

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## PAINTER DIES MYSTERIOUS DEATH: ALGONQUIN PARK 1917

**Prince Edward County, ON, (June 19, 2009):** So went the headlines in the local papers when the body of Tom Thomson, iconic Canadian painter, was found floating in Canoe Lake. Thomson's life and mysterious death are the subject of *Colours in the Storm*, billed by playwright Jim Betts as "A Gallery of Scenes and Songs on the Life of Tom Thomson". Visit with the playwright at the final installment of the Festival Players Playwrights Reading Series on **Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup> at 2pm**, upstairs at **Books & Company** in **Picton**.

The Playwrights Reading Series offers an excellent opportunity to learn a bit more about the writer, his subject and the process of creating a theatrical work. Thomson, a pre-'Group of Seven' painter, left behind many paintings but little else to put together the picture of the man. His obsession with perfection, his bumbling attempts at romance, his tall tales and survival skills - they're all pieces in the puzzle that Betts has put together for us to enjoy.

Betts is an Ontario-based playwright, composer and producer, well known for his work in musical theatre and young people's theatre. His work has been produced at the Stratford Festival, Charlottetown Festival, and Young People's Theatre where he was a mainstay for nearly a decade. For this last, he created many shows including the enormously popular *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang* with Mordecai Richler, Dennis Lee and Philip Balsam in 1984. He won the Chalmers Award three times and the Dora Mavor Moore Award. At the playwrights reading, he will address this topic and also regale with stories of his trajectory through decades of Canadian theatre.

*Colours in the Storm* plays in the barn at Fields on West Lake near Bloomfield, August 6 – 21.

Admission to the Playwrights Reading Series is free. Light refreshments available. A Q&A will follow readings and songs from playwright Jim Betts.

For more information: 613.399.5677 or [www.festivalplayers.ca](http://www.festivalplayers.ca)

**Playwrights Reading Series Sunday June 28th at 2pm**  
**With *Colours in the Storm* playwright Jim Betts**  
**Upstairs at Books & Company, 289 Main Street, Picton**

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