**Mary Vingoe (1955-2025)**

Sadly, with the recent passing of Mary Vingoe – an award-winning playwright, actor, and theatre director - we have lost another giant in the Canadian theatre community.

Born in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia in 1955, Vingoe received her early training at Dalhousie and the University of Toronto Centre for the Study of Drama. In 1979, she became one of the co-founders of Nightwood Theatre, Canada’s oldest professional women’s company, along with Cynthia Grant, Kim Renders, and Maureen White. In addition to creating collective creations with her other collaborators, she also served as Nightwood’s first artistic co-ordinator between 1985-1987*.*

Beyond her work with Nightwood, Vingoe also directed significant early productions of women playwrights, Wendy Lill (*The Glace Bay Miner’s Museum, Messenger),* Colleen Wagner (*Home*) and Catherine Banks (*It is Solved by Walking*.) Later plays of her own that received recognition included *Refuge*, a finalist for the 2016 Governor General’s Award in English-language Drama, and *Some Blow Flutes*, which was nominated for Outstanding New Play by a Nova Scotian at the 2019 Merritt Awards.

Vingoe went on to co-found three more theatres in the Martimes, with a particular mandate for producing work by Atlantic Canadians: the Ship’s Company Theatre in Parrsboro, Nova Scotia with Michael Fuller (1984), the Eastern Front Theatre in Halifax with Wendy Lill and Gay Hauser (1993), and the HomeFirst Theatre in Halifax with Colleen Wagner (2010). She also served as the first artistic director of the Magnetic North Theatre Festival, devoted to promoting Canadian English-language theatre in locations across the country (2002-2007).

While Vingoe is best known for her contributions to the development of new Canadian work, particularly that of women and Atlantic-Canadians, her passion for “cultural cross-pollination” (Nothof) and expressing the full regional and cultural diversity of the country through theatre made her a lifelong creative force at all levels. Along with her fellow Nightwood co-founders, Vingoe was awarded a CATR Honorary Associate in 1996 for her “significant and sustained contribution to Canadian theatre practice.” In 2010 her contributions to Canadian culture and the arts were recognized at the federal level with the Order of Canada

In a Facebook post, her colleague Sarah Garton Stanley, praised her for her “fierce devotion to pursuing what mattered, justice, beauty and respect. Oh. And Truth. She did not suffer fools gladly. ... Basically she got us. And she fought for us. And she created for us. She was a leader of extraordinary breadth, depth, humour, wit, and talent.”

Her light will be missed, but continues to burn on in her many family, colleagues, and friends, including her two children, Kyle VC and Laura Vingoe-Cram whom she shared with her late husband, jazz musician Paul Cram.

Nothof, Anne. “Mary Vingoe.” Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia. Accessed 21 July, 2025. <https://www.canadiantheatre.com/dict.pl?term=Vingoe%2C%20Mary>

“Mary Vingoe.” Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia. Accessed 21 July, 2025. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary\_Vingoe