

NFLT Newsletter



January 21, 2017

Wintry Greetings!

I am pleased to bring you a summary of NFLT activity throughout the summer and fall of 2016, along with our exciting plans for 2017. As well, we have attached a Pioneer Drama article that lists some excellent ways for actors to learn their lines – there are even apps for that!

We endeavour to update our membership list as effectively as possible. We apologize for any glitches in this respect and ask that if anyone would like to be taken off or added to our mailing list, please let us know through an email: nflt1980@gmail.com.

Best!

Brian

SUMMER AND FALL 2016 SUMMARY OF EVENTS

June – Graduating student Skylar Peterson receives the NFLT Drama Award at the GREC Commencement

- Nina Jenkins and Doug MacIntyre join me at a **Canada 150** information and planning meeting in Arden. Along with other community groups, we presented our general vision for celebrating this important landmark anniversary of Canada’s heritage.

July/August – Craig Godfrey, author of “*Turtle “Crossings”*”, continues to prepare for this fall production by recruiting cast and crew, and editing and completing the script and music with the input of NFLT

September – Auditions for our fall production of “Turtle Crossings” take

place and rehearsals begin not too long after

September 25 – NFLT Awards Afternoon, Tichborne Hall

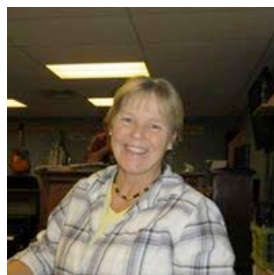
NFLT Awards, September 25, 2016



Nick and Jocelyn Whalen, Martina Field, John Stephen

October - executive finalizes NFLT's plans for **Canada 150**

November 24-27 – Highly successful performances of *“Turtle Crossings”*



Brother/sister team
Craig Godfrey and
Kathy Bonsall bring us
“Turtle Crossings”

December - *Festival of Trees* – the NFLT tree decorated by Nina Jenkins and Pam Woods wins first prize in their category!

January 2017 – Doug MacIntyre receives an NFLT Lifetime Recognition Award as we bid him farewell and best of luck in B.C.



POINTS OF INFORMATION

- 1) NFLT thanks the Treasure Trunk for their continued support, most recently donating to us stage risers, a carpet and a high chair
- 2) ***Classic Theatre Festival Perth*** (an award-winning professional summer theatre that draws audiences from across Eastern Ontario every summer, producing hits from the golden age of Broadway), has kindly offered to perform a benefit play for us next summer. The idea is we choose one of their summer productions, sell as many tickets for it as we can, and keep \$15 on every \$34 ticket we sell. So...if there is anyone interested in spearheading or participating in this fund-raising opportunity, please contact us nflt1980@gmail.com
- 3) Thanks to Sally Angle and Nina Jenkins for their on-going work in organizing the costume storage centre at the Tichborne Hall. Speaking of costumes, we are looking for people interested in dressing up in turn of century costumes and mingling at the different events associated with ***Heritage Weekend*** in February and **Canada 150**. Please contact us if interested at nflt1980@gmail.com
- 4) ***SPRING PRODUCTION*** – We have changed our spring production from “The hand that cradles the rock” to **“Here on the flight path”**.

The play is an adult comedy by Norm Foster: set on adjoining balconies in a big city apartment building, the play follows John Cummings as he interacts with 3 women, Fay, Angel and Gwen, who become his neighbours over a 3 ½ year period. It is said to be hilarious and at times touching. 3 acts, 1 male, 3 female required.

John Pariselli will direct and will be looking for not only actors, but a production team as well. Check our website and the Frontenac News for upcoming audition dates.

- 5) *NFLT* member **Tim White** is awarding bursaries for his dance studio lessons in Arden to interested students. Gillian Hofman was the first to receive this incentive, and Sidney Drew was chosen as the current recipient.

6) **NFLT's PROGRAMME Canada 150**



November, 2016 - "Turtle Crossings" - This play by Craig Godfrey includes cottage life as a theme, and serves as a warm-up for Canada 150 in terms of the celebration of an aspect of Central Frontenac's heritage

February, 2017 - *NFLT*'s presence at Central Frontenac's Heritage Events Weekend in terms of actors donning turn of the century costumes and appearing in role at the different events (evening concert, Polar Bear Plunge, Pioneer Activity Afternoon, Snowshoe Outing etc.)

April, 2017 - *NFLT* will acknowledge and promote Canada 150 in conjunction with our spring production of "Here on the Flight Path"

July, 2017 - *NFLT*'s participation in the Canada Day Parade

August, 2017 - *NFLT* Student Theatre Camp culminating in a presentation in conjunction with the NFCS summer celebration

November, 2017 - "Central Frontenac Forever" - the *NFLT* revue that includes fun and local colour, highlighting the one act play by North Frontenac residents Debbie Ibey and Carol Hillier entitled "The Wedding". This aims for cross township participation.

December, 2017 - Participation in the Festival of Trees

Newsletter: Working with Student Actors

Help Students Learn Their Lines – Valuable Approaches

By Mike Steele

Tips on Learning Lines

[Mike Steele](#) has been writing and directing as far back as he can remember. He spent the bulk of his teenage years performing in school and community theatre productions and continued to act through college while he completed a BS in elementary education and sociology. Mike directs school and community theatre productions and teaches cooperative drama workshops, a process in which he incorporates writing into the creative process.

It's the final week of rehearsals for the school play you're directing. You're frazzled as you sit in the booth and organize lighting cues with the technical director, jot notes about last minute alterations you'd like your costumer to make, and frantically text message the set designer that the walls are a little too orange. At least the cast is well rehearsed. The scene onstage is running smoothly until... SILENCE! The students stand frozen, waiting for one young actor to speak, but he doesn't seem to notice that he's missed his line.

We've all been in this type of situation when working with student actors. Memorizing dozens (if not hundreds) of lines and the order in which to say them can be challenging for any actor, but it seems like an especially daunting task for the young and novice. I find myself repeating the same phrase year after year to my high school students: "I can't learn your lines for you."

And it's true. As directors, we can't learn the lines for our casts. Are we resigned to simply sit back and watch our actors struggle through the line learning process, though? Absolutely not. We may not be able to learn the lines for these young thespians, but there are a few strategies we can employ to help make the transition off book as painless as possible for everyone involved.

1. **Record the read-through (not just the performance) and offer it to the cast.** Many actors find that they best memorize their lines by listening to the dialogue over and over. Your more

conscientious students might record themselves reading the script aloud, but others might not have the skills or know-how. Why should each cast member have to go through the trouble of producing his own recording, anyway? You can simplify the process by making an audio recording of the first read-through of the script. Distribute CD or mp3 copies of the recording to the cast and encourage your students to listen to the recordings whenever they would normally listen to music: as they get dressed, during car rides, while they're working out, when they're falling asleep, etc. If you separate each scene as a different track on the recording, it will be easier for individual cast members to find the parts of the show that they need to memorize.

2. **Spread out the off book fun.** A full length script can contain 90 or more minutes of dialogue that a cast must collectively memorize. Many directors require their actors to be off book for a whole act or even the entire play at once. For an actor, it can seem like an impossible task to sit down and memorize such large chunks of text. Consider adjusting the schedule so that you only ask the cast to memorize individual scenes or smaller portions of the script at one time. While the final off book date might remain where it normally would be in the rehearsal process, these smaller and more manageable memorization challenges will be less overwhelming to your young actors.
3. **Extra credit might provide extra motivation.** Many actors find that they best memorize their lines by writing the dialogue over and over. While this may seem tedious, it's a tried and true technique practiced by many professionals. This method may work for some and be a big bore for others, but encourage your students to give it a shot. Offer extra credit to any actor who turns in a notebook with each of his lines handwritten ten times in a row. And if your show isn't for a class where extra credit applies, create some other incentive for actors willing to go the extra mile. And whether for a class or not, you can require this assignment for your students who fail to memorize their lines by a certain date.
4. **Have students rehearse even when they're not rehearsing.** Many actors find that they best memorize their lines

by repeating the dialogue over and over. You might not have the time to rehearse a scene as many times as it would take for an actor to learn his lines, but that doesn't mean the actor can't rehearse off the stage. Most plays don't require every actor to be onstage for the entire show, which means there's a considerable amount of downtime for individual performers while you rehearse with others. Students can utilize this valuable time to run lines with one another. If one actor in particular is struggling to learn her lines, ask a production assistant or even a parent volunteer to sit and read the script aloud with the student.

5. **There really is an app for that.** Nearly every student has a smart phone these days. I'm sure your actors are always texting and tweeting while you're trying to rehearse. Have your cast put their phones to good use and download one of the many apps specifically designed to help actors learn their lines, such as Scene Partner, Line Learner or Rehearsal. Some of these apps even provide interactive games that take the line learning process to a new level. Don't forget to test out a few of these apps yourself so you'll know which ones to recommend to your students.

You may not be able to learn the lines for your students, but following these tips will at least help you guide and encourage your students during the strenuous task of getting off book. With a few of these tricks under your belt, your actors should be well prepared to memorize their lines, allowing you to focus your energies on other things — like those walls that are still a little too orange.

