

Performance Schedule

April 13 – May 19, 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
APRIL 7	8	9	10	11	12	13 11 am B4Play
14	15	16 8 pm Preview	17 8 pm Preview	18 8 pm Opening	19 8 pm	20 4 pm 8 pm
21 2 pm	22	23 12 pm ■ 8 pm Afterplay	24 1 pm 8 pm Afterplay	25 12 pm ■ 8 pm TalkBack	26 8 pm Afterplay	27 4 pm 8 pm Afterplay
28 2 pm	29	30 12 pm ■ 8 pm	MAY 1 1 pm 8 pm	2 12 pm ■ 8 pm Belfry 101	3 8 pm	4 4 pm 8 pm
5 2 pm	6	7 8 pm	8 8 pm	9 8 pm	10 8 pm	11 4 pm 8 pm
12 2 pm	13	14 8 pm Afterplay	15 8 pm Afterplay	16 8 pm Afterplay	17 8 pm Afterplay	18 4 pm 8 pm Afterplay
19 2 pm Closing	■ Library events / for locations – www.belfry.bc.ca					

Previews/Tuesdays at 8 pm \$25
 Wednesday Matinees at 1 pm \$30
 Wednesday/Thursday at 8 pm \$35
 Friday/Saturday at 8 pm \$40
 Saturday Matinees at 4 pm \$35
 Sunday Matinees at 2 pm \$30

Tickets

250-385-6815 or
 www.belfry.bc.ca

BOX OFFICE HOURS During Performance Weeks
 Monday 9:30 am – 5 pm
 Tuesday – Saturday 9:30 am – 7 pm
 Tuesday – Sunday one hour prior to curtain time for in person sales only.
 During Non-performance Weeks
 Monday – Friday 9:30 am – 5 pm

Why I Chose This Play

Well over two years ago, Erin Macklem, the Belfry's Artistic Associate, received a call from Bruce Ruddell. He had a couple of scripts, and would Michael be interested in seeing them? Given Bruce's history with the Belfry, I was more than anxious to read them and meet with him. Little did I know that I was about to fall in love.

Bruce's story made me fall in love twice: once with the character of Nora, challenging in ways that only a mother can truly manage; and then again, with the story's unusual blend of romance and realism, with its own brand

of magic thrown in. As a son who is dealing with a mother in her nineties, I could relate to this story on a personal level, and I believed that the majority of our audiences would as well. What is even more special though, is that the story is told from the point of view of the mother – not that of the children who are dealing with her. As a result, Nora is a fully drawn character, a senior citizen with faults and needs and regrets and love in her.

Add to this wonderful story the songs that Bruce and Bill Henderson have written, and I find the piece irresistible. These songs have

flavours and textures that are surprising, and totally their own. The score is beautiful in its own right. However, there is an old adage in musical theatre that a good story can survive a bad musical score, but a good score cannot survive a bad story. In other words, if these songs were not wedded to a story that makes us care, it wouldn't matter how good they were. Luckily, these songs and this story add up to one of the happiest couples I have ever met!



Michael Shamata
 Artistic Director

B4PLAY Saturday, April 13
 at 11 am

Join CBC Radio's Gregor Craigie for a live talk show featuring artists from *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*. Learn about the music of the era from local experts.
Free Event.

Single Tickets

from \$25 – \$40 (plus HST)
 at 250-385-6815
 or www.belfry.bc.ca

Book and lyrics
 by **Bruce Ruddell**
 Music and lyrics
 by **Bill Henderson**

LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART

WORLD
 PREMIERE

Belfry Theatre

Connect with us.

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 or follow us on
 Facebook, Twitter, tumblr, Vimeo or Youtube –
 just search Belfry Theatre.

SEASON SPONSORS AND GOVERNMENT FUNDERS:



LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART
 APRIL 16 – MAY 19, 2013
BELFRY THEATRE
 1291 GLADSTONE AVENUE
 VICTORIA, BC V8T 1G5



A Great Place to See Great Theatre

showguide

Belfry Theatre

Inside
 Books, Stories and Music
 Belfry B4Play
 The Belfry Librarian

LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART

WORLD
 PREMIERE

A romantic musical comedy
 Book and lyrics
 by **Bruce Ruddell**
 Music and lyrics
 by **Bill Henderson**

belfry.bc.ca

APRIL 16 – MAY 19, 2013

The search for Nora's songs by Bill Henderson

Welcome

We're thrilled to be premiering *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* this month.

Creating a new play is always a magical experience; creating a new musical is such a rare experience that it makes the journey that much more rewarding.

Let Me Call You Sweetheart draws its inspiration from real people in real places that we all know, visit and inhabit. And our intimate theatre is the perfect venue for a small scale musical like *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*.

Please read on to learn more about Nora, our lead character, and her story and we hope you will join us for this very charming new musical.

Armed with the moving story of Nora Chase that Bruce Ruddell had created, he and I set out to write songs that sounded like they could have been favourites of hers. It was a search, and these were our clues:

Ten years ago last Valentine's day, Nora was 80 years old. In the Canada of 1923 when she was born, people's houses had gramophones that played 78 rpm records, radios operating on the am and short wave bands broadcasting the music of the day, and even a hit parade of sorts. What kind of songs would Nora have heard and fallen in love with during her lifetime? What were the styles and how did they change as she grew up?

In 1926, at the age of three, she could have bounced around the room to *Red Red Robin*. Published in 1910, the song *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* was probably already considered a classic. By the age of ten in mid thirties depression times, she couldn't avoid Billie Holiday's *Gloomy Sunday*, with its ominous minor chords. At thirteen

she probably enjoyed Fats Waller's spunky songs and the romantic sounds of Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra. By her late teens she could have been besotted with Frank Sinatra and enjoyed dancing to local swing bands in the style of the Glenn Miller Orchestra.

Through the years, Nora's life experiences and the depth of her feelings would also likely have given her an ear for blues music.

As Bruce and I searched (internally) for the songs, I imagined Nora to be much like my mom, who was born just two years earlier and sang around the house all the time. For her, like Nora, music and singing were both inspiration and solace.

Collaborating on this project with Bruce Ruddell was a wonderful creative experience. Bruce set the direction of the songs with his lyrics which he'd email to me from Victoria. After a quick read I'd let them drop down into my subconscious where they could make musical connections without any interference. Emerging

songs appreciate gentle and respectful treatment, so in order to find the music, I'd simply revisit the lyrics from time to time, with a guitar in my hands and... listen. I tried not to push, but to simply stay alert and discover the song.

Each of our thirteen original tunes found a different way into the light. Some quickly, others not. But once each first draft was done and the new song had made its particular character known, there was plenty of cleaning up and polishing to be done. And so, always listening for Nora's voice, both music and lyrics continued to evolve over the two years or more that Bruce and I collaborated on this project.

I hope you'll come out to *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* and share our pleasure in what we found in our search for Nora's songs.

Over the last 40 years **Bill Henderson** has been a singer, songwriter, composer of music for film, television and theatre, guitarist, record producer and engineer. He has won many awards including a Juno (Producer of the Year, with Brian MacLeod), and a Genie for his song *When I Sing*, the theme song for Anne Wheeler's film, *Bye Bye Blues*.

3X3 Each Mainstage show we ask three people three questions about an aspect of the show. This time we asked people from three different generations about the first song they felt connected to, a song that resonates with them today, and a song that they feel represents another generation. Here are a few teasers:

 "... Music is after all the language of the soul... and actually is a universal experience..."
Peter Symcox,
Retired Music and
Opera Director

 "... Carry On, by Fun... In life you can get tired and you want to give up, but it says keep going because there's always something at the end for you..."
Molly Lydon,
Actor / Student

 "... My parents didn't really get along, but one thing that they could totally agree on was that they both loved Gordon Lightfoot..."
Carolyn Mark,
Musician / Host

Listen to the full interviews online at www.belfry.bc.ca/let-me-call-you-sweetheart

The Belfry Librarian

To help you get a bit extra out of every show, we've unleashed the **GVPL Librarians** on our season scripts. For *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*, our Librarian has put together a list of books, stories and music to whet your appetite for this charming new musical.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Playing the Ukulele
by David Hodge

The Art of Growing Old: Aging with Grace
by Marie de Hennezel

Find the Love of Your Life after Fifty!
by Alice Solomon

Good Ol' Songs: Melody Line, Chords, and Lyrics for Keyboard, Guitar, Vocal (music score)

The Hard Questions for Adult Children and Their Aging Parents: 100 Essential Questions for Facing the Future Together, with Courage and Compassion
by Susan Piver

I Feel Great about My Hands: And Other Unexpected Joys of Aging
edited by Shari Graydon

The Love Album: Doris Day (CD)

Sex and the Seasoned Woman: Pursuing the Passionate Life
by Gail Sheehy

Songs of the 40's (music score)

List Compiled by Hannah Mitchell, GVPL.

AFTERPLAY WEEKS

April 23 – 27 / May 14 – 18

During these weeks of performances, we want to hear what you have to say. After each evening performance, stick around for a short discussion facilitated by one of our staff.

TALKBACK THURSDAY

Thursday, April 25

Following the 8 pm performance of *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*, join the actors from the show and your fellow audience members for a 20-minute Q & A session.

PACT Conference

This year the Belfry and Puente Theatre are hosting the annual Professional Association of Canadian Theatres' conference from May 22 – 25. The conference brings together theatre artists and administrators from across the country for four days of face-to-face networking, hands-on workshops, international inspiration, and open forum discussion. We're thrilled to be hosting.

LETTER FROM WINGFIELD FARM WINGFIELD'S PROGRESS WINGFIELD'S FOLLY

by **Dan Needles**
directed by **Douglas Beattie**
starring **Rod Beattie**

July 30 – August 25

Rod Beattie and Walt Wingfield return to where it all began. This summer we'll reprise the first three episodes of Canada's most enduring comedy series, all of which premiered at the Belfry. Join Walt, Freddie, Don, The Squire, Willy, and Dave for an incredible summer evening – or three. Watch your mailbox for our new season guide or visit our website for full show descriptions.

Belfry Season ticket holders will receive a two-for-one ticket voucher to see the comic gem of their choice.
Single tickets on sale June 3.

SEASON TICKETS

Season tickets for *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)*, *A Tender Thing, Proud and Equivocation* are on sale now. To learn more about how you can see these new shows and save, you can pick up a season guide at our Box Office, call us at 250-385-6815 and we'll pop one in the post, or visit us online at www.belfry.bc.ca.

cast & creatives



Nicola Lipman



Alec Willows



Elizabeth Duncan



Vincent Gale



Megan Leitch



Donna Soares



Bruce Ruddell
Book & Lyrics



Bill Henderson
Music & Lyrics



Michael Shamata
Director



Susan Benson
Designer



Ereca Hassell
Lighting Designer



Karel Roessingh
Accompanist



Jessica Hickman
Choreographer

www.belfry.bc.ca

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