



# THE LOVE LIST

## MAR. 6 – APR. 10, 2010

By Norm Foster

Starring Peter Anderson, Norm Foster and Cailin Stadnyk

Directed by Max Reimer | A Playhouse Theatre Company production

# PLAY GUIDE

## PART 1: PLAYWRIGHT, GLOSSARY...

CREATED BY THE PLAYHOUSE TEACHERS ADVISORY BOARD (PTAB) AND PLAYHOUSE STAFF

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Created to provide you with explorations and insights into this production beyond the actual performance, this Play Guide includes information on its creators and characters, notable quotables and more:

**Download suggested practical lessons and activities at [vancouverplayhouse.com](http://vancouverplayhouse.com)!** As a teacher, you can adapt these to your classroom activities before or after your performance. As a parent, you can draw on some activities to enhance your child's theatre experience. And, as a patron at large, these activities might stimulate your own exploration or offer a new insight into the play. We hope you have fun playing with the facts and ideas presented!

# THE STORY

What do you get a friend for a 50th birthday present? Well, if you're a guy, you buy him a "love list." Bill is to put pen to paper and come up with a list of ten qualities that define the perfect woman and according to the Gypsy where Leon made this dubious purchase, she will appear. After much collaboration the list is complete and much to their surprise, she appears. Bill's world is turned upside down as he learns more about himself, perfection and the pursuit of happiness.

## SUGGESTED PLAY ACTIVITY [A SAMPLER]

### "CATALYTIC QUOTES FOR QUERY AND QUILL"

**Type:** post-viewing | **Suitability:** grade 10-12+

**Suggested by:** Heather Robbie, David Thompson Secondary, PTAB Member

#### page 7

Leon: You mean to tell me that seventy percent of that dust in the home is comprised of human skin and hair?

Bill: That's right.

Bill: In fact, in the not to distant future, it might be possible to clone someone from their dust particles. |

#### **Activities: Written responses to the following questions:**

1. If you could clone anyone, who would it be? Explain your choice.
2. Should cloning research be paid for by the government or private investors?

FOR A FULL VERSION AND MORE PLAY ACTIVITIES VISIT  
[VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM/ EDUCATION-OUTREACH](http://VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM/ EDUCATION-OUTREACH)

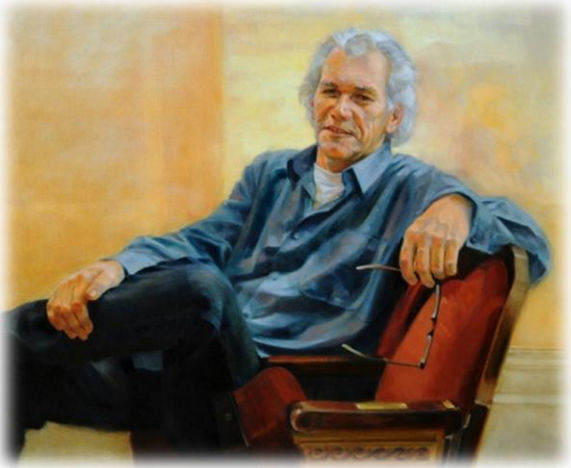
## THE CRITICS SAY...

### *THE LOVE LIST*

*The audience laughs cries and cheers as the characters navigate their way through the labyrinths of love, disillusionment and new understanding.*

**Lake Erie Beacon**

## PLAYWRIGHT: NORM FOSTER



Born in Newmarket, Ontario on St. Valentine's Day. Raised in Toronto, Norm Foster attended West Hill Collegiate Institute and then went on to study Radio & Television Arts at Centennial College in Toronto and then Confederation College in Thunder Bay. Upon completion of his studies, he began a radio career that would span 25 years and which would take him from Thunder Bay to Winnipeg to Kingston and finally to Fredericton, New Brunswick. It was in Fredericton in 1980 that Norm was introduced to the world of theatre.

***A friend of mine was going to audition for a community theatre production of 'Harvey' and he asked me to go along. I went, just for a lark, and I wound up getting the part of Elwood P. Dowd. The funny thing is, I had never even seen a play in my life before this.***

Foster fell in love with the theatre right then and there, and two years later he penned his first professionally produced play, *Sinners*. It was produced by Theatre New Brunswick and directed by **Malcolm Black**, who would also direct Foster's next effort, the highly successful, *The Melville Boys*. *The Melville Boys* would go on to be produced across Canada and in the United States, including a well-received run off-Broadway in New York. It would become Foster's signature play, and the one which would bring his name to the forefront of Canadian theatre. Since then, Norm Foster has produced an astonishing output of work. Nearly forty plays in all, including *The Affections of May*, the most produced play in Canada in 1991. He has also written a musical with composer Leslie Arden (*The Last Resort*) and four musicals (*Jasper Station*, *Race Day*, *Sitting Pretty* & *One Moment*.) with composer Steve Thomas.

Says Foster, ***"I write for about three or four hours each day. I mean, if you can turn out even one page per day, it doesn't take long before you've got a ninety page script. Another important thing is, you have to know when to stop writing. Know when your play is finished. One of the curses of being a playwright is that you're never ever completely satisfied with your finished product. There is always that one line which you think you could improve. And when you improve that line, you find another. You must know when to stop."***

Foster's plays are known mainly for their comedic qualities, but they are not without their serious moments as well. ***"I find it far more satisfying if I can make an audience laugh and feel a little heartache within the same story. The farces (Sinners, Self-Help) are a lot of fun to write but it's the stories that touch an audience's heart as well as it's funnybone that are the most rewarding."***

Norm Foster does not limit his efforts to writing though. Lately, he has returned to what brought him to the theatre in the first place; acting. ***"Acting is great fun, but writing is my first love. A lot of people out there like the 'idea' of being a writer. The romance of it. The notion that we all sit around in cafes and talk about our writing with other writers. Personally, I would rather do it than talk about it. The actual process of writing is what excites me. Creating a world from the ground up and populating it with characters I've pulled out of my head. This is why I rarely set my plays in real cities with place names we recognize. I want the audience to imagine these locations right along with me."***

When asked to try and pin down a common theme that runs through his plays, Foster says he's not sure. ***"I think for the most part, they're about ordinary people just trying to get by in life. I never set out with a monumental purpose in mind. I'm not trying to teach an audience a lesson or pass along some profound message, because I don't think I'm qualified. What I am trying to do is make them feel a little better about this world, and that's not easy these days."***

# CHRONOLOGY OF PLAYS BY CANADA'S MOST PRODUCED PLAYWRIGHT, **NORM FOSTER**, AND THEIR FIRST PRODUCTIONS

**UNDER THE BRIGHT SUN** (one act) | Lunchbox Theatre, Calgary, AB, 2009

**SKIN FLICK** | Neptune Theatre, Halifax, NS, 2009

**THE CHRISTMAS TREE** (one act) | Lunchbox Theatre, Calgary, AB, 2008

**BOB'S YOUR ELF** | Upper Canada Playhouse, Morrisburg, ON, 2008

**OLD LOVE** | Lighthouse Festival Theatre, Port Dover, ON, 2008

**ONE MOMENT** (with Steve Thomas) | Theatre Orangeville, Orangeville, ON, 2007

**THE DEATH OF ME** (one act) | Lunchbox Theatre, Calgary, AB, 2007

**MENDING FENCES** | Theatre in Port, Port Dalhousie, ON, 2006

**MY NARRATOR** (one act) | Lunchbox Theatre, Calgary, AB, 2006

**JENNY'S HOUSE OF JOY** | Lighthouse Festival Theatre, Port Dover, ON, 2006

**BEDTIME STORIES** | Theatre Orangeville, Orangeville, ON, 2006

**LOOKING** | Victoria Playhouse, Petrolia, ON, 2005

**SITTING PRETTY** (with Steve Thomas) | Lighthouse Festival Theatre, Port Dover, ON, 2005

**OUTLAW** | Theatre Orangeville, Orangeville, ON, 2004

**THE LOVE LIST** | Thousand Islands Playhouse, Gananoque, ON, 2003

**STORM WARNING** | Bluewater Summer Playhouse, Kincardine, ON, 2003

**DEAR SANTA** | Theatre Orangeville, Orangeville, ON, 2002

**RACE DAY** (with Steve Thomas) | Theatre-on-the-Grand, Fergus, ON, 2002

**SELF-HELP** | Theatre Aquarius, Hamilton, ON, 2002 (Directed by Max Reimer)

**KISS THE MOON, KISS THE SUN** | Theatre Orangeville, Orangeville, ON, 2001

**JASPER STATION** (with Steve Thomas) | Theatre-on-the-Grand, Fergus, ON, 2001

**SMALL TIME** | Theatre-on-the-Grand, Fergus, ON, 2000

**MAGGIE'S GETTING MARRIED** | Theatre-on-the-Grand, Fergus, ON, 2000

**SADIE FLYNN COMES TO BIG OAK** | Festival Antigonish, Antigonish, NS, 2000

# NORM FOSTER CHRONOLOGY (CONT'D)

**ETHAN CLAYMORE** | Grand Theatre, London, ON, 1998

**DRINKING ALONE** | Festival Antigonish, Antigonish, NS, 1998

**THE FOURSOME** | Theatre on the Grand, Fergus, ON, 1998

**A FOGGY DAY** (with John Mueller) | The Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, 1998

**THE LAST RESORT** (with Leslie Arden) | Thousand Islands Playhouse, Gananoque/Theatre Orangeville, Orangeville, ON, 1997

**HERE ON THE FLIGHT PATH** | Piggery Theatre, North Hatley, QC, 1997

**JUPITER IN JULY** | Theatre Aquarius, Hamilton, ON, 1997

**OFFICE HOURS** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1997

**THE LONG WEEKEND** | Festival Antigonish, Antigonish, NS, 1994

**NED DURANGO COMES TO BIG OAK** | Grand Theatre, London, ON, 1994

**LOUIS & DAVE** (one act) | Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary, AB, 1994

**THE SITTER** (one act) | Lunchbox Theatre, Calgary, AB, 1994

**WRONG FOR EACH OTHER** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1993

**THE MOTOR TRADE** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1991

**THE AFFECTIONS OF MAY** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1990

**OPENING NIGHT** | Piggery Theatre, North Hatley, QC, 1989

**BRAVADO** | Magnus Theatre, Thunder Bay, ON, 1988

**MY DARLING JUDITH** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1987

**WINDFALL** | Theatre Plus, Toronto, ON, 1986

**THE MELVILLE BOYS** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1984

**SINNERS** | Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, 1983

**References:** [normfooster.com](http://normfooster.com)

**THE CRITICS SAY...**

***THE LOVE LIST***

*The best script he's delivered to date.*

**Contra Costa Times**

# GLOSSARY



## Amish

An orthodox Anabaptist sect that developed in Switzerland and the Alsace in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Old Order

Amish Mennonite Church is mainly active in Pennsylvania and Ohio. It's members are pacifists, wear modest, plain dress, and reject most of modern technology.

## Armani

Giorgio Armani S.P.A. is an Italian fashion house that is synonymous with haute couture, though it also designs and retails ready-to-wear fashions.



## Yul Brynner

Jul. 11, 1920-Oct. 10, 1985

A Russian-born stage and film actor, Yul Brynner began his career in a French circus. He was best known for his roles in

*The King and I*, *The Ten Commandments*, and *The Magnificent Seven*.

## Central limit theorem

A probability theorem in statistics that states that the distribution of sample means taken from a large population will approach a normal distribution regardless of the distribution of the independent variables themselves.

## Correlation coefficients

Statistical measure of the degree to which the movements of two variables are related.



## Cruella

Cruella de Vil is the main villain in the novel *The Hundred and One Dalmatians* and the subsequent Disney animation film and live-action adaptations. She kidnaps Dalmatian puppies for their fur.

## Albert Einstein

Mar. 14, 1879-Apr. 18, 1955

Albert Einstein was a Nobel Prize-winning physicist, known for his theory of relativity. In 1905, Einstein – while working as a clerk in a patent office – made three major contributions to physics: the explanation of Brownian motion in terms of molecules; the explanation of the photoelectric effect in terms of the quantum; and the special theory of relativity that links time to space and energy to matter.



## Dr. Frankenstein

Victor Frankenstein is the protagonist of Mary Shelley's 1818 novel *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. A scientist who is obsessed with creating life through artificial means, he assembles a humanoid creature

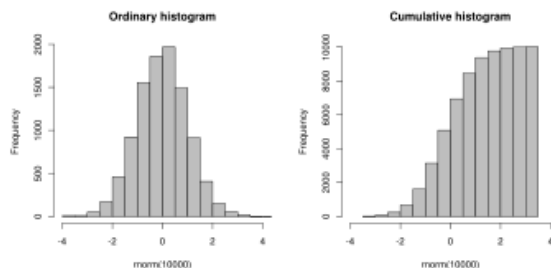
and animates it. When he rejects his creation, the monster embarks on a path of vengeance.

## Globalization

The process by which everyday experiences are becoming standardized around the world through the diffusion of commodities and ideas. Globalization has resulted in the economies of nations around the world becoming increasingly integrated.

## Histogram

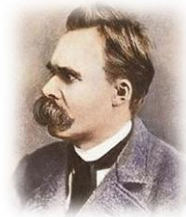
A bar graph that uses the width of the bars to represent the various classes and the height of the bars to represent their relative frequencies.



# GLOSSARY (CONT'D)

## Multivariate analysis

A statistical procedure used in market research where more than one variable is analyzed at the same time.



## Nietzsche

Oct. 15, 1844-Aug. 25, 1900  
Friedrich Nietzsche was a Swiss philosopher and writer who was concerned with the origin and function of values in human life. One of the most influential modern thinkers, Nietzsche's

philosophies influenced National Socialism, though his "Superman" was not an Aryan hero, but an individual who rose above bourgeois Western morality.

## Pedantic

Marked by a narrow focus on or display of learning especially its trivial aspects, a pedant is someone who is overly concerned with formal rules and precision and makes an ostentatious display of learning.

## Plagiarist

Someone who copies ideas or words from another individual and presents them as their own.

## Schizophrenic

Schizophrenia is a psychotic disorder marked by impaired thinking, emotions and behaviours. It is characterized by positive symptoms such as hallucinations, paranoid delusions; negative symptoms such as flat affect, lack of motivation and energy; and disorganized symptoms such as confused speech and repetitive movements.



## Tennyson

(August 6, 1809-October 6, 1892)

Alfred Tennyson, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Tennyson, was the leading English poet of the Victorian age. He was named Poet Laureate of England in 1850. The death of his friend Arthur Hallam inspired the

elegy *In Memoriam*; he dedicated *The Idylls of the King*, a series of linked narrative poems about King Arthur and the Round Table, to Albert, the Prince Consort.

## Victoria's Secret

An American retailer of women's wear, lingerie and beauty products, Victoria's Secret is famous for its fashion shows and catalogues featuring top models.

## Westworld

A 1973 novel about a high-tech amusement park where patrons act out their fantasies with lifelike robots; at least until the main computer fails, and the robots take control.

**THE CRITICS SAY...**

***THE LOVE LIST***

*Sharp, snappy and irresistibly funny.*  
Contra Costa Times

# ABOUT THE COMPANY

The Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company is British Columbia's premier regional theatre company, producing engaging plays of the highest calibre since 1962. Our mandate, as it has evolved with the region's cultural needs, is to be a vital cultural leader in the theatre ecology, describing and shaping our community's perspectives by engaging a wider audience in significant theatre experiences. Our repertoire is contemporary and classic, Canadian and international, reaching deep into our community, across our country and beyond.

We ask that you note the following guidelines to help keep the theatre experience an enjoyable one for all.

## THEATRE ETIQUETTE FOR ALL AGES

### **Thou shalt not arrive late.**

This is an insult to performers and annoying to those on time.

### **Thou shall sit in an assigned seat.**

When in doubt, speak with an usher or refer to your admission ticket.

### **Thou shalt not talk during the performance.**

You're not at home watching television.

### **Thou shalt not rattle candy wrappers.**

Sound effects for this production have been chosen by the designers.

### **Thou shalt not "sing along" with the performers.**

Save that for after the show.

### **Thou shalt not consume food or drinks inside the auditorium.**

Performers can hear you just as much as you can hear them.

### **Thou shalt not place feet on the seat in front, or tap out a rhythm.**

The back of the seat in front does not belong to you.

### **Thou shalt not go "to and fro" from thy seat during the performance.**

This disrupts the show for everyone.

### **Thou shall turn off all that goes beep, ring or buzz.**

Accompaniment provided by orchestra only.

### **Thou shall turn off all texting devices.**

We love to twitter, facebook or blog, too, but save it for before or after the performance.

[VISIT VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM/BLOG](http://VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM/BLOG)  
[BEFORE OR AFTER THE PERFORMANCE]

## THE CRITICS SAY...

### *THE LOVE LIST*

*If you want to laugh yourself silly, The Love List is for you.*

Hamilton Spector

# PLAYHOUSE EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

**PRODUCTION CENTRE TOURS** As a group, you can book a complimentary guided tour of the 25,000 square foot Production Centre and explore scenery and prop shops, the wardrobe department and rehearsal halls. We recently moved into a new facility on East 2nd Ave., which will be our home until 2011. **Call 604 637 3094.**

**E-STAGE: PLAYHOUSE YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS 2010** High school students from across British Columbia collaborate with professional directors and playwrights to develop an eight-minute scene, which is then performed by professional actors on the Playhouse stage. 2010 submission deadline is December 1, 2009. Email submissions are preferred. **Contact Meredith Elliott at 604 629 2097 or [melliott@vancouverplayhouse.com](mailto:melliott@vancouverplayhouse.com).**

**TALKBACKS** An excellent way to enhance your experience as actors return to stage to offer insights on the show and their work. Select Monday and Tuesday evening performances. ***The Love List*: Mar. 29 and Apr. 6, 2010.**

**SALON SATURDAY** Informative and fun, Salon Saturday is presented in the Playhouse Salon at 1pm (show at 2pm). This series brings the audience together with a notable speaker to explore some of the underlying themes of the play that follows. Held on the third Saturday of each production. ***The Love List*: Apr. 3, 2010.**

**PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN MATINEE** This matinee is instrumental in bringing live, professional theatre to everyone in our community regardless of income level. ***The Love List*: Mar. 27, 2010.**

**RUSH TICKETS** Available 15 minutes before show time and subject to availability, rush tickets are only \$20 for regular performances and \$30 for the season's musical (*Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*).

**PREVIEWS** Be the first! We stage four preview performances (not yet media-reviewed), which offer dramatic savings on regular tickets (preview tickets: \$30-38). ***The Love List*: Mar. 6, 8, 9, 10, 2010.**

**TEA MATINEES** These lively, social matinees are extremely popular with our audiences (especially seniors and students) and provide a unique afternoon theatre experience. Complimentary tea, coffee and biscuits are served at 1pm, show at 2pm. ***The Love List*: Mar. 31, Apr. 7 and 8, 2010.**

**RENTALS** In addition to our own production work, we share our rehearsal halls, production workshops and props and costume inventory with the community as a whole, providing badly needed resources to other arts organizations and community groups that otherwise wouldn't have access to a venue, shop space or heavily subsidized props and costume rentals. **Call 604 872 6622. Rehearsal: x 224. Prop: x 250. Costume: x 320.**

## VISIT VANCOUVERPLAYHOUSE.COM

We welcome your feedback and questions regarding our Play Guides!

You can also request a copy of a script (for educational purposes).

Contact: Stasa Andric at **604 637 3094** / [sandric@vancouverplayhouse.com](mailto:sandric@vancouverplayhouse.com)  
or Meredith Elliott at **604 629 2097** / [melliott@vancouverplayhouse.com](mailto:melliott@vancouverplayhouse.com).

**SEE YOU AT THE PLAYHOUSE!**