



Review: Pipeline

Description

Infinithatre's playreading series

By **Byron Toben**

The Infinithatre is dedicated to encourage Quebec-based writing talent as it matures into full production. Its annual Write-On-Q! contest has resulted into such recent hits as Alyson Grant's Progress, Arthur Holden's The Book of Bob and Oren Safdie's Unseemly.

This year's four readings, as usual, allowed the playwrights to hear their words echoed by some of our finest voices, who despite only a few hours rehearsal, always deliver the goods. Audience talkback also helps refine the works in progress

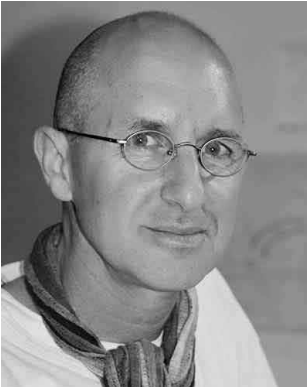


Leopold St-Pierre

This year's winner (\$3000) was Two Piranhas by Leopold St-Pierre. Established pros Noel Burton and Joanna Noyes were paired as onetime Hollywood buddies who had a falling out which led to a bitter feud for 30 years. A chance meeting brings back old times outweighed by dark unresolved secrets. Mr. St-Pierre has an extensive film



and TV writing experience in both North America and the UK.



Oren Safdie

Second place (\$1500) was won for Lunch Hour by Oren Safdie. Alon Nashman and Claudia Basso are perfectly matched as they become friendly at a local diner each noon. Casual chatting eventually leads to a liaison despite each being married to another — Patricia Summersett and Carlo Mestroni, respectfully. Jennifer Morehouse was smashing in a small cameo. Mr. Safdie's equally humorous entry from last year, Mr. Goldberg Goes to Tel Aviv is slated to be produced by Infintheatre in February at the sumptuous theatre St-James.



Louise Arsenault

Third Place(\$500) was awarded to Burning Tongues by Louise Arsenault. Remember Quebec's first referendum? This play takes you back to those thrilling days of yesteryear, as played out on an Easter weekend by a fractious family on the West Island. Alcoholism, late pregnancy, business morality and a disappeared maid add to the mix. Wow, with Vlasta Vrana as the father, Joanna Noyes as the ultra-religious mother, and Catherine De Seve and Isabelle Cyr as their daughters, no need for costumes and sets. Ms. Arsenault has had three plays produced and, like Alyson Grant, a prior winner, teaches at Dawson.



Michael Milech

The final honorable mention went to *Honesty Rents By The Hour* by Michael Milech. I did not get to see this one as it was the same night as the opening of [Urban Tails \(WestmountMag Oct 13\)](#). It is described as a failed ménage a trios involving a McGill student, a Hasidic bachelor and a receptionist. Not my kind of story, but hard to resist with talent like Howard Rosenstein (*Kafka's Ape*), Jonathon Silver (*Unseemly*) and Catherine De Seve voicing the three. Michael Milech grew up in Montreal, was educated in New Brunswick and Toronto.

Feature image: photographed by Emily Di Michele Newson. From left: Guy Sprung, Leopold St-Pierre, Noel Burton, Jennifer Moorehouse, Joanna Noyes, Gerry Lipnowski; other images courtesy of Infinitheatre.

The Pipeline readings ran from December 10 to 13 at the Rialto.

Byron Toben is the immediate past-president of the Montreal Press Club.

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Date Created

December 2015