

## **ROBB PATERSON ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT**

**WINNIPEG, March 18, 2015** – Royal MTC Associate Artistic Director Robb Paterson confirmed today his decision to retire in March 2016. Artistic Director Steven Schipper acknowledged Robb's long legacy at our theatre, and noted that it was characteristic of Robb's kindness and care to provide such generous notice to Royal MTC.

"Robb is the most joyful, idealistic person I've ever known, and his positive spirit has carried over from our office into the rehearsal hall and onto our stages. He has an innate ability to analyze people, events and scripts, and to uncover the hidden truths that drive them," said Steven Schipper. "He is a gifted director, a riveting performer and, to quote one of his favourite phrases, the hardest-working man in show business. I am so honoured to be his friend and his colleague, and I hope he will come back to our theatre often."

Robb Paterson came to Winnipeg in the early 1980s as part of Richard Ouzounian's resident company and, along with his good friend Richard Hurst, decided to make Winnipeg his permanent home after the others went back east. His decision to stay and raise his family here paid creative dividends for theatres throughout the city. He has worked on more than 165 productions across Canada, including 85 at the Royal Manitoba Theatre, and many more at Rainbow Stage, Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Prairie Theatre Exchange and Winnipeg Jewish Theatre. Associate Artistic Director for the past 12 years, he directed three of Royal MTC's biggest hits: *White Christmas*, *A Christmas Story*, and *My Fair Lady*.

Audiences probably know him best for his virtuoso performances in *How I Got that Story* (Warehouse, 1982) and *Billy Bishop Goes to War* (regional tour, 1981), and for his Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Mainstage, 1996) and his Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol* (Mainstage, 1993). Let's not forget the time he went on for an ailing actor in the role of *My Fair Lady*'s Henry Higgins: a grateful cast and the audience sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" during the curtain call.

"I have been a theatre artist in Winnipeg for 35 years, and more than half of my shows have been at Royal MTC, so this was a difficult and emotional decision," said Paterson. "My wife Heather and I raised our family here, and I have loved my time at Royal MTC, my long friendship and partnership with Steven Schipper and the many staff and artists, and I hope to return often."

Robb will direct Royal MTC's season opener *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* in October 2015 and continue his many duties until his retirement date. The theatre will host a community party in March 2016 to honour and celebrate his legacy. We look forward to his continued involvement in the work on our stages. Royal MTC will announce hiring plans for the Associate Artistic Director position at a later date.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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