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**THEATRE BY THE BAY ANNOUNCES COMMISSION OF CELEBRATED
CANADIAN PLAYWRIGHT, VERN THIESSEN**

BARRIE, ON. Theatre by the Bay (TBTB) is thrilled to announce Governor General's (GG) Award-winning playwright, Vern Thiessen, will be writing a new play for the company's 2023 season. It will be a dramatic look at Barrie's ice industry of the 20th century. TBTB's Artistic Director, Iain Moggach, will direct its world premiere.

As one of Canada's most celebrated playwrights, Thiessen's plays have been produced across Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Asia. He has had plays translated into five different languages and some have been produced Off-Broadway. His award-winning works include *Einstein's Gift* (GG winner), *Lenin's Embalmers* (GG finalist) along with critically acclaimed works *Of Human Bondage*, *Vimy*, *Apple*, and *Shakespeare's Will*.

"I am delighted to be working with TBTB," says Thiessen. "Their commitment to telling stories by and for their community are values I hold dear. I look forward to spending time in Barrie and Simcoe County and working with the local artistic community."

Thiessen's introduction to TBTB was as a guest instructor for the company's Professional Workshop Series, where he taught the fundamentals of playwriting. He also served as a dramaturg for the development of a new TBTB play.

Throughout the development of this new work, Thiessen will collaborate with local historian and playwright, Mary Harris. Harris has written extensively on Barrie's ice industry for her local blog "Remember This?", which is featured regularly on Barrietoday.com.

Thiessen will begin working on the new play in early 2022. The show is set to premiere during Theatre by the Bay's 2023 season.

This commission would not be possible without support from The McGuire Trust and Theatre by the Bay's generous sponsors, members, and donors.

THEATRE BY THE BAY

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