buy a subscription on the website:

<https://artshudson.org>

or email

subscriptions@artshudson.org

Contact us at:

Arts Hudson
P.O Box 415
Hudson, QC J0P 1H0

artshudson.org
art@artshudson.org
Tel: 450-458-1319

Buy an Ad on Arts Hudson

Full Page Ad, 10" x 8"
\$250.00

Full Page Ad, 10" x 8"
4 Issues \$900.00

Inside Back Cover, 10" x 8"
\$300.00

Inside Back Cover, 10" x 8"
4 Issues \$1100.00

Half Page Ad, 5" x 8"
\$150.00

Half Page Ad, 5" x 8"
4 Issues \$540.00

Quarter Page Ad, 2.5" x 8"
\$100.00

Quarter Page Ad, 2.5" x 8"
4 Issues \$350.00

Artist's Ad, about 15 square inches.
Image at the top with a few lines text
and contact information underneath.
Shape corresponds to the shape of the
image.

\$75.00
4 Issues \$250.00

Buy ads on the website:

<https://artshudson.org>

or email ads@artshudson.org

Cover Caption and Photo Credit

Top Row: David Doughty, James Berryman, Vickie Kuchlein
Second Row: Lisa Fisher, Carla Labrosse, Susan Walsh Cote, Tyler Cardille,
Marley Chorazyczewski, Claudia Lapenna, Cate Johnson, Liana Lawrence, Marie-
Jill Trudeau, Jim Istvanfy, Brigid Patterson, Cameron Carruthers
Third Row: Dave Fisher, Ethan Soda, Louis Oceau Piché, Andrew Richardson,
Jean-Frédéric Samson, Michaela Lapenna, Andrew McLennan, Steve Walters
Fourth Row: Lilymay Villeneuve, Lily Samson, Abby Patterson, Anabel Palermo,
Rylee Bouchard, Amanda Caron
Photo: Karen Burgan

Season's Greetings!
Helen Henshaw
Top 5% real estate sales in Quebec
Awards:

ROYAL LEPAGE
TOP TIER

ROYAL LEPAGE
PRESIDENT'S
GOLD
AWARD

ROYAL LEPAGE
DIAMOND
AWARD

ROYAL LEPAGE
DIRECTOR'S
PLATINUM
AWARD

The Hudson Village Theatre Annual Pantomime

"Cinderella - The Panto," written and directed by John Sheridan

Preview by Kathryn Lamb

Cinderella, this year's Christmas pantomime, written and directed by John Sheridan, arrives at the Hudson Village Theatre on December 13. I snuck into the back row of the theatre to watch a rehearsal last weekend, and I am glad to report that the magic is underway.

Upon entering, I am entranced to see that the theatre lobby has been transformed into a costume-creating workshop filled with yards of tulle, satin, sparkles and braid. "Panto moms" are busily cutting sewing, pressing and gluing under the aus-

pices of costume mistress Carla Labrosse (also in the show, along with her daughter - panto tends to be a family affair). Outfitting a cast of nearly forty individuals of every age and shape with costumes lovingly designed to enable the actors to better feel their roles is a huge undertaking.

Inside the theatre, I took a seat and gazed at the set. Two prosceniums designed by J. C. Olivier (who sadly passed away earlier this year) aided by Jonathan Brookes and James Berryman sit in front of the curtain.

Behind the curtain are a series of impressive backdrops that roll up and down - a forest, a town scene and an elegant gallery - and suddenly we are somewhere in medieval Europe.

On stage, things are coming to- (continued on page 6)



Former Young HVT Panto 'Star' Playing Brand New Role in Poland

Kyle Gregor-Pearse now teaching English to aspiring actors there

By James Parry

As a young lad growing up back in the 50s in then not-so-Jolly Olde Engand, and with televisions as scarce as hen's teeth, I would often turn to books as a means of escape from the realities of life in the drab North-East. Two of my favourites being Robinson

Kyle hamming it up with Donia over there in Poland.

Photo courtesy of Kyle Gregor-Pearse.



Crusoe penned by Daniel Defoe and replete with shipwrecks, the original Man Friday for any day of the week and cannibals as well as Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson, a classic tale of treasure, pirates, and high-seas treachery. Ah, avast me hearties, buckets 'o blood, and all that stuff! Never dreaming that one day, in a land far away, I would actually appear on stage in front of an audience playing the role of Squire Trelawney of Treasure Island fame. And right here in Hudson no less.

For it was in the Pantomime of the same name staged at Hudson Village Theatre in 2006 and I had a blast. Meeting for the first time so many amateur 'actors' of all ages who hammed it up, as requested by the director, as best we could to thunderous applause and, oh yes, a lot of boos which meant that we were doing good.

Well, blow me down with a feather if, quite by happenstance and out

(continued on page 10)

Hudson Players Club Spring Production

Rehearsals start in January for "The Game's Afoot" by Ken Ludwig

Ken Ludwig's award-winning play, "The Game's Afoot," is a fun Sherlock Holmes themed murder mystery that features quirky characters, mysterious events, and a castle-like mansion that plays tricks on the characters.

Having chosen a director and cast the play, the Hudson Players Club is getting ready to start rehearsals next month



Parrydise Hudson

Ghosts of Christmases Past and Present

by James Parry

Hard to believe that it was 40 years ago this December that my beautiful Sunshine and I moved from our apartment on Nun's Island in to our dream home on Elm Avenue in Hudson Heights. Well, kind of. For there was deep snow on the ground, the wind was blowing something fierce, and none of our furniture was scheduled to arrive until some time in the New Year. Undaunted, however, and wanting to spend at least Christmas Eve around our newly-found fireplace in celebration of our new adventure together, we arrived that afternoon with her dear old Mom, logs and kindling that we had bought at a gas station on Decarie Blvd, a picnic hamper stocked with goodies, wine and champagne, blankets, and three sleeping bags that we spread out on the floor and really celebrated before finally falling asleep before a glowing fire.

Heading back to Montreal the following day with twinkling Christmas lights everywhere and with snow-

Under clear blue skies and with not a snowflake in sight, they flocked from far and wide to the Parish Christmas Market and auction sponsored by the Friends of St. Mary's and St. James in mid-November held in the historic Main Road home that was the residence of the the original Minister, James Pyke. And all to raise urgently needed funds to help rebuild the 182 year-old church that was gutted by a devastating fire this past April. Shown below, the Reverend Sophie Rolland (centre) with just some of the many friends who helped make it all possible.

Photo by James Parry



flakes falling transforming the landscape into a carpet of white, we all agreed. It was truly a magical night that we shall never forget.

In the years and winters to come, we were to discover and enjoy much more of Hudson's fabulous festive fare that truly amazed us considering the actual size of the town of only 5,000 or so residents none of whom at that point we had actually met.

Gobsmacked to learn that special services were being held at four churches no less and, although not religious souls in the traditional sense, we did the rounds before finally deciding that Midnight Mass conducted by Father Roland Demers at St. Thomas Aquinas Church was to become part of our new tradition. Two services, one in English the other in French, and the pews at both were always absolutely packed to the rafters with young and old alike. Go figure!

We would also go on to discover wonderful Christmas Readings by members of the Hudson Players Club which has been entertaining the community since 1948, an actual year-round Christmas store on Cameron, myriad Christmas bazaars and fairs that are always raising funds for some worthwhile cause, the Town's official Lighting of the Lights complete with choir, hand-held candles and cups of warming hot chocolate and, down on the Lake of Two Mountains, skating, the temporary tree-lined Hudson-Oka Ice Bridge, ice fishing and clusters

of huts of every colour and size in the bay complete with cars and trucks creating what was surely a little village all unto itself until the big melt.

Then, of course, there was the fantastic volunteer-run Royal LePage Firemen's Christmas Basket Fund Auction at Hudson Village Theatre with the inimitable Michael Lawrence working his magic to boost the bids while raising urgently-needed funds for a most worthy cause. Still going strong, this is the second year that it was staged at the Falcon Golf Club and what a resounding success it was.

As to how it all began way back in 1977? Explains its founder Janet Ellerbeck, "I decided to have a little in-house auction at our Christmas party at the office and we raised \$200 that year with the proceeds going to the fund. With the help of other brokers each year the event continued to grow, and when my daughter Tania decided to join forces with me, we decided to take the occasion to a higher level and we rented the Hudson Village Theatre for the auction. And over the years, it has raised over \$400,000, which is used by the Fire Department to assist an average of 50 families every year at Christmas as well as to provide support throughout the year when needed." Bravo Janet to you and your team of dedicated volunteers for a wonderful initiative that just keeps on rolling!

And speaking of HVT, Hudson can be truly proud of its annual Christmas Pantomime, first launched back in the year 2,000 by Heather Markgraf-Lowe, the theatre's founder, and the only one in Quebec, if not all of Canada, to have such an extended run from December through January.

Says Heather, "I began this annual fundraiser for the theatre by enlisting the help of the local community to stage a classic British Panto, a family tradition of ours having grown up in

the U.K., and the response was immediate and fantastic. Young and old, many of them never having appeared on stage before, responded to the call and a new Hudson tradition was born!"

On a personal note, I have appeared in two - Treasure Island (2006) and The Emperor's New Clothes (2007) - and I have to tell you, speaking from experience, that it is a wonderful fun-filled coming together of local actors and dancers of all ages including tiny tots who give it their all for audiences from far and wide throughout the region. (See story on page 1),

This year's production, written and directed by John Sheridan, is Cinderella - The Panto opening on December 13 and running through January 5 with matinee and evening performances. Fabulous fun for the entire family. But don't leave it too late to book a seat. They always sell out faster than hot cross buns!

And the clock is certainly clicking down to Hudson's eagerly awaited Santa Claus Parade organized for the first time this year by the Soulanges Irish Society which, since 2019, has played the same role for the phenomenally successful Hudson St. Patrick's Day Parade and, again for the first time, being staged at 5 p.m. on December 14. It sure promises to be a really memorable one according to Society president and co-founder Jay de la Durantaye.

Says Jay, "With a committee of 12 and many volunteers we have been working on the parade since August and the response has been tremendous. We will have about 30 floats, a marching band, and a lot more participation by local community groups and businesses than we have for St. Patrick's Day for sure. And as it is in the evening and with all the lights, it will certainly be more magical for the youngsters with one of the highlights being Shriners wearing their lit-up illuminated clown outfits."

It goes without saying, of course, that our winters just ain't what they used to be given undeniable climate change

being felt worldwide. Why, many of us were still raking leaves and putting the garden to bed in late November this time around. Once again, the ice bridge is iffy. Ditto for ice fishing. And who can possibly predict what the next few months will bring in terms of temperatures and snowfall? But one thing is for certain. The Christmas festive spirit will once again be alive and well in our little hamlet of Hudson and environs. Ho. Ho. Ho!

ESCAPE TO SUNNY ITALY WITH SALINA

And now from the promise of a winter wonderland to sunny Italy. And no, you don't need to take a flight from Dorval. For, in a manner of speaking, Italy has come to our neck of the woods courtesy of Hudsonites Salvatore 'Sal' Veccio and Lina Simone who two years ago embarked on a new adventure in their lives. Namely Les Aliments Salina on Harwood Blvd. in the Centre d'Achats shopping centre which is believed to be the only store of its kind in the region selling a vast range of products virtually all directly imported from Italy where Sal was born in the little town of Pilone exactly 75 years ago this November. Hence the party that I crashed! And what a party it was for Sal, his partner Lina, their extended family, and regular clients from far and wide.

Was fascinated to learn that it was a circuitous route that brought Sal, who speaks four languages, here. From Italy, he went to Germany from the ages of 10 to 18 before moving to Canada in 1969 where he would go on to work for VW for 25 years and teach night school mechanics for Laurier MacDonald Trade School for two years before

opening his own very successful business in St. Leonard in 1998 which he sold just two years ago.

Lina, who was born in Toronto and worked there as a registered nurse in palliative care, has an equally fascinating background. Upon arriving in Hudson in 1998 she would continue to work as a registered nurse before retiring in 2020 to start up her own cooking operation for people who needed help with their meals, including out-of-town family members who were not available for whatever reason.

So how did this dynamic duo first meet and whose idea was it to open such a store as Salina?

Laughs Lina, "We first met online 10 years ago and Sal moved to Hudson in 2021 and it was definitely his idea. It came about because he was sick of going to the local stores and complaining about their price fixing and high prices. He felt that prices were much lower in the city and it is for that reason that we try to keep our prices as low as possible. Also, there was not really any store like ours in the area. I loved the idea right from the start and did not hesitate at all."

Adds Lina, "What's more, almost everything comes from Italy and we love not only the quality but also the fact that they are made with few

(continued on page 6)

Turning 75 years young in fine style recently, Salvatore Veccio and his partner Lina Simone (left) celebrated with clients and close family members, including those shown here at the Salina store on Harwood. Photo by James Parry





DE MA FAMILLE À LA VÔTRE,
FROM MY FAMILY TO YOURS,

Joyeuses Fêtes
Happy Holidays

PETER SCHIEFKE

député fédéral - Member of Parliament
Vaudreuil-Soulanges

Shirley Valentine by Willy Russell

Presented at the Hudson Village Theatre, directed by Heather Markgraf-Lowe

Review by Kathryn Lamb

Shirley Valentine, every woman's best friend from childhood, reappeared on the stage at the Hudson Village Theatre last month for a long-overdue visit. We felt so at home, as she invited us into her kitchen for a chat. She talked about her disappointing husband, ungrateful kids, and friends who had taken different life paths, all while she was chopping and frying the chips that would be expected by her family for their tea. The kitchen was retro with the prerequisite chrome-framed dinette set, her accent pure Liverpool, but we were right there with her.

Shirley talks to us as she moves through the set, confiding in us as if we were her best mate. Her daughter pays no attention to her unless she needs something. Her son Brian, who had once brought a school nativity play to an abrupt

halt when, playing Joseph, he insisted on a room at the inn, because "he had booked" (my favorite line), was now in some trouble with the law. And her husband Joe, although Shirley still fondly remembers how it used to be when they laughed together, makes her wonder "Why, if somebody says I love you, it seems to automatically give them the right to treat you worse than people they only like, or people they don't like at all".

It is not every family's story, but it is a familiar one, as seventies British tunes drift over the stage ("I Can't Get No Satisfaction", "World Without Love").

Her only alternative role model was a school friend who had created a more lavish and exciting lifestyle by becoming a hooker. So, when another friend offers her a two-week vacation in Greece, she realizes that nobody at home really needs her, and despite a few lingering doubts, she goes for it. And so, her education begins.

They arrive in Greece, and Shirley's friend promptly dumps her for a guy. But she finds a café on a beach, a new friend, and life begins to open up.

Shirley discovers that "dreams are never in the places we expect them to be". She falls in love, I think, not with a guy, but with the idea of living. "Why" she muses to herself, "do we have all these feelings and dreams and hopes, if they can't ever be used?"

Where will she go with this new knowledge? Will she want to go back to her old existence after two weeks in Greece? I think Shirley has tasted and learned far too much for that.

This play, by Willy Russell, is

built around a brilliant script that was faultlessly delivered to us by one actor, Lisa Bronwyn Moore. A tour de force by any standard. It was directed by Hudson Village Theatre founder Heather Markgraf, who herself has played Shirley on several previous occasions. And with the help of Karen Pearce's costumes, Shirley morphs from an apron-clad housewife to a much wiser free spirit.

The continuing appeal of this play, several decades after its writing, is due, I believe, to its timeless humour, the familiarity of its portrayal of family dynamics, and the way women of a certain age still seem to disappear into the background of daily life. We still have our marbles plus lots of experience, and we deserve to be acknowledged and at least (maybe most shockingly!) to have a little fun.

Every person I spoke to in that very full theatre could relate to Shirley- even the men, and the younger spectators. We look forward to her next visit!



Rehearsal location: St. Clet Church

Website: osjvs.org/en/auditions



Hudson Village Theatre Annual
Panto continued from page 1

gether. This is the first chance the cast has had to rehearse in front of the sets, and it is exciting to watch.



The cast ranges in age from 70+ down to very young (I am not a good judge of age!). The more senior actors are true panto veterans, but even the smaller ones tell me they have one or two pantos already under their belts. Such professionalism in a small town! They rehearse the opening number, where proper "panto etiquette" is explained to the audience - i.e. cheer the good guys, boo the baddies, and alert the hero when a villain is sneaking up from behind! And, oh yeah, duck when a handful of candies is heading your way. But Hudson panto regulars know all this.

Rapt attention is given to musical director and choreographer Donna Stewart, as she demonstrates and refines the steps, twirls, and hand gestures, and there is lots of laughter as the dance routines gradually fall into place. Donna, aided by local musician Tim Duggan Walsh, has written original musical numbers for this production. I heard a couple songs, and they are hilarious. On top of all this, the props have to be tried out, the backdrops tested and the costumes fitted - a million steps in this process of creation and improvisation that leads to a finished production.

Sitting in the theatre, some of

the younger performers clue me in about some things I don't quite understand yet, and one even offers me a chocolate mint girl guide cookie (which I love, and haven't tasted in years). There will be a glorious ball, and two VERY ugly step sisters who hope to win the prince by any means necessary. There will be spies (maybe royal ones?), an incidence of food poisoning, and apparently a horse. I may not yet understand everything that will happen in this performance, but it is clear that this version of Cinderella is unlike any other. Liberties have been taken, new plot twists added, but for me, some mysteries still remain. Thankfully. So I will line up with all the other faithful to see the final production

The Hudson Village Theatre pantomime is a proud tradition initiated by Heather Markgraf in 2000. It represents a huge gift of time and talent from all of the actors, backstage people, and volunteers who put it together, and it is created with love as a fundraiser for the theatre. We should feel proud and very lucky to have such a resource in our town.

Cinderella will run from December 13 - January 5, with both matinee and evening performances. Tickets are selling fast, so contact the theatre by phone (450-458-5361) or go to the website

hvtbox@villagetheatre.ca

to procure yours. See you there.

Parrydis Hudson
continued from page 3

ingredients. Very few items come from here and usually only those that we cannot get from Italy direct."

I asked Sal what kind of service and ambiance he set out to create at Salina from day one. Quick as a flash, he answered, "Lina and I wanted to create a friendly store where people love to shop. Our customers feel like family to us. And we felt it was important to make people feel at home the minute they arrive, which is why the first thing we do is offer them

a coffee. And if there is a product they want that we do not have we will do our best to try and find it for them."

Added Sal, "We also recycle our boxes and reusable grocery bags to help decrease garbage and we also try to purchase products in glass, metal, or paper whenever possible. It's the little things that make a big difference and we want to be there for our customers."

Not only their customers, I should add, but also many worthwhile causes in the community that they support, such as the Firemen's Basket

Fund, LePont Bridging Food Bank, Hudson Players Club, Hudson Creative Hub, Le Nichoir, the St. Lazare Garden Club, the St. Patrick's Day Parade, last year's James Ratcliffe fundraiser, and the Parliamo Italiano Vaudreuil Soulanges Club. And all this in just two years. Oof!

Congratulazioni Sal e Lina e ogni successo negli anni a venire. Te lo meriti!

And that's a wrap!

Hudson Film Society

The Big Little Canadian Film Festival will be 10 years old in 2025

by Clint Ward

114 is the number of Canadian Feature length films that have graced the Hudson Village Theatre screen since 2016. Add to that the number of short films that Ben's Screening Room generated, and you end up with a history to be proud of. So there is reason to mark 2025 as a time to celebrate and feature the return of the on stage reception.

The Big little Canadian Film Festival is slowly attracting a following in the film industry and our 10th anniversary has attracted some guest interest. It has also put us in a position to select some of our films earlier than ever. We now feel that a Christmas launch of Ultimate Pass sales is a realistic goal and December sales through the Village Theatre box office will be possible. Before anyone can consider a purchase - some of the films and guests should be considered.

The present plan is to open the 2025 Festival on Easter Monday with a film that celebrates a major Quebec winter passion. Ice-Breaker is a film that tells the story of the 'Series of the Century' that involved the best hockey players of Canada against the best that the Soviet Union could offer. We all know how important that 8 game competition was and how it came down to the final goal in the last 34 seconds of the final game. Diplomats, journalists, former NHL players and fans reveal the extraordinary events surrounding the series in 1972. Director Robbie Hart will be on stage after the film to host other luminaries from that game and time.

Our Festival always features an important Day of First Nations Films. From a wide choice available, one film has already been selected. So Surreal: Behind the Masks is the storied journey of Indigenous masks and their profound impact on one of the most iconic art movements of all time. Part caper, part road trip, part spiritual journey the film follows award-winning Cree filmmaker, Neil Diamond as he travels coast-to-coast and across the Atlantic and back, gradually piecing together this groundbreaking global story of influence, reconnection and hopeful restitution.

At TIFF 2024, the audience choice for best Canadian film was, Berger (Shepherds). It is a Canadian-French drama film directed by Sophie Deraspe. An adaptation of Mathyas Lefebure's semi-autobiographical novel D'ou viens tu, berger? Mathyas trades in his Montreal life as a young advertising executive to become a shepherd in the South of France. But the harsh realities of the pastoral world force him to question his romantic vision of the profession. A visit from Elise, a civil servant who has abruptly quit her job, gives Mathyas' quest a new direction. Together, with a herd in their care, they embark on

a journey towards a new way of life in the mountains.

Another TIFF 2024 film was Young Werther, longlisted for the 2024 Jean-Marc Vallée DGC Discovery Award. It offers a fresh, witty adaptation of Goethe's classic tale of unrequited love, placing it in modern-day Toronto.

Werther, an impulsive young man sent to retrieve a valuable family sculpture, only to be captivated by the magnetic Charlott, and her warmth and humor draw Werther into her world. Yet his newfound joy is bittersweet - she's already engaged to the kind but steadfast Albert.

Rather than leaving, Werther becomes entangled in a unique friendship with the couple, his love for Charlotte deepening in complexity and desperation. Their tangled emotions play out against the cityscape, balancing romance with humor as Werther's naïve passion brings both charm and chaos to their lives in a blend of vulnerability and humour, drawing the audience into an emotional rollercoaster that is both poignant and deeply relatable.

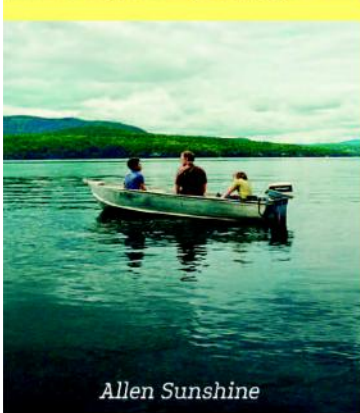
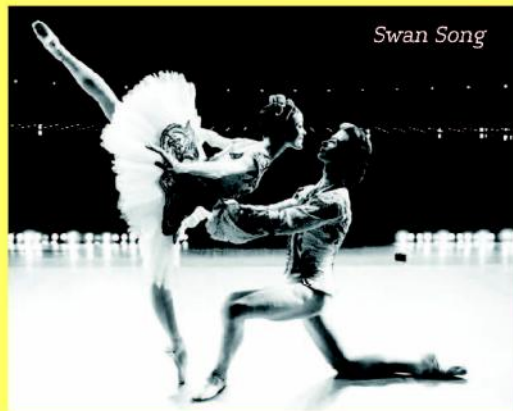
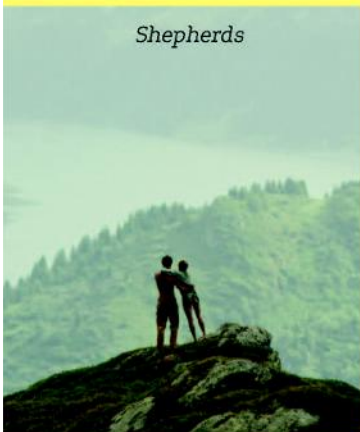
Montreal director Harley Chamandy was just 22 when he began shooting his debut feature film, Allen Sunshine, two years ago in the Eastern Townships. Little could he have dreamed that the finished product would capture the attention and imagination of one of the world's most iconic directors, Werner Herzog, So much so that the German director's Werner Herzog Foundation recently (continued



So Surreal: Behind the Masks

on page11)

Give the gift of a thousand emotions this holiday season.



THE BIG LITTLE CANADIAN FILM FESTIVAL

Looking for the perfect gift for a loved one, relative, or friend? **The Hudson Film Festival ULTIMATE Pass** is a guaranteed crowd-pleaser, offering an unforgettable experience for anyone on your list!

FULL access to the 10th anniversary programme which gives:-

- 13 Award Winning Films
- Guests including Karen Kane for the film *Swan Song*
- Hockey night in Hudson on Easter Monday with *Ice-Breaker* – the story of the 1972 Russia Canada series
- The 2024 TIFF Canadian Film Audience favourite. *Shepherds*
- Ben's Screening Room
- Two Featured Days. "Indigenous" and "Save the Environment"

For more information (exciting news coming soon)... www.hudsonfilmfestival.ca

The gift that will keep on giving... forever!
To order go to villagetheatre.ca or call 450-458-5361

J. S. Bach's Long Walk in the Snow

Tom Allen presents a music-filled tale of romance, action and adventure

by Kathryn Lamb

Tom Allen is the kind of guy who adores music, has a way with narrative, and enjoys combining these two elements in surprising and creative ways. He chooses a story - usually loosely based in musical history - where we know some of the facts, but maybe not all of the details, and creates a performance using music and narration to retell it in his own way.

This story recounts what happened to J.S. Bach when, as a young but somewhat hot-headed musician of 20, he set out from his home in Arnheim to walk 400 km. north, in the middle of winter, to the larger centre of Lübeck. His goal was to meet and study with the iconic organist Buxtehude who worked and played in the Marienkirche (St. Mary's Church) in that city. The story, as the narrator explains, is partly factual, and partly a question of "connecting the dots".

Entering the Hudson Village Theatre, the stage is framed by a gorgeous pair of harps. The caramel-coloured spruce sounding boards, the sinuous curved exotic woods that form the neck and shoulders of the instruments, all connected by pegs and strings that catch the light - It was visually stunning. The harpists are Lori Gemmel and Jennifer Swartz. Between them on stage sat Kate

Bevan Baker (violin, voice), Sam Roberts (voice, guitar and violin) and Tom Allen (narrator and trombone).

We do know that when Bach arrived in Lübeck, Buxtehude invited him to stay with his family and to follow him around. Bach also met his oldest daughter Anna Margarethe, and it seems there might have been a little chemistry there.

Buxtehude was famous for an annual series of concerts called "Abendmusik" (evening music) for which he wrote the music, hired the necessary musicians and raised the funds through relationships with local merchants - a real impresario. Bach stayed and worked with him for three months.

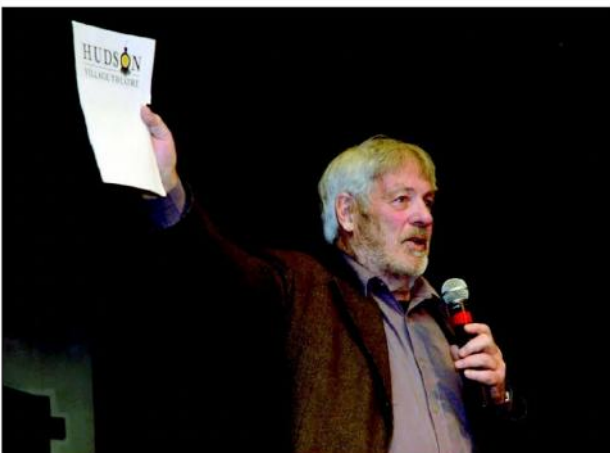
How the musicians recount and accompany this story is both surprising and exciting. A gorgeous classical piece for harp can be followed by a contemporary voice and guitar solo by Sam Roberts (a well-known performer on his own). Kate Bevan Baker's elegant soprano aria morphs into a rendition of the 60's Leslie Gore anthem "You Don't Own Me". All the voices and instruments on stage - even the trombone - work together to tell this story.

Sometimes the instruments feel more like human voices, and sometimes vice-versa, but this

just adds to the uniqueness and creativity of the presentation. You never know what's coming next.

J.S. Bach's Long Walk in the Snow is not Tom Allen's first visit to the Hudson Village Theatre, and I hope he will return in the future with another story told in his own particular way. I am not the most knowledgeable connoisseur of classical music, but I think his productions have expanded my understanding of music in general and have helped me think of these historic figures as being human like ourselves.

Both performances in this visit were sold out, and the spectators offered standing ovations both times. Each of the individual performers has impressive credentials in their own right, and I think we were fortunate to see them together here on our stage.



Clint Ward!

PLAYWRIGHT • SPEAKER • AUTHOR

*"Someday, we will all die, Snoopy!"
"True, but on all the other days, we will not."*

- Charlie Brown

www.clintward.ca

HVT Panto Star,
continued from page 1

of the blue, haven't I just been reunited with a fellow cast member from that very show. Then 13, now 31, a graduate of John Abott College with an associate's degree in creative arts, literature, and languages and now living 7,000 km away in Poland together with the love of his life and teaching English to aspiring Polish actors there young and old.

His name? Kyle Gregor-Pearse, the son of long-time Hudsonites Eric Gregor-Pearse and Elizabeth Dawe and all reminding from a little chat and heads up I had with Eric in the IGA parking lot recently when suddenly and for no real reason at all we got to talking about Christmases past and he gave me his email address. "Hi Kyle," I typed to him, obviously to his great surprise. "Your old Panto buddy James here. What's new?" And here's how the subsequent online conversation went.

Q: So what are you doing in Poland and how did this all come about?

A: Because of a beautiful lady named Donia who I met in Montreal through a mutual friend. We hit it off there and had a Florida fling while I trained at American Top Team Fort Lauderdale. We discovered that we were deeply in love and, since then we've alternated between Hudson and Koszalin in Poland, which is her home town.

Q: I first met you when you were a teenager in two Pantos here at

page 10

HVT. Do you remember?

A: Absolutely. First of all in Treasure Island in which I played a number of really fun chorus roles, including townfolk, pirate, and creature of the sea. And then in The Emperor's New Clothes the following year in which you played the role of Stuff.

Q: You would go on to play in other Pantos at HVT. Why was this?

A: For sure. Such as Beauty and the Beast, Peter Pan, and finally Camelot. As to why, because I love the knee-slapping humour, the groaners, and all the audience interaction. I also love the community aspect, the teamwork, and all the stunning work that goes into the sets, costumes, choreography, and backstage coordination.

Q: You would also go on to appear in a lot of plays and productions after that. What were some of them?

A: Too many to mention here but here are a few that I will always remember. Alice in Wonderland, The Penelopiad, The Heidi Chronicles, Oklahoma, Lisistrata, No Sex

Obviously living life to the full, Kyle celebrates with the new love of his life Donia and his parents Eric and Elizabeth. Photo courtesy of Kyle Gregor-Pearse.



Please We're British, Whose Wives Are They Anyway, The Fixer Upper by Lorne Elliott, The Tempest, and an experimental/original play by Chris Gobeil where I played a demon but, to be honest, I can't remember the name of that play for the life of me. We only did a few performances but I had an absolute blast.

I also became an ACTRA member, had a number of short film extra roles, and wrote and produced a feature film called The Death of a Travelling Life Insurance Salesman, directed by Alberto D'Onofrio. We took home audience favourite at the Hudson Film Festival and I went on to work as an assistant coordinator and post production coordinator for Sony Screengems and Hallmark, and I have two original screenplays in development.

Q: Tell me more about your new role teaching English to aspiring new actors over there in Poland?

A: The school that I'm teaching at here is called Manufaktura Sukcesu. I also offer private classes in person and online, and teach online-exclusive lessons on a platform called Spicus. We use

scenes from films or plays. The subject matter isn't as important as the fact that the students have a support system in the form of written material. This methodology helps to bypass the awkwardness and, dare I say, 'shame' experienced by many ESL learners which acts as an impediment to their development. I'm currently giving about 20 to 30 classes a week between my in-person and online students. Ages

(continued on
page 11)

Hudson Film Society
continued from page 7

announced that Chamandy's poignant and strikingly shot *Allen Sunshine*, about a music producer mourning the death of his famed singer wife, is the winner of the 2024 Werner Herzog Film Award. The young director will be bringing his award-winning film to the Hudson Film Festival.

The yearly collection of 13 great Canadian films will close with a wonderful film, *Swan Song*. It is the story of an internationally famed Canadian ballerina, directing *Swan Lake* as a final moment of her storied career.

Here's the Big Little Canadian Film Festival's celebratory 10th anniversary news – Karen Kain and her husband, Ross Petty will be with us to introduce her film and visit with us after the film in an 'onstage' reception.

One of Canada's most beloved

stars, prima ballerina Karen Kain thrilled audiences around the world for over 28 years with her unparalleled artistry. A dancer of extraordinary talent and beauty, the personification of Canadian ballet and The National Ballet of Canada, she brought emotional depth and dramatic nuance to all of her roles.

During her long and illustrious career as Principal Dancer with The National Ballet of Canada, Miss Kain performed every leading role in the classical canon and constantly challenged herself with exciting new work from the world's leading contemporary choreographers.

Awards and honours include: Officer of the Order of Canada, 1976, elevated to Companion in 1991; Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de France, 2002; Governor General's Performing Arts Award (National Arts Centre Award), 1997; Cartier Lifetime

Achievement Award, 1996 (the first Canadian to be so honoured); Performing Arts Award, Toronto Arts Awards, 1992; Order of Ontario, 1990; honorary degrees from Toronto, York, McMaster, Trent and UBC universities.
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karen_Kain

Is there a better way to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Big Little Canadian Film Festival?

The 'best of' Ben's Screening Room will be at the Hudson Creative Hub on Sunday, April 27, officially closing the 2025 event. Final choices of remaining films will be announced later but the foregoing titles indicate what is shaping up to be the best ever celebration of Canadian Film we have had in the past 10 years. Join the celebration!

Go to or call the Hudson Village Theatre box office - the Ultimate Pass might be a great Christmas Gift choice, 450-458-5361.

HVT Panto Star,
continued from page 10

range from 8-72. A lot like panto, eh? They are loving it and feeling so relaxed and confident in class. Most importantly, we are always having fun which keeps them coming back. For consistency is key in any kind of learning.

Q: So what is your current status in Poland in legal terms and what are your future plans?

A: I'm here on a national type D visa for one year, and will be staying further on a 'Freelance' visa which will be granted as I fill the niche of CELTA certified native English speaker teacher.

Q: And when you are not conducting theatre classes?

A: With the rest of my time? I'm habitually working out, cooking, getting certified as a personal trainer, taking care of our chihuahua (Tadek Tadeusz Thadeus) and working on my screenplays.

Q: You mention training. Why?

A: To put it simply and to be very honest, training saved me from depression and self-hatred. Physical fitness was the thing that truly made me believe in myself. I was very overweight as a child. Dropping that weight and getting super fit made me believe that I can do just about anything. I am hyper-

Kyle spending quality time with his go-everywhere pet pooch chihuahua.
Photo courtesy of Kyle Gregor-Pearse



obsessed with fitness, fighting, and general athletic perform. And all for the good. In fact, I am hoping to be soon working as a personal trainer/performance enhancement coach for local athletes with a view to merging my services into a unique kind of combo-offering of English and Athletic coaching.

Q: In closing, I just have to ask. How is your proficiency in the Polish language coming along?

A: It is coming along great! I'm attending lessons twice a week and will ramp up my studies soon in order to achieve at least B2 level proficiency which is needed to pass the citizenship test in five years.

I'm sure you will ace it Kyle and best wishes to you and Donia this holiday season from all your friends and fans right here in Hudson! And should you wish to get in touch with Kyle, he gave me permission to type in his email which is:

kylegregorpearse@gmail.com

Arts Hudson Calendar of Events

December 2024 Events

Hudson Creative Hub, 273 Main Road hudsoncreativehub.org

Saturday December 7th "Behind the Scenes of World Cinema," 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Sunday December 8th Hub Christmas Concert at St Thomas Church, 413 Main Road, 3:00 to 5:00 pm

Alibi Barn, behind 422 Main Road alibibarn.ca

Saturday December 7th and Sunday December 8th, Christmas Market

Live music, food and beverages, and a fire pit, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Greenwood Centre for Living History, 254 Main Road greenwoodcentre.org

Sunday December 8th, Old Fashioned Christmas 1:30 to 5:00 pm

Friday December 13th and Sunday, December 15th

Greenwood Singers at St. Mary's Church, 261 Main Road, 7:00 to 9:00 pm

\$25 Tickets at Que de Bonnes Choses

Town of Hudson Community Events, hudson.quebec

Saturday December 14th Santa Claus Parade, 5:00 to 6:30

Starts at Hudson High School on Cote St. Charles

and continues along Main Road to the Community Centre.

Friday December 20th, Square Dancing at the Community Centre, 6:30 pm, \$10.00

Village Theatre, villagetheatre.ca

Saturday, December 7th, A Paul Reid Christmas, 7:30 pm

Timeless Christmas Classics and a Holiday Drink

Friday December 13th to January 5th, Annual Pantomime, "Cinderella"

Friday, December 13 @ 7pm, Saturday, December 14 @ 1pm, Saturday, December 14 @ 8pm,
Sunday, December 15 @ 2pm, Friday December 20 @ 7pm, Saturday, December 21 @ 2pm,
Saturday, December 21 @ 7pm, Sunday, December 22 @ 2pm, Tuesday, December 24 @ 11am,
Thursday, December 26 @ 2pm, Thursday, December 26 @ 7pm, Friday, December 27 @ 2pm,
Friday, December 27 @ 7pm, Saturday, December 28 @ 2pm, Saturday, December 28 @ 7pm,
Sunday, December 29 @ 2pm, Monday, December 30 @ 2pm, Monday, December 30 @ 7pm,
Tuesday, December 31 @ 2pm

Cardinal Microbrewery Events, cardinalhudson.com

Live music every weekend, plus an ongoing program of comedy nights,
trivia and tasting events - see website for details

Chateau du Lac Events, chateaudulac.ca

Fridays Ladies Night, occasional live music - see website for details

January 2025 Events

Village Theatre, villagetheatre.ca

Wednesday January 1st to Sunday January 5th, Annual Pantomime, "Cinderella"

Wednesday, January 1 @ 2pm, Friday, January 3 @ 7pm,

Saturday, January 4 @ 2pm, Saturday, January 4 @ 7pm, Sunday, January 5 @ 2pm

Friday January 17th, Freddie James Project, 8:00 pm

Hit songs from classic soul and pop artists including Stevie wonder, Micheal Jackson,
Whitney Houston, Earth wind and Fire, Kool and the Gang and Janet Jackson

Saturday January 18th, Long Live, A Taylor Swift Tribute Band at 2:00 pm

Wednesday January 29th to Sunday February 9th,

"The Three of Us," written and directed by Glen Bowser

A Hudson Village Theatre and GlenKaren Co-Production

Cardinal Microbrewery Events, cardinalhudson.com

Live music every weekend, plus an ongoing program of comedy nights,
trivia and tasting events - see website for details

Chateau du Lac Events, chateaudulac.ca

Fridays Ladies Night, occasional live music - see website for details

Arts Hudson Calendar of Events

February 2025 Events

Village Theatre, villagetheatre.ca

Wednesday February 5th to Sunday February 9th,
"The Three of Us," written and directed by Glen Bowser
A Hudson Village Theatre and GlenKaren Co-Production

Hudson Film Society, hudsonfilmsociety.ca

Monday JNight at the movies, become a member, check the website

Hudson Creative Hub, 273 Main Road hudsoncreativehub.org
Regular markets, quizzes, art exhibits and courses - check the website

Hudson Chamber Music Series, hudsonchambermusic.ca
occasional concerts, check the website

Cardinal Microbrewery Events, cardinalhudson.com
Live music every weekend, plus an ongoing program of comedy nights,
trivia and tasting events - see website for details

Chateau du Lac Events, chateaudulac.ca

Fridays Ladies Night, occasional live music - see website for details

March 2025 Events

Encore Musical Theatre Company, encoremusicaltheatre.ca

Friday March 6th to Sunday March 16th 9 to 5 The Musical!
With music and lyrics by Dolly Parton and book by Patricia Resnick
9 to 5 is based on the 1980 hit movie. Set in the late 1970s, this hilarious story of friendship
and revenge in the Rolodex era is outrageous, thought-provoking and even a little romantic
Presented at Hudson Village theatre, 450.458.5361

Hudson Film Society, hudsonfilmsociety.ca

Monday Night at the movies, become a member, check the website

Hudson Creative Hub, 273 Main Road hudsoncreativehub.org
Regular markets, quizzes, art exhibits and courses - check the website

Hudson Chamber Music Series, hudsonchambermusic.ca
Occasional concerts, check the website

Cardinal Microbrewery Events, cardinalhudson.com
Live music every weekend, plus an ongoing program of comedy nights,
trivia and tasting events - see website for details

Chateau du Lac Events, chateaudulac.ca

Fridays Ladies Night, occasional live music - see website for details

April 2025 Events

Hudson Players Club, hudsonplayersclub.ca

Friday April 4th to Sunday April 13th, Annual Spring Production
"The Game's Afoot," by Ken Ludwig
An award-winning Sherlock Holmes themed murder mystery.

Hudson Film Society, hudsonfilmsociety.ca

Monday April 21st to Sunday April 26th, Hudson Film Festival
10th Anniversary program: 13 award-winning film with guests including Karen Kain
for the film "Swan Song."

Give a Festival Pass for Christmas - available at the Hudson Village Box Office, 450-458-5361

Have an event you want to promote? Email bert@artshudson.org

HUDSON
VILLAGE THEATRE

Annual Holiday
Pantomime

Written & Directed by
John Sheridan

Cinderella

Join us for all the singing,
dancing, silly jokes, goodies,
baddies, and candy
that Panto has to offer!

Dates & Showtimes

Fri, Dec 13 @ 7pm
Sat, Dec 14 @ 1pm
Sat, Dec 14 @ 8pm
Sun, Dec 15 @ 2pm
Fri, Dec 20 @ 7pm
Sat, Dec 21 @ 2pm

Sat, Dec 21 @ 7pm
Sun, Dec 22 @ 2pm
Tue Dec 24 @ 11am
Thu, Dec 26 @ 2pm
Thu, Dec 26 @ 7pm
Fri, Dec 27 @ 2pm

Fri, Dec 27 @ 7pm
Sat, Dec 28 @ 2pm
Sat, Dec 28 @ 7pm
Sun, Dec 29 @ 2pm
Mon, Dec 30 @ 2pm
Mon, Dec 30 @ 7pm

Tue, Dec 31 @ 2pm
Wed, Jan 1 @ 2pm
Fri, Jan 3 @ 7pm
Sat, Jan 4 @ 2pm
Sat, Jan 4 @ 7pm
Sun, Jan 5 @ 2pm

DECEMBER 13 - JANUARY 5



Canadian
Heritage

Pantomime
canadien



COMING UP AT VILLAGE THEATRE

LONG LIVE

A TAYLOR SWIFT
TRIBUTE BAND

LIVE ON STAGE

SATURDAY
JANUARY 18 @ 2pm



HUDSON
VILLAGE THEATRE
& GlenKare
Prods present



Is love enough to keep a family together?

The 3 Of Us

Written and directed by Glen Bowser

JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 9

MATINEES AND EVENINGS

TICKETS & INFO VILLAGETHEATRE.CA - 450 458 5361