

MEDIA RELEASE

- For Immediate Release -

**EXHIBIT CELEBRATES TRAILBLAZING CANADIAN PLAYWRIGHT**  
***David French: Writing Home* Comes to Tarragon Theatre**

(TORONTO, August 27, 2012) – Tarragon Theatre presents ***David French: Writing Home***, an exhibit produced by Canada's National Arts Centre (Ottawa) in association with Theatre Museum Canada which runs at Tarragon's Rehearsal Hall from September 11-30.

Focusing on his five semi-autobiographical plays about the fictional Mercer family of Newfoundland, the exhibit combines rare artifacts, images and text to examine the history of French's darkly humorous slice-of-life dramas, and his far-reaching influence in the development of English Canadian theatre.

**David French** (1939-2010) played a crucial role bringing the voice of Canadian playwrights to our stages and the popularity of his plays proved that audiences from coast to coast wanted to see plays written by Canadians. Tarragon's founding Artistic Director Bill Glassco first took a chance on David French in 1972, closing the first season with his first professional play: ***Leaving Home***. Urjo Kareda wrote, in 2001, when he was Artistic Director: "*Leaving Home* was the play and the evening – I've always believed – that put Tarragon Theatre onto the map."

"As the theatre that launched and nurtured David French's early work, it is totally appropriate that this exhibit comes to Tarragon," says current Tarragon Artistic Director Richard Rose. "David French's Mercer family is our Houae of Atreus. He dramatised the living rooms of 1960s Toronto, evoking the great dramatic myths and the eternal conflict of family. We understand this story anew again thanks to David French."

This special retrospective exhibition was produced with the support and collaboration of the French family who loaned numerous artifacts and photos on display.

***David French: Writing Home*** originally opened September 2011 as part of Culture Days at the National Arts Centre. An online companion exhibit is also featured on the NAC's educational website ArtsAlive.ca.

The exhibit is open before performances of the first show of Tarragon's 42nd season – *No Great Mischief* by David S. Young, adapted from the novel by Alistair MacLeod – and closes 15 minutes before show time.

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About **Tarragon Theatre**: Tarragon Theatre is known for its creation, development and production of new Canadian work. Now in its 42nd season, more than 190 plays have premiered at Tarragon. Tarragon presents new plays from all parts of the country, revives significant Canadian plays and produces international work, contemporary and classical. Tarragon is also a pioneer in presenting Quebecois plays in translation. The theatre offers extensive play development programs and an active outreach and education department. Tarragon received the 2012 Premier's Award for Excellence in the Arts.  
[www.tarragontheatre.com](http://www.tarragontheatre.com)

About **Theatre Museum Canada**: Theatre Museum Canada seeks to share the wonder of Canada's rich theatre legacy with Canadians and theatre enthusiasts everywhere. In 2010, theatre impresario David Mirvish announced a planned permanent home for TMC. One of its most important current initiatives is the LEGEND LIBRARY, the online history project with R.H. Thomson interviewing pioneers of Canadian Theatre. [www.TheatreMuseumCanada.ca](http://www.TheatreMuseumCanada.ca)

About **The National Arts Centre**: The National Arts Centre is Canada's home of the performing arts and opened its doors in Ottawa in 1969. A leading showcase for the performing arts, the NAC presents Canada's and the world's best in music, English theatre, French theatre, dance, variety and community programming. The NAC is a national centre for performance, creation and learning that collaborates with countless artists—both emerging and established—and partners with scores of other arts organizations and arts educators across the country.  
[www.nac-can.ca](http://www.nac-can.ca)

***David French: Writing Home***

Tuesday September 11 to Sunday September 30  
Tarragon Theatre Rehearsal Hall, 30 Bridgman Avenue, Toronto  
Free Admission

The exhibit is open at least two hours before performances and closes 15 minutes before show time (except Sunday as noted below):

Tuesday to Friday: 6:00pm to 7:45pm  
Saturday: 12:30pm to 2:15pm & 4:30pm to 7:45pm  
Sunday: 1:30pm to 2:15pm (Exhibit opens one hour before show time)