

IMMEDIATE RELEASE**PROVOCATIVE *PLAYBOY* BEGINS PREVIEWS**

- *The Shaw's A.D. Emerita Jackie Maxwell moves Synge comedy to 1950s Ireland -*

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (May 24, 2023) — **Jackie Maxwell** returns to the Shaw Festival to direct [*The Playboy of the Western World*](#) – the play that stoked the fires of Irish nationalism and sparked the infamous Dublin “Playboy Riots” of 1907. Previews of **J.M. Synge’s** funny and enthralling masterwork of the Irish Literary Renaissance begins May 25 in the theatre named after The Shaw’s former A.D. – the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre.

In a small Irish village where the only entertainment is gossip, Christy Mahon’s (**Qasim Khan**) arrival has everyone talking. On the run after splitting his father’s head open with a spade, he declares his act of patricide to all within earshot. Though fully prepared to be condemned, he instead finds himself a local celebrity admired by the village’s men and desired by its women. Everything is going well for this dangerous “Playboy,” especially between him and the wild and forthright Pegeen Mike (**Marla McLean**), until his father Old Mahon (**Ric Reid**) turns up at the Flaherty shebeen very much alive.

The Playboy of the Western World also features **Fiona Byrne, Shane Carty, Alexandra Gratton***, Andrew Lawrie, Jade Repeta, Sophie Smith-Dostmohamed**, Sanjay Talwar, Jonathan Tan** and **Kiana Woo***.

Set and costume designer **Judith Bowden**, lighting designer **Kevin Lamotte** and sound designer **Samuel Sholdice** have masterfully transported this production to 1950s rural Ireland – an era where economic conditions and mass emigration from Ireland mirrored the realities of Synge’s County Mayo. *The Playboy of the Western World’s* production team includes Stage Manager **Beatrice Campbell** and Assistant Stage Manager **Meghan Froebelius**.

On stage at the [Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre](#) (10 Queens Parade) from May 25 to October 7 (available for review beginning June 23), *The Playboy of the Western World* is recommended for audience members ages 14+/Grade 9+ and is sponsored by **Michael Eagen**. Running time is approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes, including one intermission.

The Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre is sponsored by **Paradigm Capital Inc.**

Cast:

Fiona Byrne	Widow Quin
Shane Carty	Jimmy Farrell
Alexandra Gratton***	Sara Tansey
Qasim Khan	Christy Mahon
Andrew Lawrie	Shawn Keogh
Marla McLean	Pegeen Mike
Ric Reid	Old Mahon
Jade Repeta	Susan Brady
Sophie Smith-Dostmohamed**	Ensemble
Sanjay Talwar	Michael Flaherty
Jonathan Tan	Philly O’Cullen
Kiana Woo*	Honor Blake
Vinnie Alberto**	Baillie Cohort Understudy

Creative & Production:

Jackie Maxwell	Director
Judith Bowden	Set and Costume Designer
Kevin Lamotte	Lighting Designer
Samuel Sholdice	Sound Designer
Beatrice Campbell	Stage Manager
Meghan Froebelius	Assistant Stage Manager
Meredith Macdonald	Production Stage Manager
Beyata Hackborn	Associate Set and Costume Designer
Emilie Trimbee	Assistant Lighting Designer
Andrew Lawrie	Fight Captain
John Stead	Fight Director
Jeffrey Simlett	Voice and Dialect Coach

* RBC Emerging Artists are sponsored by the RBC Foundation and RBC Emerging Artists.

** The Baillie Cohort is supported by the Baillie Family Fund for Education.

*** The Christopher Newton Intern is supported by Marilyn and Charles Baillie.

Generously sponsored by **The Slight Family Foundation**, the Shaw Festival's 2023 season runs through to December 23, with a playbill featuring [Mahabharata](#), [Gypsy](#), Noël Coward's [Blithe Spirit](#), [The Amen Corner](#), [Prince Caspian](#), [On the Razzle](#), [Village Wooing](#), [The Shadow of a Doubt](#), [The Playboy of the Western World](#), [The Apple Cart](#), [The Clearing](#), [A Christmas Carol](#) and Lerner and Loewe's [Brigadoon](#). This season's Outdoors @ The Shaw includes [Mother, Daughter](#), [The Game of Love and Chance](#), Rodgers and Hammerstein's [A Grand Night for Singing – One Act – in Concert](#), [Coffee Concerts](#), [Speakeasies](#), [A Short History of Niagara](#), [What's in Your Songbook?](#) and [Gospel Choir](#).

Direct bus service from downtown Toronto and Burlington to Niagara-on-the-Lake is available on the [Toronto-Niagara Shaw Express](#). Luxury buses are standard size wheelchair accessible, offer free Wi-Fi and have an on-board host. \$29 return per person. Ticket to a 2023 performance is required. Please pre-arrange with the Box Office. Schedule is subject to change. Please confirm dates and times with the Shaw Festival Box Office.

Masks at The Shaw: While the wearing of masks is now optional, their continued use is recommended indoors and remains at the discretion of the individual. While The Shaw maintains its [Duty of Care](#) measures, there remains an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 in any public place where people congregate. The Festival continues to work closely with public health experts to ensure all necessary and reasonable precautions are being met to reduce the chances of exposure; however, patrons are encouraged to take what precautions they deem necessary to protect themselves and others. Patrons are also requested to refrain from attending any performance or event if presenting COVID-19 symptoms.

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The Shaw Festival wishes to acknowledge and honour the land upon which its patrons and company members gather as the historic and traditional territory of First Nations peoples. Recognition and thanks are extended to the Neutral Nation, the Mississauga and the Haudenosaunee for their stewardship of these lands over millennia.

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. shawfest.com

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