

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHAW FESTIVAL SHIFTS START OF 2021 SEASON TO JULY

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (April 29, 2021) — As Ontario remains under a provincewide emergency and stay-at-home order, the Shaw Festival is now forced to delay the start of the 2021 season to early July. In keeping with the commitment to presenting the current playbill in the safest way possible for both audience and company members, early performances of ***Charley's Aunt*** and the full run of ***The Devil's Disciple*** will now move to new outdoor venues. Bernard Shaw's melodrama kicks-off the series of *al fresco* shows on July 6 at a newly raised outdoor stage in front of the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre.

Beginning July 7, audiences can enjoy ***Charley's Aunt*** under a canopied stage set amid the Shaw Festival gardens. ***A Short History of Niagara***, a commissioned puppetry piece originally set at Fort George, moves to the Festival grounds with shows starting on July 29.

"The opportunity to present these shows amid the beauty and magic of Niagara's outdoors – in the light of day or under the early evening stars – allows us all to experience them in an entirely new and special way," said Artistic Director **Tim Carroll**. "Theatre is about connection – human connection – and our outdoor performances are one way that more of us can come together safely and experience live theatre again. I want to thank our patrons for staying with us at every pivot and turn over these last few months. I look forward to seeing you all very soon."

"The recent increase in vaccination rates, coupled with all of our continued adherence to public health guidelines, will hopefully result in a rapid decline in case numbers over the summer months," commented Executive Director **Tim Jennings**. "We continue to remain optimistic that our American patrons will also be allowed to join us at The Shaw and in Niagara-on-the-Lake before the end of summer."

When it is safe to do so, The Shaw plans to welcome audiences back indoors for reduced-capacity performances of ***Flush*** at the Royal George Theatre, starting July 8, and ***Sherlock Holmes and The Raven's Curse*** at the Festival Theatre, beginning July 23. As restrictions ease further, ***Charley's Aunt*** will move back to the Royal George Theatre's stage in August.

Due to severe restrictions affecting international travel, director **Selma Dimitrijevic** is unable to join the company this season. After directing ***Serving Elizabeth*** at the Stratford Festival, The Shaw's Associate Artistic Director **Kimberley Rampersad** returns to take over the directorial duties of ***Desire Under the Elms***. Performances of the Eugene O'Neill masterpiece will shift from the intended July start to October 15. It will run concurrently with ***A Christmas Carol*** and Irving Berlin's ***Holiday Inn***.

Box office representatives will be reaching out to all affected ticket holders to discuss options, including refunds. Patrons with questions or concerns regarding their tickets can call the Shaw Festival Box Office at 1-800-511-7429, Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., or email boxoffice@shawfest.com.

On stage July 6 through December 23, the Shaw Festival's 2021 season playbill features [***The Devil's Disciple***](#), [***Sherlock Holmes and the Raven's Curse***](#), [***Charley's Aunt***](#), [***Flush***](#), [***Desire Under the Elms***](#), [***Trouble in Mind***](#), [***A Short History of Niagara***](#), [***A Christmas Carol***](#), Irving Berlin's [***Holiday Inn***](#) and an upcoming, yet to be announced, series of outdoor concerts and activities.

The Shaw Festival plans to present the rest of its 2021 season as per the revised schedule; however, performances will only take place if deemed safe to do so. In addition to following and exceeding the directives of local, provincial and federal governments and their respective public health agencies, The Shaw has implemented a robust [Duty of Care](#) initiative. These measures include significant infrastructure improvements and a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of audiences, company members and communities.

For the most up-to-date information, visit 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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