

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHAW FESTIVAL OPENS SHAW ARTISTS' VILLAGE

- New campus unites artist and visitor residences, creative production and expanded programming at the Burton Centre for Lifelong Creativity -

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (August 14, 2026) – The Shaw Festival has officially opened the 40,000 square foot Shaw Artists' Village, bringing together housing, creative production, arts education and professional development on one campus dedicated to exploring the role creativity plays in helping people learn, communicate and connect.

"The Shaw Artists' Village represents the next chapter in our evolution as a centre for communication, creativity and curiosity," said Tim Jennings, Executive Director/CEO of the Shaw Festival. "By combining artist living, education, performance and artisan workshops within a single complex, we will provide new opportunities for artists to thrive while opening our doors wider than ever before. Now people of every age and background can experience the transformational power of the arts at the Burton Centre for Lifelong Creativity at the Shaw Artists' Village."

Located next to the Festival Theatre at 272 Wellington Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Shaw Artists' Village transforms five buildings of the former Upper Canada Lodge into a vibrant campus where artists will live, learn, create and collaborate, while welcoming visitors to participate in year-round classes, programs and performances.

This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada, through the Department of Canadian Heritage, as well as the support of Shaw's All.Together.Now. campaign donors. The Government of Canada allocated \$15 million as a matching grant in 2024 to the Shaw Festival to support the expansion of its campaign and the creation of the Shaw Artists' Village.

"The new Shaw Artists' Village provides 26 apartments for Shaw's seasonal artists while replacing approximately 30 bedroom units the Festival currently rents throughout Niagara-on-the-Lake, helping put those rental units back into the local housing market. At the same time, this new campus creates more opportunities for families, young people, seniors and visitors to take part in arts and cultural programming year-round. Supporting The Shaw means supporting artists, strengthening our local economy and helping make Niagara an even better place to live, work and visit," said Chris Bittle, Member of Parliament for St. Catharines.

Burton Centre for Lifelong Creativity

At the heart of the Shaw Artists' Village is the Burton Centre for Lifelong Creativity, an innovative new hub exploring how the performing arts can enrich every stage of life.

Made possible through a generous gift from the James A. Burton & Family Foundation, the Burton Centre for Lifelong Creativity will become the home for Shaw's expanded performance, education and community outreach program offerings, welcoming visitors for Positive Aging programs, youth and community arts education, professional development, concerts and events.

"We have described the vision for the Shaw Artists' Village as bringing Shaw to the street — taking the imagination, the craft and the human skills that live inside a great theatre and opening them up to the rest of us in everyday life," said Jim Burton, Chair of the James A. Burton &

Family Foundation. "School children will meet the actors, designers, wardrobe artists and technicians who turn something imagined into something real. Seniors will gather and be immersed in the arts. Professionals - ranging from physicians to business executives to members of the Canadian navy - will sharpen the way they listen and communicate. There is an inner artist in each of us, and the Burton Centre is designed to invite all of us to express it."

Artist Residences

Two wings of the Shaw Artists' Village offer 26 fully furnished apartments providing Shaw's seasonal ensemble members with a welcoming home away from home. The artist residences include studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom accommodations, along with shared gathering spaces, workout facilities and gardens.

"Every great work of theatre begins with people coming together to imagine something bigger than themselves," said Tim Carroll, Artistic Director. "The Shaw Artists' Village gives our artists a place where collaboration can happen every day, while inviting our community into the heart of the creative process. It's a place where artistry, craftsmanship and curiosity can flourish together, enriching not only the work we create, but the lives of everyone who encounters it."

Creative Production: Wardrobe Workshop

The Shaw Artists' Village is also the new home of The Shaw's Wardrobe Workshop, bringing one of the organization's largest departments together in the same space, for the first time in decades. Shaw's wardrobe team designs, creates and maintains approximately 1,000 new costumes for the 12-14 repertory shows produced each year.

Large windows into the Wardrobe wing offer visitors to the Shaw Artists' Village a rare glimpse into the artistic process and craftsmanship behind The Shaw's array of costumes. The Wardrobe Workshop's double-height space with a mezzanine replaces the four previous disparate shops to improve collaboration, accessibility, storage and efficiency, while allowing designers, cutters, stitchers, milliners, craftspeople and wardrobe specialists to work together more seamlessly throughout the creative process.

Visitors' Residence

The purpose-built Visitors' Residence allows the Shaw Festival to welcome school groups, business and community organizations for immersive multi-day educational, professional development and team building experiences.

With 15 modern, fully-accessible dormitory rooms available, each featuring two twin beds with built in desks and a private ensuite bathroom with a shower, the Shaw Artists' Village offers its program participants an integrated and convenient place to stay on The Shaw's campus during their programs.

All.Together.Now.

The Shaw Artists' Village represents another significant milestone in The Shaw's All.Together.Now. Campaign for Real Human Connection, an ambitious initiative that is transforming the Shaw Festival into one of North America's leading centres for communication, creativity and curiosity.

"The opening of the Shaw Artists' Village is a dream come true, creating more opportunities for people to experience the joy and transformative power of creativity," said Pragna Desai, Director of Community Engagement and Outreach. "Last year, the Shaw Festival presented more than 5,000 workshops, events, tours, talks and engagement opportunities. With these inspiring new spaces, we will be expanding our programming to welcome even more youth, seniors,

educators, community groups and lifelong learners to discover their creativity and build meaningful connections.”

Unity Design Studio led the architectural design for the Shaw Artists' Village and Govan Brown managed construction.

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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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