

Map of tobacco country and some of the places in our show.



Artword Theatre's first season in Hamilton four great shows:

You Are What You Do, a musical play by Ronald Weihs about working people with the Artword Theatre Ensemble in October/December 2008

Rascals and Numskulls, a new show by Ronald Weihs about Robert Land, Hamilton's first white settler, a Loyalist during the American Revolution – music, dance, battles, laughs, tears, and history (February 2009)

Sunamabeach, a new show by Charly Chiarelli – Hamilton's favourite irreverent North-Ender, back for a sold-out run in March

and our current show ***Tobacco Troubadour***.

What will Artword do next?

We're still working on our plans. Stay tuned for our 2009-2010 Hamilton season.

Get on our email list (sign up in the book on the green stand), so we can keep you posted.

Or send us an email to artword@artword.net, or call our office 905-548-0341

Artword Theatre's new production

Tobacco Troubadour

a new play about growing up in tobacco country and its lively dance hall scene



photos of our rehearsals



**based on the songs of J.P. Riemens
script and direction by Ronald Weihs
design by Judith Sandiford**

**performed by the Artword Theatre Ensemble
music performed by J.P. Riemens and The Barflies**

April 15 to 26, 2009

Wed Apr 15 at 7:30 pm: SPECIAL all tickets \$10
Apr 16-19 Thur, Fri & Sat at 7:30 pm, Sun at 2:00 pm: \$20 reg / \$15 std/sen
Apr 23-26 Thur, Fri & Sat at 7:30 pm, Sun at 2:00 pm: \$20 reg / \$15 std/sen

Call Artword 905-548-0341 www.artword.net

Artword @ The Pearl, 16 Steven Street, Hamilton

Artword Theatre: Office: 166 Prospect Street S., Hamilton ON L8M 2Z4
905-543-8512 email: artword@artword.net **www.artword.net**

at The Pearl Company, 16 Steven Street @ King William Info: 905-524-0606
For event schedule updates, visit: **www.thepearlcompany.ca**

Director's Statement: How "Tobacco Troubadour" came to be

I first heard J. P. Riemens and The Barflies at a concert at The Pearl, just shortly after Judith Sandiford and I arrived in Hamilton. Two things about the band impressed me: the endlessly inventive guitar work of Brian Griffith and the evocative songwriting of Paul. Riemens. The lyrics would slip out easily, just like someone talking, and then a phrase would sneak around and hit you in the back of the head with its aptness and – dare I say? – beauty.

I thought "these songs would be terrific in a play". And that's not as common as one might think. There are many excellent songs that are not particularly suited to theatre. They tell too much story, or they don't tell any, or they go on and on with "baby, baby" and so on. But Paul's little pieces of crystallized observation and wisdom were perfect. So I phoned him up and introduced myself.

It was Paul who suggested that we do a play set in tobacco country, built around Roosevelt's Dance Hall in Cultus. Cultus is a crossroads a couple of miles west of Port Rowan. There were some songs that he had been saving, not recording them, waiting for something like this to come along. One of them was "Roosevelt's Dance Hall Saturday Night".

Judith and I went over to Grant Avenue Studio. He turned on his recording equipment and talked for two hours about growing up as a "bunkhouse baby" in tobacco country, and about how tobacco was picked in the old days. He burned a CD and gave it to me. The narrative portions of the play are taken from this interview.

But what was the plot going to be? I listened to the songs over and over, and they seemed to be fitting together into a story – a story about loving a woman who is just out of reach. One of Paul's songs is "Untouchable": "Don't you try to break my heart. I can do it by myself." And then there was "Bonnie", a song about a young girl who is too big for a small town.

So what we ended up with was a story that was a little bit of all these things, and not any. The young man in the play is called "Paul", and his circumstances are similar to J.P.'s. There never was a girl called Emily, but Paul assures me that there were girls like Emily.

Paul has a song called "Troubadour": "I'll sleep on your floor, like an old troubadour", says the song. A troubadour is a minstrel from the Middle Ages. He would travel around, something like a wandering knight, with a lute slung over his saddle, singing – like Alan-a-Dale in Robin Hood. The troubadour owed allegiance to his "mistress", who inspired his art.

So there it is – we mixed all these ingredients together into Tobacco Troubadour. And now you know all our secrets.

Ronald Weihs, Artword Theatre, April 2009

Artword Cultural Projects is a not-for-profit corporation that is designed to focus the activities of Artword Theatre and Artword Gallery in developing new projects. Artword Cultural Projects encourages, fosters and presents new work, and new interpretations of existing work, in theatre, dance, music, visual art and multimedia. We create art that provides a critical view of contemporary life, makes use of a range of art forms (music, dance, visual art, multimedia), reflects the diversity of the modern world, and honours the human spirit. The company was incorporated federally on December 8, 2006.

Board of Directors: Don Cullen, Frank McBryan, Saikou Saho, Debbie Wilson

Artistic Director: Ronald Weihs **Managing Director:** Judith Sandiford

Artword Theatre was founded by Ronald Weihs and Judith Sandiford in 1993 to develop and foster works of theatre. From 1993 to 2006, we also operated a performance facility on Portland Street in Toronto. In 2007 Artword Theatre expanded its operations to Hamilton. For more about Artword, visit www.artword.net (email artword@artword.net)

About Artword Theatre

Artword Theatre, the creative team of director Ronald Weihs and designer Judith Sandiford, has been producing original theatre since 1993. Until 2006, Weihs and Sandiford operated a facility (Artword Theatre and Artword Gallery) in downtown Toronto, when their theatre was closed to make way for a condo.

Artword Theatre, after 12 years in downtown Toronto, has moved to Hamilton, where it is joining forces with Hamilton's premier alternative arts venue, The Pearl Company, 16 Steven Street. Together, they have remodelled the second floor into a versatile performance space, "Artword @ The Pearl". With this base, Artword Theatre has been developing an acting and performance ensemble in Hamilton and launching a theatre season.

About The Pearl Company

The Pearl Company is an arts and performance facility owned by guitarist and composer Gary Santucci and arts activist Barbara Milne, located at 16 Steven Street in the heart of the Landsdale neighbourhood of downtown Hamilton. Renovated in 2006, the facility has devoted two of its three floors to the arts. In the past two years, The Pearl Company arts initiatives include the well-known Art Bus two Fridays a month, the Opus Mundi Festival, theatre workshops and productions, concerts and events and two outdoor festivals.

For more information visit the website: www.thepearlcompany.ca 905-524-0606

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Judith Sandiford (designer, producer) is managing director of Artword Theatre. She has worked on all productions, concerts and events produced by Artword Theatre from 1993 to the present. She has functioned as producer, graphic artist, lighting designer, technician, scenic painter and stage manager. As designer, she has done set and some lighting design for *Market of Tales* (2005) *Fate of a Cockroach* (April 2005) *The Full Nelson* (February 2005), *Death and the Kings Horseman* (2004), *Sur* (2003), the musical *Toronto The Good* (2002), *Cu'Fu?* (1996-2002), *Mangiacake!* (2001-2002), *Whoever You Are* (1998), *Echo and Narcissus* (1997), *Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde* (1996), and *me²* (1995). She has also designed *Fire, Air, Earth, Water* (2002 and 2004) and *Onibaba* (2002), collaborations with choreographer/ dancer Meiko Ando, at Artword. Recently she wrote the script for Artword's project *Ghost Ship* (2007), based on the Senegalese migrations to Europe. She did lighting design for *If Cows Could Fly* (2008) *You Are What You Do* (2008) and *Rascals and Numskulls* (2009).



Ronald Weihs (playwright, director) Artistic Director of Artword Theatre, is a playwright and director. His work prior to Artword includes: *Moirá*, University of Toronto, *Hands Up: The Bill Miner Story* (1977) for Caravan Stage Company, *Highball!*, for Touchstone Theatre and Island Stage Theatrical Company (1980 & 1981), *The Wobbly* with George Luscombe (1982 and 1983) for Toronto Workshop Productions. In 1983, *Hands Up!* was remounted, directed by Richard Pochinko. In 1985, he directed *Ida Carnevale in Temptonga*, at Expo '86 Vancouver, remounted in Toronto in 1987. His clown musical, *The Beavers*, was produced in 1987 by Theatre Resource Centre, directed by Richard Pochinko, and in 1990 by Native Earth and Theatre Resource Centre, directed by Tomson Highway. In 1993, together with his partner Judith Sandiford, he founded Artword Theatre. Productions written and directed for Artword include *Mama Says You Are What You Do* (1994), *me²* (1994), *Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde* (1995), *Echo and Narcissus* (1996), *Whoever You Are* (1997), Charly Chiarelli's two Sicilian plays, *Cu'Fu* (1999, 2001) and *Mangiacake* (2001, 2002), Allan Merovitz's *If Cows Could Fly* (2000, 2001, 2008), the musical *Toronto The Good* (2002), and *Sur*, an adaptation of a story by Ursula K. LeGuin (2003). From 2004 to 2006, as AfriCan Theatre Ensemble's Resident Director, he directed their productions of *Death and the Kings Horseman* by Wole Soyinka (May 2004), Donald Carr's *The Full Nelson* (February 2005), Tawfik al-Hakim's comedy *Fate of a Cockroach* (April 2005), and directed and dramaturged *Market of Tales* (November 2005). His play *The Gambler*, based on Dostoevsky's novel, was mounted by Beggarly Theatre and Alianak Productions at Artword in 2006, directed by Molly Thom. In 2007 he directed *Ghost Ship*, Artword's production about Senegalese migrations to Spain. In 2008, after a remount of *If Cows Could Fly* in Ottawa, he launched Artword's season in Hamilton with a remount of his play *You Are What You Do*. In 2009 he wrote and directed a new play *Rascals and Numskulls*, based on Hamilton's first white settler Robert Land. He has just completed directing Charly Chiarelli's new show *Sunamabeach*, and a new show *Tobacco Troubadour*, based on songs by Hamilton musician J.P. Riemens for April. As Ron the Fiddler, he is enjoying getting his bowing arm back in shape.



Artword Theatre's new theatrical production

Tobacco Troubadour

based on the songs of J.P. Riemens
script and direction by Ronald Weihs
design by Judith Sandiford

performed by the Artword Theatre Ensemble:
Paula Grove, Tanis MacArthur,
Gordon Odegaard, Ryan Sero

music performed by J.P. Riemens and The Barflies:
J. P. Riemens (lead vocals and guitar), Brian Griffith (lead guitar),
Carrie Ashworth (bass), Lindo Duemo (drums)
with backup vocals by Paula Grove

Movement: Tanis MacArthur
Lighting and set design by Judith Sandiford
Costume: Judith Sandiford
Costume for "Bonnie" dance Tanis MacArthur
Multi-media: Ronald Weihs
Assistant to director: Val Kay
Marketing and promotion by Andrew Amoah
Produced by Artword Theatre

The show runs approximately 2 hours with a 15-minute intermission.

The Songs: words and music by J.P. Riemens

Act One:	Act Two:
<i>It Ain't Right</i>	<i>Dover Girl</i>
<i>Roosevelt's Dance Hall Saturday Night</i>	<i>Roosevelt's Dance Hall (Reprise)</i>
<i>Northern Girl</i>	<i>Piece of Heaven</i>
<i>Southern Ontario Sunset</i>	<i>Holly</i>
<i>Loser</i>	<i>Blue Martini</i>
<i>Untouchable</i>	<i>Already Over You</i>
<i>Peg o my Heart</i>	<i>Bonnie</i>
<i>Get up and Dance</i>	<i>Troubadour</i>

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production supported by the



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Artword Theatre thanks: Barbara Milne and Gary Santucci at The Pearl Company,
Copy Dog Print Services, The Zine.

Biographies: J.P. Riemens and the Barflies

J.P. (Paul) Riemens (composer/songwriter, music director) is a singer-songwriter who lives in the small town of Harley, Ontario. As a recording artist and performer, Riemens has recorded seven albums of original material and performs over 150 live shows a year. As co-owner of the famed Grant Avenue Studio in Hamilton, Riemens is also a highly regarded and sought-after recording engineer and producer. Riemens started his first band in 1977, as a college student. From 1981 to 1985, he and Ray Ovington formed two "punkwave" bands that toured the punk rock circuit in Southern Ontario with original material. In the mid-80s JP returned to the country swing roots music he grew up with. His first recording, *Songs from Mom's Kitchen* (1989), was captured from a weekend of sessions in his mother's kitchen in the Harley farmhouse. In 1991 Riemens released a series of original western swing singles in Europe under the guise of Ugly Bob's Little Big Band. In 1994 he released *Full Moon In August*, a polished version of *Mom's Kitchen*. This recording continued the roots tradition with its consistently entertaining storytelling.

Riemens was introduced to Grant Avenue Studio in the spring of 1985 and over the next 13 years he worked on many projects both as an artist and producer until 1998 when he became co-owner. His intimate knowledge of the studio allowed him to "hit the ground running" and in his first year he produced four projects. His own recordings after becoming co-owner of Grant Avenue Studio include *Girls* (1999), *Blue Martini* (2004), *Plain & Simple* (2005), and *Redneck Lullaby* (2006/2007). His band, The Barflies, includes Carrie Ashworth on bass, Linda Duemo on drums and Brian Griffith on lead guitar. Randall Hill, Dan Walsh, and the late Willie P. Bennett are among the noted musicians who have made guest appearances on his recordings. In 2005 and 2006 Riemens was nominated in 6 different categories at the Hamilton Music Awards. In April 2009 he released his new cd *Love is a Dog*, featuring The Barflies and other guest musicians. Copies are for sale at the theatre.

The Barflies:

Carrie Ashworth (upright bass) is a graduate of Mohawk College's Applied Music Program in jazz. She has been a member of The Barflies for 5 years, and previously with the band Sarah Somebody. She has done session work and gigs with numerous Hamilton musicians including Blue Monks, Jace Martin, Lynn Jackson, Linda Duemo, Steve Hogg,



Linda Duemo (drums) a singer/ songwriter, has shared the bill with acts including Colin Linden, Tom Wilson, Fred Eaglesmith and Kelly Joe Phelps. Her album *One Night Soon* includes performances by Willie P. Bennett, Dan Walsh and Darcy Yates. When not gigging as a singer, she also performs as a drummer. She's a member of two bands, J.P. Riemens and The Barflies and The Bold Street Trio.

Brian Griffith (lead guitar) is a well-known award-winning guitar virtuoso around town. He has played with a long list of illustrious musicians, both Hamilton-based and in the US. He played with Willie Nelson (on "One Hell of a Ride" cd). He plays on Harrison Kennedy's cd *High Country Blues*, as well as several of J.P. Riemens recordings. He plays numerous gigs, and can be heard regularly Thursday nights with J.P. Riemens at the Cat 'n Fiddle.



Biographies: The Artword Theatre Ensemble



Paula Grove (Rita, Holly, ensemble), singer and actor, has performed in numerous roles on stage and in film and television. Stage roles include: Vicki in *The Full Monty* (Westside Concert Theatre, L. Leiberman); *Cabaret* (Westside Concert Theatre, Nupi Lapsley); Ensemble in *Jacques Brel...* (New Faces: David Dayer); Edith in *Getting Married* (The Shaw Festival: Marti Maraden; Marjorie Frant in *Berkeley Square* (The Shaw Festival: Neil Munro); Mona Rivas in *Stealing Home* (The Caravan Stage Co.: A. Hausvater); Sophie in *Detaining Mr. Trotsky* (CanStage: Richard Greenblatt). As a member of the Artword Theatre Ensemble she performed in Artword's fall 2008 production of *You Are What You Do*, and *Rascals and Numskulls* (2009), both written and directed by Ronald Weihs.

Tanis MacArthur (Emily, ensemble, choreography) is a Hamilton dancer, choreographer and costumier. She was a founding member of dada dance (2007-2008) and Indicaba Dance Theatrics (2002). She is resident costume designer and dancer for Inner City Dance company (2002-present, Irina Aouscheva, artistic director). Her costume design clients include Hamilton Dance Company, MacDancers, Parahumans, Momo Dance, KSWwhyte-motions, Acromaniacs. She continues to create and present new contemporary dance works in the Hamilton area, often as part of the James North Arts Crawl. She is a member of the Artword Theatre Ensemble and performed in Artword Theatre's productions of *You Are What You Do* (2008) and *Rascals and Numskulls* (2009).



Gordon Odegaard (Sam, Frenchy, ensemble), has been in plays since he was 13. He has been involved with the Community Theater Brantford. He also worked as an actor and musical director in a professional troop called "The Grand River Players". Collaborating on original music projects is a passion. Gordon is also a massage therapist. He is a member of the Artword Theatre Ensemble and performed in Artword's fall 2008 production of *You Are What You Do*. He played the role of Robert Land in Artword Theatre's new production of *Rascals and Numskulls* (Feb 2009).



Ryan M. Sero (Paul, ensemble) is a professional actor and graduate of Redeemer University College's theatre arts program. This is his first appearance with the Artword Theatre Ensemble. Past roles include Lion in *Anansi Tales*, Danny Bell and others in a piece he co-wrote with others titled *NZR*, Mephistophiles in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, and John Barrymore in *I Hate Hamlet*. His spare time is taken up by his wife, Jody, and their cat, Loki, although further hobbies (and sometime-professions) include writing, sketching and drawing, painting, and the long-lost art of reading. This July, he will participate in the Hamilton Fringe Festival with a piece he wrote called *A Modicum of Freedom*, which he begs you all to come and see.

