

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ANDREA BOYD
MANAGING DIRECTOR CALEB MARSHALL

Festival Antigonish Confirms Bauer Theatre Summer Season Will Proceed, with Retrofit Construction to Begin in September

Community fundraising reaches 85% of \$500,000 goal as spring concerts return home to the Bauer

Antigonish, NS — Festival Antigonish is thrilled to share major news for audiences, artists, and the wider community: the **Bauer Theatre will be permitted to operate for the 2026 summer season, with retrofit construction to begin in September.**

The announcement means that not only will Festival Antigonish's summer season proceed as planned at the Bauer, but two upcoming musical events previously set for alternative venues will now return **home to the Bauer Theatre: [The Hello Crows and Misfits Musical Cabaret.](#)**

The Bauer was closed to public performances effective **December 31, 2025**, by the Office of the Fire Marshal in order to undertake code-compliant fire safety work. In response, Festival Antigonish launched the **Bridge the Bauer** campaign in December to raise the community support needed to help move the project toward compliance and keep the theatre active.

In just three months, the campaign has now raised **85% of its \$500,000 community fundraising goal.**

"This is incredibly exciting news for our organization and for the whole community," said **Caleb Marshall, Managing Director of Festival Antigonish.** "The Bauer is more than a venue. It is a place of memory, mentorship, creativity, belonging, and live performance. To know that our summer season can proceed as planned, and that

audiences will also get to return to the Bauer this spring for live music, is a tremendous relief and a real cause for celebration.”

Fire Marshal approves Bauer Theatre for Spring Performances

The Office of the Fire Marshal has confirmed that the theatre may be used for the approved spring performances and summer season, provided interim fire safety measures remain in place, including fire watch and previously outlined safety protocols. Festival Antigonish says these measures will be carefully implemented to ensure the building remains safe, welcoming, and well-managed for audiences, artists, and staff.

Marshall noted that while formal construction bids are expected within the next few weeks, the timeline to begin work and complete it without affecting the summer season had become increasingly tight.

“There are very few alternative venues in Antigonish that can accommodate professional theatre and the kind of patron experience people have come to expect,” said Marshall. “We were confident we had demonstrated enough movement toward compliance that the Fire Marshal would be open to a more flexible timeline, and we are immensely grateful for that vote of confidence.”

Festival Antigonish emphasized that the decision reflects both the strength of its updated fire safety planning and the substantial good-faith progress made toward the required compliance work.

As part of this announcement, Festival Antigonish has confirmed that **The Hello Crows** will now be presented at the Bauer Theatre rather than in an alternative venue.

Theatre Antigonish will also present **Misfits Musical Cabaret** at the Bauer.

Festival Antigonish will ensure that **clear signage is posted at previously announced alternate venues on the nights of affected performances**, redirecting any attendees to the Bauer.

Bridge the Bauer Campaign Video

Alongside the release, [Festival Antigonish is also sharing a campaign video by David Overmars](#), one of the many artists who has lent his voice and talent to support the effort. The video is a moving tribute to the life, energy, memory, and belonging that live inside the Bauer’s walls — and to why this place matters so deeply to the people of Antigonish.

“The Bauer has always been about more than bricks and mortar,” said Andrea Boyd, Artistic Director. “It is a place where people have discovered confidence,

built friendships, taken creative risks, and felt at home. We are thrilled to be welcoming audiences back into the space this spring and summer, and we will be doing so with great care.”

For Festival Antigonish, this announcement is both practical and deeply symbolic. It means continuity for a cherished summer tradition, the return of spring musical events to the venue audiences love, and a clear path toward the next phase of essential retrofit work.

Construction to begin in the fall of 2026

With construction set to begin in September, fundraising momentum continuing to build, and the community rallying around the future of the theatre, Festival Antigonish says the message is clear: the Bauer’s story is still being written.

Watch and share David Overmars’ Bauer campaign video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zVH9ipKd-s>

Patrons should watch Festival Antigonish’s channels for updated venue information and event details.

Learn more about ‘Bridge the Bauer. Build the Future’ [here](#).

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About Theatre Antigonish

Founded in 1974, Theatre Antigonish is celebrating its 50th Anniversary Season as a professionally led community theatre organization, offering high-quality productions at the Bauer Theatre during the fall and winter months. As a non-profit organization operating in partnership with Saint Francis Xavier University, Theatre Antigonish continues to bring together students and local community members to work collaboratively with professional mentors on all aspects of each production, including acting, design, production elements, stage management, and

promotion. With an average of 10 presentations each season and 2,000 participants, Theatre Antigonish's 50th Anniversary Season explores the theme 'The Art of Belonging: 50 Years of Connecting Community,' presenting a diverse array of programming including concerts, mainstage comedy, Holiday offerings, Green Room Cabarets, Improv, and Open Mic Nights — all enriching the cultural fabric of Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

About Festival Antigonish

Established in 1987, Festival Antigonish is located at the Bauer Theatre on the campus of St Francis Xavier University. We have an air-conditioned 220-seat auditorium and an atmospheric bar. We are committed to developing the considerable theatrical talents of Nova Scotians and each year we bring together some of the best writers, actors and directors to produce a Main Stage Series and a Family Series. We sell 11,000 tickets annually and we enjoy a well-deserved reputation for high-quality work. Festival Antigonish has grown strong roots in the community and serves as an anchor attraction for regional tourism. We are a registered charity supported by the federal and provincial governments through the Canada Council for the Arts and the Nova Scotia Culture Division and by the respective Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish.

Festival Antigonish has established an inspiring legacy as a premier summer repertory theatre in Atlantic Canada. With a history that spans three decades; a patron base that includes thousands of Nova Scotians as well as regional, national, and international tourists; an acclaimed reputation as a local economic and cultural anchor; and an artistic commitment to excellence, we are proud of our successes and we are committed to growth. Each summer, we bring together the best artists from across Nova Scotia and beyond to create an award-winning Main Stage series, a Family Stage show, and other innovative artistic presentations. We are housed in the intimate Bauer Theatre on the campus of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, NS.

Support Us | Tickets

To learn more about supporting Festival Antigonish or to purchase tickets, please visit www.festivalantigonish.com.