

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **BUCKLE UP: A WILD NEW ADAPTATION OF *THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS* STARTS PREVIEWS AT THE SHAW**

*- Reimagined family classic leaps onto the stage at the Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre -*

**Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (May 21, 2026)** – [\*The Wind in the Willows\*](#), a new adaptation based on the classic **A.A. Milne** play *Toad of Toad Hall*, makes its world premiere this season at the Shaw Festival. Adapted and directed by **Fiona Sauder**, this family-friendly show begins previews at the **Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre** starting May 22.

Serial enthusiast Mr. Toad (**Lawrence Libor**) has discovered the thrill of fast motorcars, to the despair of his friends Mole (**Gabriella Sundar Singh**) and Rat (**Sharry Flett**). Soon his reckless obsession lands him behind bars. In his absence, rivals Chief Stoat (**Sara Farb**) and Chief Weasel (**Matt Alfano**) seize Toad Hall, his ancestral home. Now, Toad must break out of prison, win back Mole, Rat and Badger's (**Shawn Wright**) trust, then embark on a daring mission to reclaim his beloved home from its nefarious new occupants.

This delightful all ages show also features the talents of **Qasim Khan, Jaden Kim, Graeme Kitagawa, Allison McCaughey, Taurian Teelucksingh** and **Jacqueline Thair**.

*The Wind in the Willows* has set and prop design by **Judith Bowden**, costume design by **Laura Delchiaro**, lighting design by **Kevin Lamotte** and original music and sound design by **Jeffrey Newberry**. The production team includes stage manager **Lani Martel** and assistant stage managers **Jamie Anderson\*** and **Kathryn Urbanek**.

*The Wind in the Willows* will be at the centre of the Shaw Festival's popular 40-minute pre-show workshop for children and the young-at-heart. During this inventive, fun and interactive outdoor event, participants will visit several themed stations on the road to Toad Hall – just like the incorrigible Mr. Toad. The activities begin one hour prior to all shows of *The Wind in the Willows* on the Shaw Festival's grounds (10 Queen's Parade). Admission: \$10 with a ticket to the day's performance.

On stage at the [Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre](#) (10 Queen's Parade) from May 22 to September 27 (available for review beginning June 21), *The Wind in the Willows* is recommended for audience members 6+. Running time is approximately 2 hours, including one 20-minute intermission.

*The Wind in the Willows* is sponsored by **Ron & Barbara Besse** and **Mary E. Hill**. Children and Family Programming is supported by **Christopher & Jeanne Jennings**.

### **Cast:**

Matt Alfano

Sara Farb

Sharry Flett

Qasim Khan

Jaden Kim

Graeme Kitagawa

Lawrence Libor

Allison McCaughey

Gabriella Sundar Singh

Chief Weasel/Ensemble

Chief Stoat/Ensemble

Rat/Ensemble

Judge/Ensemble

Marigold/Phoebe/Ensemble

Usher/Ensemble

Toad/Ensemble

Nurse/Washerwoman/Ensemble

Mole/Ensemble

Taurian Teelucksingh  
Jacqueline Thair  
Shawn Wright

Alfred/Ensemble  
Chief Ferret/Ensemble  
Badger/Ensemble

### **Creative & Production:**

Fiona Sauder  
Judith Bowden  
Laura Delchiaro  
Kevin Lamotte  
Jack Davidson (née Rennie)  
Lani Martel  
Kathryn Urbanek  
Jamie Anderson\*  
Lisa Russell  
Leigh McClymont

Director  
Set and Props Designer  
Costume Designer  
Lighting Designer  
Fight and Movement Director  
Stage Manager  
Assistant Stage Manager  
Assistant Stage Manager  
Production Stage Manager  
Associate Production Stage Manager

\*2026 Christopher Newton Intern, Jamie Anderson, is generously supported by Marilyn & Charles Baillie.

### **Beyond the Stage Events and Activities**

To complement its world-class performances, the Shaw Festival will offer more than 5,000 Beyond the Stage events, classes and activities for people of all ages this season.

Programming includes [Positive Aging events](#), [Arts Education for children and youth](#), [Backstage Tours and Artist Conversations](#), [Coffee Concerts](#), [Speakeasies](#), [What's In Your Songbook](#), [Gospel Choir](#), [Perfect Pairings Concerts](#), [Pop-Up Patios](#) and so much more. Visit [shawfest.com/beyondthestage](http://shawfest.com/beyondthestage) for more information.

Generously supported by **The Martin Family** as The Shaw's Education Partner.  
Beyond the Stage workshops graciously supported by the **DeRoy Testamentary Foundation**.  
Positive Aging programs supported by a visionary gift from **The Weston Family**.

### **Two-show [Toronto-Niagara Shaw Express](#) days are now available for the 2026 season.**

Ride to Niagara-on-the-Lake in time for the matinee and return home after the evening performance. Please see the season calendar for the full Shaw Express schedule. Luxury buses are standard size wheelchair accessible, offer free Wi-Fi and have an on-board host. The fare is \$39 return per person. Ticket to a 2026 performance is required, and advance arrangements must be made with the Box Office. Schedule is subject to change. Please confirm dates and times with the Shaw Festival Box Office. For more information – or to purchase tickets or reserve a seat on the Toronto-Niagara Shaw Express – contact the Shaw Festival Box Office at 1-800-511-SHAW or visit [shawfest.com](http://shawfest.com). The Shaw Express is sponsored by **The William & Nona Heaslip Foundation**.

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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**

One of the largest charitable theatre companies in North America, the Shaw Festival's mission is to enrich and connect people's lives through theatre. Based in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake, The Shaw's 2026 productions include [Funny Girl](#), [One for the Pot](#), [Amadeus](#), [Sleuth](#), [Jeeves & Wooster in Perfect Nonsense](#), [A New Work in Progress](#), [The Wind in the Willows](#),

[Heartbreak House](#) and [Ohio State Murders](#). The Shaw Festival's Holiday Season includes [A Year with Frog and Toad](#) and [Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella](#).

Through its [All.Together.Now](#) campaign, The Shaw is creating new spaces and programs where people can build real human connections and rediscover their creativity. For more information, visit [shawfest.com](http://shawfest.com).

*We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.* ~ George Bernard Shaw

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