

The Heart of Things

A true story of tragedy in a Nova Scotian fishing community

Wanda R Graham — Artistic Director/Director

John Plant — Composer/Music Director

Christian Ludwig Hansen — Projection, Animation, Light Design



October 22-27, 2024

Presented by



HEAT THEATRE

in partnership with



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada





Clearwater Cares is proud to sponsor *The Heart of Things*, a local production inspired by a true story of tragedy and resilience in a Nova Scotian fishing community.

We encourage all to support each other and place a high focus on mental health and well-being for yourself and for others.



clearwater.ca



www.tema.foundation



bell.ca/letstalk

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Congratulations Wanda!

*"Some people dream of success,
while other people get up every
morning and make it happen."*

Thank you for helping make our dreams come true!

EASTERN SHORE PLAYERS

Chair's Message

Kevin McNamara

Heat Theatre is proud to work and live in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

Welcome to Heat Theatre's production of *The Heart of Things* written by Wanda Graham, who is also the company's Artistic Director, with music composed by John Plant.

It is an honour to bring attention to an issue not openly heard or talked about. As a former Deputy Minister of Health in Nova Scotia, I am sensitive to the struggles that many face in mental health but even I was unaware that this was a growing issue affecting workers in the fishing industry. Heat is proud to welcome to our production The Tema Foundation, a non-profit organization that focuses on mental health and wellness for frontline workers, first responders, healthcare professionals, public safety personnel, and the important people in their lives. This is an opportunity for all of us to raise our voices and ensure that all receive the support and treatment necessary to continue as productive members of our community.

Heat Theatre exists to start conversations about societal issues that are frequently not addressed, in innovative ways. Heat's next production is to commission the creation of "alone with a monster" by Wanda R Graham with visual artist Curtis Botham. This play reveals in an original way human trafficking, something affecting more Nova Scotians than we can know. With resources such as People Against non-State Torture, Truro, Nova Scotia, Heat's production brings firsthand awareness of the issue with compassion about the growing numbers of local human trafficking so we cannot say 'we did not know' again.



I want to thank our funders, sponsors, private donors, media contacts and advertisers who have given us the opportunity to present this play for you in support of our fishers, and the Board Members who volunteer time to support Heat Theatre and bring *The Heart of Things* to fruition.

Finally, my sincere thanks to you, our audience, and we look forward to your continued support in the future. Contact admin@heattheatre.com to support our mandate by donation or to volunteer.

~ Kevin McNamara, Chair, Heat Theatre

The Heart of Things

Text – Wanda R Graham | Composer – John Plant

... an island off the coast of Nova Scotia

Movement One – L'AMOUR, the present

Movement Two – LA MORT, three months later

Movement Three – La Mer, 10 months later

Duration – 2 hours 5 minutes with no intermission

*Wanda R Graham – Director

John Plant – Music Director

Christian Ludwig Hansen – Projection, Animation, Design

Curtis Botham – Charcoal Drawings

*Jeana MacIsaac – Stage Manager

Gordon Hammond – Production Manager

Logan Tanner – Set Design

Kristy Sanders – Costume/props design/build; Set Dressing

Lucien Baker, Darcy Baker, Tom Marshall – Production crew

STOO METZ Photography – Production Stills

*Soo Garay Pearl, aka. "Nan"

*Pasha Ebrahimi Les Sr., aka. "Big Daddy"

*Logan Robins Ariel

*Riley Reign Bren

Tip Finless Les Jr., aka. "Junior"

Nika Gantar Casey

Tuesday preshow speaker: Colleen Kamps, of The Tema Foundation in partnership with
Clearwater Seafoods, introduction by Kevin McNamara

Wednesday preshow speaker Braydon Henneberry, young fisher

Thursday preshow speaker..... Bev Cadham, mother and bereavement councillor

Friday post-show talkback..... Dr. Kevin Pottie, Facilitator, with actors

Saturday Matinee post show talkback Composer John Plant

Saturday Evening post show talkback..... Dr. Kevin Pottie, Facilitator, with actors

Sunday Evening preshow chat..... visual artist Curtis Botham

Sunday Evening post-show talkback Dr. Kevin Pottie, Facilitator, with actors

* The participation of these Artists is arranged by permission of Canadian
Actors' Equity Association under the provisions of the D*O*T Policy.

Wanda Graham

Artistic Director, Playwright, Director

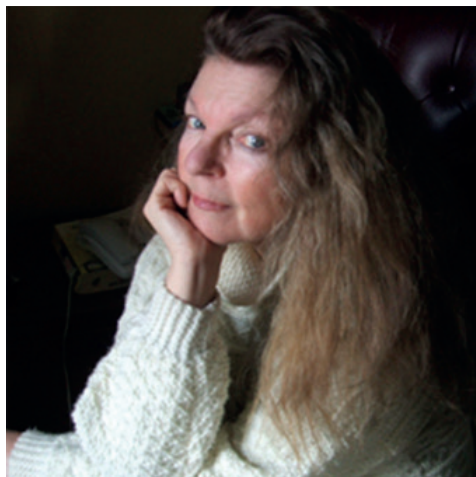
The Heart of Things is inspired by a true story. When a young fisher ropes himself to his mast in the harbour within sight of the local Legislature, he hopes to bring attention for change. Out of the tragedy that ensues emerges triumph. His twin decides to do things the way "we've always done them," only different. My advisors in creation have been the fishers I have known and loved in my own tiny fishing village of over 45 years. When one of my neighbors heard about my focus on young fisher stress and suicide he exclaimed, "Good! It's a f#%ing epidemic and there's no help."

The playwright gratefully acknowledges the writing and development support for The Heart of Things from the Canada Council for the Arts, Arts Nova Scotia, Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre Retreat and dramaturg Maureen Labonté. John Plant exclaimed after receiving the text, "I immediately started composing!" John's music for The Heart of Things is the heart of things, an epic score for actors by a master of his craft.

Arts Nova Scotia and Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre supported Heat's first customized workshop to bring together for the first time the text and John's full sumptuous virtual score with six actors. Memory Lane Heritage Village opened its doors to Heat in partnership for this production. Thank you to the many skilled, talented actors who have gotten behind this project, couldn't do it without you.

I hope you, the audience, wonder at the extraordinary cast, for their grasp of and commitment to the epic scope of the drama and their musical mastery of something not everyone can do in a score that is to be spoken. Deepest thanks to that major-domo Gordon Hammond and what his myriad resources brought together to make dreams real. My everlasting thanks to the board of Heat Theatre for their passionate love for, and belief in, the power of theatre to change hearts and minds, one play at a time.

Wanda Graham is a playwright, actor, producer and director. During her tenure as Artistic Director of Stage East Theatre in Halifax she produced 13 shows, including nine new plays, four musicals - nine of them touring shows, many of which she directed and/or wrote.



She has toured many times throughout Atlantic Canada as a freelance artist and with Stage East, Mulgrave Road Theatre, Neptune Theatre and Theatre New Brunswick. She has appeared with Black Theatre Workshops Montreal, multiple shows and workshops series with the National Arts Center, Ottawa, and once played the Toronto Fringe. For her acting work she was awarded the Jean A Chalmer's Award at the Stratford Festival and a Stagedoor Johnnie "Best Actress" for her work at the Blyth Festival.

Playwright residencies include the first Stratford Festival Playwrights Unit, Women's International Playwrights Conference Stockholm, multiple invitations to Banff Playwrights Unit, Playwrights Workshop Montreal and Playwrights Atlantic Retreat, residencies include Tableau d'hôte Montreal, Women's Work Festival St. John's, Factory Theatre Toronto's first National New Play Festival, Neptune Theatre (Brat), and Mulgrave Road Theatre (Kill Zone a love story). She was invited to speak at the Danish National Theatre School Copenhagen and at Boston's Popular Culture Conference.

Wanda was the Atlantic Rep for Playwrights Union Canada for many years and is founder and Honourary Lifetime Member of Playwrights' Atlantic Resource Centre. She was presented with Nova Scotia's first Established Artist Recognition Award Theatre.

John Plant

Composer and Musical Director

When Wanda Graham sent me the gripping and vital text of 'The Heart of Things' it was clear that this text called for a new approach to music theatre. Operatic in scope and intensity, her words also manifested a rhythmic vitality and urgency, a surging momentum. It was an irresistible challenge, to create a soundscape which would sustain and project the world she had so vividly evoked. To do this, I notated the actors' lines rhythmically, and constructed the soundscape around them. Wanda's matchless ear for fishers' vernacular, and her structural sense of the dramatic arc - both of each scene and for the work as a whole - made this task a joyful adventure.

Most of the music was composed at the height of the pandemic, which somehow made it easier to work at white heat and with minimal distraction - I composed as if I had a huge orchestra at my disposal, preparing a full score (up to 30 staves) together with electronics and natural sounds. But the heart of my inspiration is Wanda's moving text, and the compelling vision which underlies it. I hope to have created a musical structure which projects that vision with the power and eloquence it deserves.

I am deeply grateful to Arts Nova Scotia for its support, and very excited to see it reach the stage.



Crew

Christian Hansen

Projection, Animation & Design

Christian (He/Him) is a Video and Projection Designer as well Performer with special focus in Collaboration, Puppetry, and Stage Combat. He is from Northern Friesland by the German-Danish border and now lives in Kijipuktuk/Halifax.

Select Design Credits: The Movements (Zuppa), Bluebirds (TNB), The Glass Menagerie (ARC), The Proletariat (HAT), #IAmTheCheese (HTYP & EFT), Fat Juliet (EFT & SBTS).

Acting Credits: Midsummer nights dream (SBTS), Settle Elsewhere (Theatre du Poulet).



Curtis Botham

Original artwork & Poster design

Curtis Botham is a graduate of NSCAD University. Through large-scale charcoal drawings, Curtis explores the multi-faceted effects of industry, labour, and material culture, as well as their effects on communities and the environment. In the past, he explored the declining coal industry in rural Nova Scotia as well as other small-town industries, and he has more recently shifted to depictions of city life and its changes during the pandemic. Through this project and more, he plans on examining Nova Scotia's fishing industry.



*Jeana MacIsaac

Stage Manager

Jeana MacIsaac- (she/her) Stage Manager. Thank you for joining us! I am from Epekwitk (PEI) and passionate about all things creative. I love to help tell meaningful stories, while supporting fellow artists. I am a lifelong learner, who seeks inspiration and knowledge from those that surround me. Thank you to the wonderful folks at Heat Theatre for this amazing experience. Enjoy the show!

With great thanks, ~Jeana

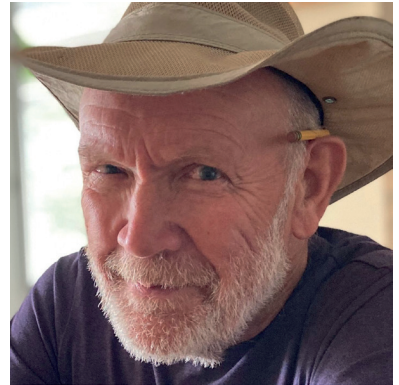


Crew

Gordon Hammond

Production Manager

Gordon Hammond has decades of senior project management experience in a wide variety of fields, ranging from the founding of two successful local companies, to co-founder of Memory Lane Heritage Village, to set design for Eastern Shore Players. This is his first project management experience with professional theatre and he says... I couldn't have done it without my dream team, Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout and Starveling.



Logan Tanner

Set Design

Logan Tanner is a builder, designer, and creative at heart from Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

He holds a diploma in Screen Arts (NSCC), Architectural Drafting (NSCC), and an International Baccalaureate Art diploma.

Logan's set and production design work, as well as art direction work has been featured in various film productions including: Trailer Park Boys - BATS (Feature Film) - Swearnet Studios; Rankin Family Christmas Special - Mabou Productions; Tracy and Martina (Season 1 & 2) - Swearnet Studios.



Kristy Sanders

Costumes, Props & Set Dressing

Kristy's experience in costuming began while she was a university student, working on productions such as 'Dangerous Liaisons' and 'Dirty Works at the Crossroads' with the Saint Mary's University Drama Society. After graduating, she continued creating costumes, both for private clients and for a costume shop (The Great Pretender) that she co-managed in Dartmouth. After moving to the Eastern Shore, Kristy spent many years volunteering as a costumer, assisting with theatrical productions at local schools and with the Eastern Shore Players. She continues to enjoy creating costumes for clients, friends, and family.



Production Actors

*Soo Garay “Nan”

Soo Garay is thrilled to be part of this momentous production. She is currently located in Toronto and lives with her amazing teenage daughter Jozefin, her brilliant musical partner Michael, Apollo the dog and, Pepper and Ivy the cats.

Selected THEATRE credits: ANGELS IN AMERICA - That Theatre Co./Buddies. WILDFIRE - Factory Theatre. HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA - Modern Times/Buddies. COMEDY OF ERRORS, JULIUS CAESAR - Canadian Stage. YANKEE NOTIONS, THE STONE ANGEL - Neptune. MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA - Centaur(national tour).

Selected TV: CROSS/S2 Amazon. HANDMAIDENS TALE - MGM. UMBRELLA ACADEMY - Netflix. HUDSON & REX - Shaftsbury. Guest star roles in - PUPPETS WHO KILL - Comedy Network. LA FEMME NIKITA - Warner Br. MUTANT X - Tribune. THE HUNGER - Showtime and, 4 years as Dr. Davison on PSI FACTOR - Alliance.

Selected FILM: SHOT THROUGH THE HEART - HBO. JACOB THE LIAR - Tristar. BLUES BROTHERS 2000 - Paramount. Selected CANADIAN FILM: ADORATION. THREE STORIES TO THE END OF EVERYTHING. ARUBA. SWEET YOYO. NOTHING.



*Logan Robins “Ariel”

Most recently they have toured across North America with The Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia as a puppeteer performing Todd Parr’s “It’s Okay to be Different”, wrote/performed in the online radio storytelling experience-‘program sound.fm”, and toured their show “Hippoposthumous” to Calgary and Canmore, Alberta!

They are the Artistic Director of The Unnatural Disaster Theatre Co, Two upcoming projects include a workshop production of a new show, “Bottom Dwellers: A Deep Sea Musical” created with support from the Canadian Ocean Literacy Coalition and premiering at Eastern Front’s Stages Festival in June 2024 AND “Autobiographical Fiction” an improvised solo show coming in September 2024.

Logan is a lover of collaborative creation/devising, site specific theatre, and puppetry/mask! When not in a theatre they can often be found exploring caves or playing their banjolele (It’s exactly what it sounds like and it is glorious)!



Production Actors

*Pasha Ebrahimi “Les Sr, Big Daddy”

Pasha Ebrahimi is a film and theatre professional based in Canada with roots in the Maritime provinces. In television, he is best known for supporting roles in acclaimed series such as *The Haunting of Bly Manor*, *The Good Doctor*, *Six*, as well as diverse character roles on prominent shows such as *Salvation*, *Supergirl*, *Supernatural*, *Shadow Hunters: The Mortal Instruments*, *iZombie*, and *Midnight Mass* etc.

His film career includes the cult classic *Hobo with a Shotgun*, the award-winning film *Charlie Zone*, the international film *The Healer* and most recently the feature film *8:37 Rebirth*, for which he was awarded Best Actor at the Montreal Independent Film Festival.

Pasha has earned numerous film festival nominations, including three ACTRA Award nominations: once for Best Actor in the film *Lord of Chaos* and twice for Best Supporting Actor in the television series *Sex and Violence*. You can find an up-to-date list of Pasha's released roles at IMDB.

Pasha is also a vocal talent with credits on award winning productions such as the documentary *Perfume War*, video games like *Assassin's Creed: Valhalla* and *Mirage*, and most recently the audiobook *My Road From Damascus: A Memoir* by Jamal Saeed.

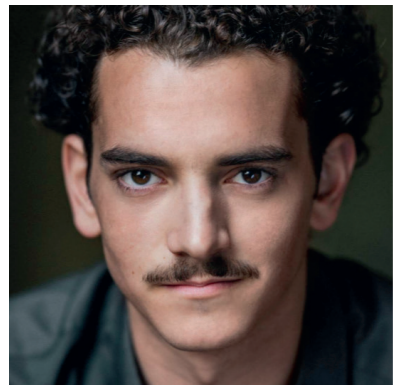
Pasha has worked with an array of theatre companies performing in both classical and contemporary productions. Most recently he played the part of Hamlet in Neptune's diverse production of “*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*” directed by Jeremy Webb. Selected theatre credits include: *THE VEIL* (Neptune/One Light), *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA* (Theatre New Brunswick), *THE DRAWER BOY* (The Atlantic Theatre Festival), *THE TRIUMPH OF JOE T.* (Irondale), *THE UNDERPANTS* (Lions Den), *EDWARD THE SECOND* (Villains), *WASHED AWAY* (Dell'Arte International)

A very special thank you to the team at Heat Theatre and Wanda Graham for the warm welcome. Pasha Ebrahimi is currently represented by Mary Jane MacCallum at The ARC in Ontario, Canada.



Tip Finless “Les Jr”

Tip Finless (He/Him) is an artist originally from Ottawa, Ontario and just completed his degree with Dalhousie in the Fountain School of Performing Arts. He looks to find new ways to present theatre and to attract the next generation of theatre goers.



Production Actors

*Riley Reign “Bren”

Riley Reign (they/them) is an interdisciplinary artist, creator and activist based in Kijipuktuk, with their Masters in Musical Theatre Performance from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. As an actor their recent credits include Victoria in *Strata Inc.*, Tessa in *Frenchy's: A Thrift Store Musical*, Ben in *Good Grief* (TV), Syd in *Hailey Rose* (Feature Film), Dawn in *Deeper*, and Jess in *I Am Not A Hero* (Feature Film). As a writer and composer they recently created *brainstorm*, first commissioned by Eastern Front Theatre as part of their Macro Digital's: *Connections*. They are also known for writing and composing *Here, Queer & Mentally Unclear* - a semi verbatim musical about mental illness in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, first commissioned by Upstart Theatre for Dare Festival, London, Eng, and writing and co-producing the award winning *fundamentals of compassionate care* - online training tool.

Riley Reign is also a singer/songwriting and instrumentalist and is passionate about creating dynamic original work which offers new perspectives on often avoided topics.



Nika Gantar “Casey”

Nika Gantar has trained at both the Berklee College of Music and at the London Academy of Music and Drama. She is delighted to be back in Nova Scotia and working with Heat Theatre on this exciting project.



Preshow speakers

Colleen Kamps

The Tema Foundation

Colleen serves as the Director of Program Development & Advisory Services for the Tema Foundation. Since 2019, she has co-developed a Mental Health & Wellness in the Workplace training curriculum for St. John Ambulance, Canada; co-created the PPE for Your Mind four-part educational video series for those working the Frontlines; co-developed a 15-micro credential program called Open Mind: Mental Health and Wellness for Frontline Professionals for Humber College; created a 5-week mental health and wellness course for Journalists students at Humber College; and co-created another Mental Health Training for Managers for St. John Ambulance National Office.

Her passion, commitment, and dedication to helping others are what keep her striving forward to make life easier for those who need support.



Bev Cadham

Canadian Mental Health Association

Bev is celebrating thirty-two years with the Canadian Mental Health Association Halifax-Dartmouth Branch where she is the Branch Co-Manager. She was founder of the Annual "Dancing in the Sky" Vigil Committee for Suicide Awareness in the Eastern Shore.

In 2023 and 2024 Bev completed and received her certifications for Living Life to the Full, T4T Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and Traumatic Loss Support Group Facilitator Training – for those experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one by suicide. A loss she understands and feels deeply in her heart.



Postshow speaker

Dr. Kevin Pottie

Talkback Facilitator

Kevin Pottie is a Distinguished Professor and Research Chair in Family Medicine at Dalhousie University. Pottie's 200 research articles and guidelines are transforming the clinical approach to refugee and migrant health, homeless populations, and 'deprescribing' for the elderly. His influential contributions extend to Médecins Sans Frontières, the Cochrane Collaboration, the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care and the World Health Organization. Canadian Researcher of the Year Award in 2021, he received the International Springer Nature Inclusive Health Research Award in 2023. He was the founding director of the Bruyere Culture Art and Healing Gallery, and he has published several creative nonfiction stories. Dr. Pottie's work embodies a dedication to fostering a diverse and vibrant clinical and research culture that accelerates medical discovery, with a shared vision of positively impacting health and quality of life. He enjoys skating, cycling and surfing.





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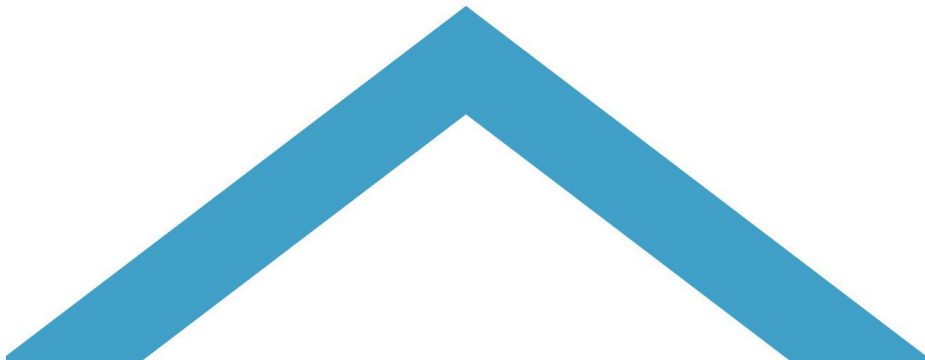

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At Oceans North, we actively work to ensure that fish populations are rebuilt and managed so that they can meet the needs of future generations and increase ecological resilience amid a changing ocean.

To learn more about our work, visit oceansnorth.org.



Thank you.

HEAT Board of directors

Chair	Kevin McNamara
Treasurer	Adrian Hoffman
Secretary	Charlotte Murray
Members at Large	Dena Simon, Mark Krause

Heat Theatre is a not-for-profit society that develops and produces brilliantly theatrical, uniquely Canadian issue driven productions. Heat reaches out with empathy for those issues right into the heart of what it means to be a Nova Scotian today. We are always looking for like-minded souls to join us. admin@heattheatre.com

Donate over \$20 and receive a tax receipt: by check "In Care of Heat Theatre," Theatre Nova Scotia, 1113 Marginal Rd, Halifax, NS B3H 4P7 or Donate Now - THEATRE NOVA SCOTIA (canadahelps.org), #23, Heat Theatre. No tax receipt admin@heattheatre.com

Heat Theatre could not do anything without...

Our funders: Canada Council for the Arts, Arts Nova Scotia, Support4 Culture

Our Sponsors: Memory Lane Heritage Village and Archives, Thea Wilson-Hammond CEO; Mental Health Authority of Nova Scotia; Dr. Kevin Pottie; Robin Webber, Eastern Shore Players; Clearwater Seafoods in Partnership with The Tema Foundation; Baker's Fish Plant; FishSafe Nova Scotia

Company Donors: Dena Simon; Olga Milosevich; Anonymous; Charlotte Murray and Catherine Williams in the name of their mother Ann Murray; Dr Melanie Moore of Mumford Family Dentistry; Canadian Piging Trades Local 56, Craig Foundation

Special thank you to: Curtis Botham; Opening Night Reception Tangier Lobster and Uprooted Café; Playwrights' Atlantic Resource Centre; Canadian Actors' Equity Association and Robert Scott; Theatre Nova Scotia; Charlie DeWolfe and Shahnaz Baha'i; Logan Tanner; Norma Kennedy, Jack Sanders; Garrett Barker/Neptune Theatre; Mark Krause; ImmediaC; Chalmers McAllister/The Deanery Project; Charlotte Wilson-Hammond; Jocelyne Fleury; Geoffrey Wilson-Harrington; Val Traversy, Ginny Mendel, Mike & Yvonne McKinnon, Alan Banks

If you or someone you know needs help with mental health or addictions concerns our team is here to help. Real people Monday - Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm (Tuesdays and Thursdays until 8pm), Voicemail evenings and weekends. 1-855-922-1122

Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Line 1-888-429-8167 available throughout the province - there are trained professionals to listen and assist.

You can also find it at the front of your phonebook, or by dialing **811** or **211**, or text **988** or call **911**

24/7 crisis help line call or text **988**

Kids help phone 24/7. **1 800 668 6868** or text **686868**



Coastal Voices Men's Choir congratulates the **Heat Theatre** team for the birth and fruition of this exciting project. We're proud to be associated with composer **John Plant**.



John has been CVMC's collaborative pianist for many years and has written and arranged for us some magnificent choral pieces. The Eastern Shore is so fortunate to have John sharing his wealth of talents and enthusiasm.

Directed by **Ross Thompson**, our rehearsals are both fun-filled and educational. Why not give the Shore's community men's choir a try? – email: **artisticdirector@coastalvoices.ca**
No previous choral experience necessary.

For more info. on CVMC, our website is: **coastalvoices.ca**



KENT SMITH

MLA, Eastern Shore

kent.smith@novascotia.ca | 902-989-3772



CENTRAL NOVA

SEANFRASER,MP



✉ sean.fraser@parl.gc.ca

www seanfrasermpp.ca

☎ 1-844-641-5886

f /SeanFraserMP

**Congratulations to all involved
in *The Heart of Things!***