

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHAW FESTIVAL CANCELS JULY EVENTS AND PERFORMANCES

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (May 29, 2020) — In keeping with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's municipal order limiting organized mass gatherings, the Shaw Festival is now forced to cancel all public events and performances throughout July. The Festival will continue to follow the guidance and directives of Canadian public health agencies, all levels of government and the organization's insurer to determine when The Shaw will be able to safely return to stage.

"While we are not surprised by the need for further cancellations, it's very hard to see more of our season evaporate. I am proud to say we have kept almost all of our artists and arts workers employed, so that we can be ready to return to our stages just as soon as it is safe to do so," said **Tim Jennings**, Executive Director.

Earlier this month, The Shaw made the difficult decision to suspend the contracts of approximately 70 ensemble members, musicians and other independent contractors, while also laying-off several part-time seasonal staff.

The Festival immediately re-engaged almost all of these artists, along with others from the local Shaw family, as temporary, full-time employees under a new program that is being supported through the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). The newly minted team of nearly 80 Education and Community Outreach Specialists (ECOS) will deepen the Festival's connection to its community by increasing digital patron engagement, creating bespoke online events for Friends of The Shaw and developing resources for various education partners.

"We can't have a human, connected theatre without healthy humans, so we will do whatever it takes to keep everyone safe, whether they work here or are itching to come and watch us play," said **Tim Carroll**, Artistic Director. "In the meantime, our artists, artisans and staff will continue to find ways to engage with our patrons and communities online – we hope you'll join us. Stay well, and we will see you as soon as we can."

At this time, the Shaw Festival administrative and box offices are closed by provincial mandate until June 9. Ticket holders to cancelled performances will have the full value of their tickets held on their account.

A small team of box office representatives is currently working remotely to contact ticket holders to discuss options such as holding money on account for future exchanges, converting the ticket value to a charitable donation or issuing a refund.

In the meantime, patrons can visit shawfest.com for more information and direct any ticket-related questions to feedback@shawfest.com.

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About the Shaw Festival

Inspired by the spirit of Bernard Shaw, the Shaw Festival creates unforgettable theatrical encounters. The Shaw Festival is a place where people who are curious about the world gather to share the unique experience of live theatre and to create a deeper human connection with the artists, the beauty and abundance of Niagara and with each other. For more information, please visit shawfest.com.

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