

Vincent de Tourdonnet
Musical Theatre Writer/Director

Press excerpts- 2005-1985

Pélagie

Two Planks and a Passion 2005 Atlantic Canada Tour

... recalls *Les Misérables* in its operatic style and epic proportions ... *Pélagie* is a major achievement in Canadian musical theatre... this time de Tourdonnet is directing with Cole as musical director. Their passion and understanding for a piece they've worked on for seven years comes through... One is left to reflect on the sad canvas of human history with all its lost and displaced families, and yet to marvel at the survival of the Acadian culture.

Halifax Herald-Chronicle, 8 Sept. 2005

The musical drama *Pélagie* seduced the public at the Capitol Theatre in Moncton... I find it incredible... it is so well staged... Funny and sad at the same time ... lively direction that illustrates the coastal wanderings of this group of Acadians who departed from the south to get back north.

Translated from the French

Acadie Nouvelle, Moncton Sept. 16, 2005

Pélagie

CanStage/National Arts Centre, 2004

It takes some kind of a musical to get Torontonians weeping for Acadia...*Pélagie*, the high-risk musical ...received a standing ovation ...large, soaring melodies... genuine dramatic tension ...echoes of *Les Miz*... This project has been six years in the making, and it has been realized with admirable courage, flair and occasional brilliance... by the time *Pélagie* comes home, there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Ray Conlogue, *The Globe & Mail*, April 10, 2004

I was swept away... This ends up being a musical history lesson which actually works... excellent! Cole's music echoes Steven Sondheim's, highly dramatic... I thought it was wonderful.

Alvina Ruprecht, *CBC Radio Ottawa Morning*- May 17, 2004

An original musical about a difficult chapter in Canadian history... The book and lyrics are salty and unconventional.... This production bursts with craft, smarts and wit.

Alex Bozicovic, *Eye Magazine*, April 15, 2004

Allen Cole and Vincent de Tourdonnet have successfully captured the verve and humour...filled with warmth, humour and charm...Cole's music is rousing and de Tourdonnet's lyrics effectively tell the tale... a fitting tribute to these brave survivors.

Catherine Lawson, *The Ottawa Citizen*, May 15, 2004

While this is a musical it is not in the Broadway tradition... It is thoroughly engrossing and powerful.... well worth seeing.

AM740 April 8, 2004

Snappy Tales

Book, Lyrics & Direction: Factory Theatre- June 7-23, 2002

"Surprising and happily ridiculous, a cabaret-styled evening of quirky satirical musicals ... highly creative and broadly entertaining..... a delightfully sharp look at moral righteousness... smart, tightly constructed, finely executed ...Snappy Tales is a whimsical evening that stages a different kind of musical question."

Rebecca Caldwell, *THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, June 10, 2002

"Musical theatre is alive and well in the hands of Vincent de Tourdonnet... there is a lot of inventive and diverse elements in the marriage of words and music. As well, de Tourdonnet has directed cleanly, simply and effectively, with some excellent mime work.... The fusion works brilliantly."

Paula Citron, *CLASSICAL 96.3 FM* June 14, 2002,

"a quartet of musicals with a social conscience... clever directing by de Tourdonnet and a super cast, the evening is a delight."

Jon Kaplan, *NOW MAGAZINE*, June 13 & June 20, 2002

Pélagie– 5th workshop reading

Canadian Stage Theatre, June 8, 2001

Book & Lyrics, Vincent de Tourdonnet, Book & Music, Allen Cole

"I was privileged to attend a workshop production of Pélagie.... The show sports a combination of heart and craft unlike anything I've experienced in a Canadian musical...." Gord McLaughlin, *The National Post*, June 23, 2001

Jeanne, the Joan of Arc Musical- 1997

Book & Lyrics by Vincent de Tourdonnet, Music by Peter Sipos
Feb-Mar '97 at *Place des Arts*, Montreal April '97, *La Capitale*, Quebec City

“Saints be praised...the lyrics and original book by Vincent de Tourdonnet tell the tale of love, valour and historical inevitability in a thought-provoking fashion... this ambitious, sweeping epic is as good as most of what Broadway has to offer.”

Pat Donnelly, *The Montreal Gazette*, Feb. 14 1997

“Jeanne la Pucelle leaps off the stage! Grandiose... faithfully respects the chronology of this enormous page from history... the show is touching and fascinating... with its political connotations, its winks at contemporary issues, history becomes more than a look at the past... impeccable, classic and efficient.”

Manon Guilbert, *Le Journal de Montréal*, 13 February 1997 (from the French)

“Jeanne la Pucelle triumphantly takes Quebec City! The public adores it... the dichotomy of the piece is brilliantly unveiled... Jeanne d’Arc is glorious subject, but a delicate one... remarkable how this piece manages to maintain the spectator’s interest without fail... It’s not only Jeanne’s victories that are miraculous here!”

Régis Tremblay, *Le Soleil*, 19 Avril 1997 (from the French)

“Jeanne la Pucelle actually works... act of sheer chutzpah... the depiction of the church, the determination of the English, and the deep faith of the French in their unlikely heroine infuses Jeanne la Pucelle with a vigour and commitment that bodes well for its future development.”

Mira Friedlander- *Variety*, (New York) February 24, 1997

Jeanne, the Joan of Arc Musical- 1995

Co-direction, Book & Lyrics by Vincent de Tourdonnet, Music by Peter Sipos

"Attempts to horn in on the megamusical market have been, until now, disastrous...Enter Jeanne... a surprisingly charming and sellable musical... The best thing that the show has going for it is that it has avoided the megamusical trap of taking itself too seriously. It is just dramatic enough to be emotionally moving, and just comic enough to relax the audience without slipping into self-parody..."

Ray Conlogue- *The Globe and Mail* - May 1 '95

Strange Medicine

Caravan Farm Theatre, 1990, Directed by Nick Hutchinson
Book & Lyrics by Vincent de Tourdonnet, Music by Allen
Cole

"Strange Medicine... is a wildly original musical with a great score, a challenging and funny script... the episodic structure of the script works... funny, scary and resonant"

Colin Thomas - The Georgia Straight (Vancouver) Aug. 3 1990

"Strange Medicine ..is a fascinating piece of work... dark satire of the medical profession filtered through the Brechtian sensibilities of writer de Tourdonnet... his clever lyrics linked to Allen Cole's sprightly mixture of tangos, mock opera and cabaret jazz... the play's style is European... it worked very well with the audience... a crowd pleaser "

Liam Lacey - The Globe and Mail - July 25 1990

"Why do people go to the theatre?... Strange Medicine answers the need for entertainment, music, thought-provoking satire and humour which draws audiences to live theatre in the first place." *Judy Reimche The Morning Star - July 29 1990*

Adaptation of Brecht's **Threepenny Opera**

Lyrics and text: Vincent de Tourdonnet

Touchstone Theatre, Vancouver B.C., Feb-Mar 1988

" The shades of truth that come from this adaptation make Threepenny Opera seem like today's brilliant satire rather than yesterday's hallowed classic."

Stephen Godfrey - The Globe and Mail - March 5, 1988

"It's more of a transformation of the Threepenny Opera... a lot of it's strength lies in the fact that it's beautifully written."

Marion Frazer CBC Radio - State of the Arts

"They've adapted it and they've adapted it brilliantly... a wonderful production of a brilliant play.

Jerry Wasserman CBC A.M. - Afternoon Show

"de Tourdonnet is both satirical and clever... his lyrics work against Weill's melodies to make you listen, he is eloquent."

Kerry Moore - *The Vancouver Province*

Adaptation of Brecht's **The Good Woman of Szechwan**

Lyrics: Vincent de Tourdonnet

The Caravan Farm Theatre, B.C. Jul.-Aug. 1989

"Vincent de Tourdonnet's lyrics, set to J.S. Dodd's music, have the bittersweet carnival gaiety of the Brecht-Weill collaborations."

Liam Lacey- *The Globe and Mail* - August 1987

Adaptation of Brecht's **Threepenny Opera**

Production, Lyrics and text: Vincent de Tourdonnet

detour/APA, McGill Morris Hall Theatre, Jul.-Aug. '85

"The initiative belongs to Vincent de Tourdonnet... not content to rest on his laurels... he wrote an adaptation of the THREEPENNY OPERA as his honours thesis at McGill...he obtained a grant to sponsor this production... it's astonishingly good..."

Kati Vita *CBC Radio* July, 1985

"The brilliantly inventive version... is a totally unexpected and unqualified success which has been playing to packed houses... off-beat, imaginative theatre."

Myron Galloway *The Montreal Suburban*, July 1985