

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE SHAW'S OHIO STATE MURDERS WRITES A NEW FUTURE BY CONFRONTING A TROUBLED PAST

- One act tragic drama to make Shaw Festival debut this season -

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (July 16, 2026) – **Ohio State Murders**, the historical drama from playwright **Adrienne Kennedy** makes its Shaw Festival debut this season, directed by 2026 Order of Canada appointee **Philip Akin**. One of Kennedy's most well-known and gripping works, this new production takes to the **Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre** stage starting July 19.

Renowned author and Ohio State University alumna Suzanne Alexander (**Sophia Walker**) returns to her alma mater to lead a talk about the use of graphic imagery in her writing. Confronted with the ghosts of her past, including an illicit relationship with her former English professor, Robert Hampshire (**André Morin**), Suzanne seizes the opportunity to speak out about the racism and injustice she experienced as a Black woman in 1950s Ohio and how the violence she endured helped shape who she became, both as a writer and as a woman.

Ohio State Murders is brought to life by **Melanie McNeill**'s set and costume design, lighting design by **Jeff Pybus** and features original music and sounds designed by **Jacob Lin** as well as movement direction by **Alexis Milligan**. The stage management team includes stage manager **Lani Martel** with assistant stage manager **Kathryn Urbanek**.

On stage at the **Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre** (10 Queen's Parade) from July 19 to October 3 (available for review beginning August 14), **Ohio State Murders** is recommended for audience members 13+. Running time is approximately 55 minutes, no intermission.

Ohio State Murders is generously sponsored by **TD Bank Group**. The Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre is proudly sponsored by **Paradigm Capital Inc.**

Cast:

André Morin
Sophia Walker

Robert Hampshire
Suzanne Alexander

Creative & Production:

Philip Akin
Kimberley Rampersad
Melanie McNeill
Jeff Pybus
Jacob Lin
Alexis Milligan
Lani Martel
Kathryn Urbanek
Lisa Russell
Leigh McClymont
Jeffrey Simlett

Director
Associate Director
Set & Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Original Music and Sound Designer
Movement Director
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Production Stage Manager
Associate Production Stage Manager
Voice and Dialect Coach

Ohio State Murders is presented by arrangement with [Concord Theatricals](#) on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

Beyond the Stage Events and Activities

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

The Shaw Festival's 2026 season runs through to December 23 and is supported by the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts.

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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.

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

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