



The Drawer Boy draws crowds  
out to Hudson

## Description

## Trio of top-notch actors assembled for award-winning play

By **Byron Toben**

Ah, summertime and the viewing is easy... Shakespeare-in-the-Park and pleasant drives to exurbs like Hudson for well-done shows at its charming village theatre (a remodelled railroad station).

The **Hudson Village Theatre** was founded in 1993 by Hudson resident **Heather Markham-Lowe**. It operated out of a tent until 2000, when it acquired the railroad station building and transformed it into a 148-seat theatre. **Andrew Johnston** joined as artistic director in 2004 but retired in 2012.

Ms. Markham-Lowe filled the gap for two more years, until 2014 when **Matthew Tiffin** was retained as artistic director and **Kalina Skulska** became (and still is) Executive Director. This year has seen **Dean Patrick Fleming** assume the mantle as the new artistic director. A Concordia theatre grad, he has taught there as well as at the National Theatre School. In addition to acting himself on stage, film and TV, he was the artistic director of Geordie Productions from 2005-2016.

It examines memory, truth vs. fiction and good intentions gone awry – serious subjects, but with dollops of humour thrown in.

Mr Fleming, as he did in helming the play *Art* at this theatre last August, assembled a trio of top-notch actors for the award-winning 1999 play ***The Drawer Boy*** by **Michael Healy**. It won both Governor General and Dora Mavor Moore awards. Loosely based on a Canadian attempt to draw real life from rural Ontario farmers 30 years ago, it eventually played all over Canada, the USA and London, UK, culminating in a film version in 2017.



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Miles (Concordia grad **Curtis Legault**) is an enthusiastic young actor/playwright who turns up at a modest farm run by two bachelor senior citizens. Morgan (Bishops and NTS grad **Brian Dooley**) and Angus (Dawson grad **Michel Perron**) were soldiers in WW II together. Angus suffered a head injury and has limited memory. Morgan reluctantly allows Miles to stay on the farm as a hired hand for only room and board so he can observe them. One thing leads to another and certain mysteries are revealed.

To me, the two farmers reflected in some ways George and Lenny from John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. The development of a play out of an old event despite the originators not wanting it be played smacked a bit of Paula Vogel's *Indecent*, albeit a completely different setting.

I note that Mr Perron had played Angus before, in a 2004 production at the Centaur. Since he has been in 54 stage plays, 80 films and 78 television series, I doubt that he could conjure up his text again by heart.

***The Drawer Boy* continues at the Hudson Village Theatre until July 21.**

*Marion Bridge* follows from August 7 to 25.

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**Byron Toben**, a past president of The Montreal Press Club, has been WestmountMag.ca's theatre reviewer since July 2015. Previously, he wrote for since terminated web sites Rover Arts and Charlebois Post, print weekly The Downtowner and print monthly The Senior Times. He also is an expert consultant on U.S. work permits for Canadians.



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