



Shaw Festival announces 2018 financial results

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (March 1, 2019) — Earlier today the [Shaw Festival](#) welcomed donors, patrons and members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake community to the Annual General Meeting where Executive Director **Tim Jennings** announced a healthy surplus while celebrating the artistry of the 2018 season.

The 57th Shaw Festival season welcomed 251,321 patrons to 755 performances, while also increasing donations and financial support – all of which resulted in a \$537,000 surplus. This season over 28% of tickets sold were to first-time buyers, helping The Shaw reach its highest attendance since 2013. With the aim of giving visitors a glimpse into how theatre is created and a chance to meet the people behind the productions, the Festival nearly doubled the number of education events offered, giving patrons and company members 1,554 opportunities to connect with The Shaw and each other.

“My favourite number this season is 47,391. That is how many people engaged with our education department, and it represents more or less a twofold increase on the year before. It means thousands of people had the chance to meet us and glimpse what we do; and it gives real meaning to the phrase Two-Way Theatre,” said **Tim Carroll**, Artistic Director. “I am proud of the acting ensemble, for being open and brave enough not only to engage with their audience, but for allowing those moments of connection to land and have an effect on the rest of the performance. My ideal theatre is one where each show is different every night. I felt that 2018 was a big step in that direction.”

The 2018 season took audiences everywhere from the magical world of Narnia to an orchard in the Okanagan Valley. The young and young-at-heart were charmed by the interactive nature of ***The Magician’s Nephew***, where they helped bring Narnia to life. The Festival welcomed renowned actor, author and comedian Stephen Fry in the world premiere of ***Mythos: A Trilogy – Gods. Heroes. Men.***, which saw new visitors from around the globe discover The Shaw. The Festival made strides towards representing the voices of Canada by producing ***The Orchard (After Chekhov)***, the first new play by a South Asian Canadian in its history. The atmospheric production of ***The Hound of the Baskervilles*** quickly became an audience favourite and one of the must-sees of the season. ***A Christmas Carol*** sold out for the second season in a row ending the year on a high note.

“This season showcased both the technical wizardry we are known for and the beauty of simple, creative concepts brilliantly executed,” said **Peter E.S. Jewett**, Chair of the Board. “In 2018 we also made large strides on our strategic objectives, increasing connectivity to audiences and communities, and increasing the number of tickets sold. All of this resulted in significant financial success; important in ensuring The Shaw’s sustainability.”

The Shaw Festival increased the total annual revenues by \$1.38 million over 2017 and eliminated its remaining operating debt.

“Perhaps most satisfying to me personally, we finished the work of erasing the last of the \$10 million in historic operating deficits and deferred capital work that were outstanding when I arrived here in late 2015. Many thanks again to Heritage Canada for the \$2.77 million matching grant they gave us in 2016,” said **Tim Jennings**, Executive Director. “I am excited to see the theatre in a place of significantly increased stability. I’m thrilled by our audience’s clear enthusiasm for TC’s call for a more human, more connected theatre as is already apparent by the early success of the 2019 season sales and membership renewals.”

The Shaw Festival's 2019 season is on stage April 6 through December 22 featuring a playbill that includes [*The Horse and His Boy*](#), [*Brigadoon*](#), [*The Ladykillers*](#), [*Man and Superman with Don Juan in Hell*](#), [*Rope*](#), [*Getting Married*](#), [*The Russian Play*](#), [*Cyrano de Bergerac*](#), [*The Glass Menagerie*](#), [*Sex*](#), [*Victory*](#), [*Secret Theatre*](#), [*A Christmas Carol*](#) and [*Holiday Inn*](#). Tickets for the 2019 Festival season are available through the Box Office at 1-800-511-SHAW and online at www.shawfest.com.

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About the Shaw Festival

Inspired by the spirit of George Bernard Shaw, the Shaw Festival creates unforgettable theatrical encounters in any way we want. The Shaw Festival, home to Two-Way Theatre, is a place where people who are curious about the world gather to share the unique experience of live theatre. For more information, please visit www.shawfest.com.

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Media Contacts:

Laura Hughes
Senior Communications Manager
1-800-657-1106 ext. 2222
lhughes@shawfest.com

Jenniffer Anand
Publicity Coordinator
1-800-657-1106 ext. 2224
janand@shawfest.com