

Media Release

IN MEMORIAM - SEASON DEDICATED TO MEMORY OF FOUNDING BOARD PRESIDENT GEORGE THOMAS

July 31, 2017

(TORONTO) Theatre Gargantua mourns the loss of **George Thomas**, one of the company's founders and a long-time benefactor. He passed away peacefully on Thursday July 27, surrounded by family. He was 77 years old.

Thomas was a long-serving arts volunteer as the first President of the Board of Theatre Gargantua. He helped establish the company in 1993 under the artistic vision of **Jacquie Thomas**, his daughter.

In honour of the contributions he made to the establishment of the company, Theatre Gargantua is dedicating its 25th Anniversary Season and upcoming works to the memory of George Thomas.

Thomas, a brilliant businessman, was well-loved within his local community for his honest and generous, philanthropic spirit. He immigrated to Toronto in 1960 from a small village in northern Greece, Xanthogia, arriving with very little, and went on to build a number of successful companies. His wife **Gayle Thomas** continues his business and philanthropic work.

"All of us at Theatre Gargantua mourn the passing of our benefactor and first Board President, George Thomas," said **David McOuat**, Theatre Gargantua's current President. "In the early years of this company George was an inspiration to all those who worked behind the scenes and on the stage. A quarter century ago his love of life and enthusiasm for our creative cycle helped build and create our core values here at Gargantua. His belief that the Arts are important along with his steadfast financial support allowed our company to flourish and grow.

"His warm, friendly smile and his infectious positivism were matched only by his impeccable style. Closing night parties were often catered by George as he wanted to personally give back to the cast and crew who gave so much of themselves. A true patron of the arts, George will be missed but not forgotten. Our entire season and the World Premiere of *Reflector* this Fall will be dedicated to his memory."

Visitation will be held at the Elgin Mills Funeral Centre on Monday, July 31 from 5 to 8pm, and services will follow at St. Panteleimon Greek Church in Markham on Tuesday, August 1 at 10:30am.

Theatre Gargantua offers Gayle and Jacquie Thomas and their entire family our sincere condolences.

- 30 -

Visitation & Service Details: <https://mountpleasantgroup.permavita.com/site/GeorgeThomas.html>

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