

ANNUAL REPORT

2015/16



The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's John Hirsch Mainstage. PHOTO BY JERRY GRAJEWSKI
Inset: John Hirsch and Tom Hendry.



ABOUT ROYAL MTC

When the Winnipeg Little Theatre and Theatre 77 merged to form the Manitoba Theatre Centre in 1958, the goal was to produce great theatre with mass appeal. Artistic Director John Hirsch and General Manager Tom Hendry staged professional productions of an eclectic array of plays – classics, Broadway hits and new Canadian work. With the establishment of a second stage for experimental work in 1960, and an annual provincial tour that began in 1961, MTC fully realized the original vision of a centre for theatre in Manitoba. Inspired by the breadth and quality of MTC's programming, a whole network of what became known as "regional theatres" emerged across North America.

Since its founding, MTC has produced more than 600 plays with hundreds of actors, including Len Cariou, Graham Greene, Martha Henry, Judd Hirsch, Tom Hulce, William Hurt, Tom Jackson, Robert Lepage, Seana McKenna, Eric Peterson, Gordon Pinsent, Keanu Reeves, Fiona Reid, R.H. Thomson, Kathleen Turner and Al Waxman.

The company produces in two venues: the Warehouse, which opened in 1969, and the Mainstage, completed in 1970. The theatres were renamed after the company's founders in 2008. In 2009, the Government of Canada designated the Mainstage a National Historic Site and, in 2010, Queen Elizabeth II granted the company a royal designation.

Today, the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre produces 10 plays on two stages, a regional tour, a wide range of youth programming and two annual festivals: the Master Playwright Festival (founded in 2001) and North America's second-largest Fringe Festival (founded in 1988). Attendance for Royal MTC programming averages 300,000 each year, and many Manitobans also support Royal MTC with donations and volunteer time. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Steven Schipper and General Manager Camilla Holland, Royal MTC remains Manitoba's flagship theatre.

ROYAL MTC MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE MANDATE

It is the aim of the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre to study, practice and promote all aspects of the dramatic art, with particular emphasis on professional production.

MISSION

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre exists to celebrate the widest spectrum of theatre art. Deeply rooted in the province of Manitoba, which gave it life and provides for its growth, Royal MTC aspires to both reflect and engage the community it serves.

VISION

Royal MTC's theatres and our province will teem with artists and audiences sharing in the act of imagining, enriching lives and communities.

VALUES

QUALITY

A commitment to quality is reflected in the writing of each play, in the actors, directors and designers who create each production, and in the volunteers, staff, funders and audiences who support it.

BALANCE

A commitment to balance is evident in the variety of our playbill and in the wide range of programs Royal MTC offers.

AFFORDABILITY

A commitment to affordability is reflected in our marshalling of public and private sector support to keep ticket prices as low as possible for all Manitobans.

ACCESSIBILITY

A commitment to creating theatre throughout the city and the province is evident in our festivals and touring productions.

SUSTAINABILITY

A commitment to sustainability is evident in our rigorous governance structure, our sound business practices and our prudent financial management.



Rick Miller in *BOOM*.
PHOTO BY PAUL LAMPERT

ATTENDANCE

JOHN HIRSCH MAINSTAGE	94,343
TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE	16,866
WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL	188,721
AYCKBOURNFEST	3,759
(Excluding 4,678 who attended <i>Things We Do For Love</i> at the Tom Hendry Warehouse)	
REGIONAL TOUR	4,234
THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES	1,712
Attended five student-only matinee performances	
TOTAL	309,635



The cast of *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*.
PHOTO BY ROBERT TINKER

ROYAL
MTC
MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre operates as a non-profit charitable organization, led by the Artistic Director, General Manager, Board Chair and a volunteer Board of Trustees from the community. The management practices of Royal MTC are based on five best practice principles: forward planning, accountability, monitoring, a sound control environment and ongoing liaison with the Board of Trustees. The Board's input and agreement is sought regularly on the action plans developed by management. Royal MTC owes its success this season to the dedicated, enthusiastic, accountable and responsible governance by board and staff. An open annual general meeting was held June 22, 2016, to report artistic and financial results to interested subscribers, patrons and community members.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

Manitoba



MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DU MANITOBA



WINNIPEG
ARTS COUNCIL

**“Taut and intriguing ... a smart,
compelling Western”**

– CBC MANITOBA



Paul Essiembre and David Coomber in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



I first fell in love with this theatre back in Grade 9, when Len Cariou was Artistic Director. I didn't know it then, but what I experienced that year changed my life. If not for those six nights sitting in a darkened auditorium getting lost in the magic of live theatre, there are a whole lot of things I never would have done, including auditioning for Steven's first Lawyers Play 25 years ago, taking my (then future) wife to MTC on our first date, and I certainly never would have joined this board, or had the pleasure and the honour to serve as its Chair.

It takes a unique confluence of elements just to mount a single show. It takes art, magic and passion. It also takes cutting, compromising and scrimping. It takes the theatrical equivalent of twine and baling wire. Most of all, it takes a monumental amount of work.

If that's one show, just imagine what it takes to produce an entire season. Every year our incredibly dedicated, unbelievably talented, and slightly mad team works together to mount a season of plays that touches our hearts and our minds. And Royal MTC has been doing that for 59 years. Now that's a feat. That's something to celebrate. That's something of which Winnipeg and Manitoba and Canada should be immensely proud.

None of this comes easily. I doubt it ever has, but the challenges continue to grow. Every year it gets harder to make it work. Our subscriber base is still the envy of theatres across North America, but we face competition from an ever-widening array of entertainment options. There simply aren't enough nights in the year.

The marketplace is changing. Yet the arts and culture sector remains a major player in any economy. Manitoba is no different; it employs over 20,000 people and drives some three per cent of the GDP. The indirect and intangible contributions are immeasurable. Without a vibrant arts community, there is no community. No local or national identity. Nothing that speaks to who we are.

There may be storms, but we have a sturdy ship. We have two great captains in Steven and Camilla who share the helm with grace and ease. We have a great crew who will continue to pour themselves into their work body and soul. And one of the things I'm most pleased with is we now have a chart that will help us navigate in troubled waters: a new Strategic Plan.

As always it was the product of much thought, debate and compromise. But we've landed in a good place. The community we serve continues to develop and change, so we'll have to keep an open mind as we move forward. Organizationally, we'll have to deepen our understanding of those changes and developments. There are new stories to be told – or perhaps – old stories to be revisited. But telling stories is what we do. Which stories we choose and how we choose to tell them is up to us.



JIM MCLANDRESS

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



We are so proud of this season's artistic, administrative and governance work. Onstage, under Steven's stewardship and leadership, the quality and depth of the plays were impressive, and audience responses mirrored this. Offstage, our extraordinary production and administrative team worked to ensure beautiful, inspiring and highly-technical productions found appreciative audiences. In the boardroom, our dedicated trustees did heavy lifting of their own, in the development and creation of a new Strategic Plan for the four-year span of 2017-2020.

Manitobans have long been recognized as staunch volunteers and generous donors, and their continued engagement with our vibrant cultural organization is laudable. Still, we felt pressure this year on our bottom line. Cultural attendance is stretched across many entertainment options, and public sector investment hasn't increased lately. How fortunate we are that former dedicated volunteer boards created the Stabilization Fund, where we have vested the past three years of surplus funds, and can now draw down to cover this year's small operating deficit. With the leadership of our trustees, under new chair Tony Fletcher, we will continue to dedicate our energies to balancing the artistic and financial health of this great company, and to making strategic and smart decisions that allow us to thrive well beyond our upcoming 60th anniversary.

Each year, our volunteers contribute over 30,000 hours towards Royal MTC's programs. Their invaluable and astonishing support made possible this year's record-breaking Fringe, successful special events like the Black & White Ball and the Lawyers Play, and we couldn't open the house nightly without the assistance of our large corps of ushering volunteers. Our most dedicated volunteers include the Royal MTC Board of Trustees and their invaluable participation in committees. Thank you to all our volunteers, for your exemplary service to Royal MTC in many ways.

Our community continues to support and value Royal MTC, as demonstrated by the generosity of our new record 1,697 supporters. It's a crowded fundraising marketplace in Manitoba today and the growth of our individual donors, our corporate community, our Founders' Circle members, and endowment donors is heartening. We value their generosity and their faith in us.

We look forward to working with our new provincial and federal governments, and our supportive municipal government, to ensure the

continued health and vitality of our organization. Our thanks to the Canada Council for the Arts, the Manitoba Arts Council, the Winnipeg Arts Council and to the other funding agencies at the provincial and federal level for their contributions to Royal MTC's activities, and their special support for the Fringe Festival, the Regional Tour and the Master Playwright Festival.

Finally, it's bittersweet that only 12 months after I thank a Board Chair for their first year of service, we're bidding them a fond adieu. What an incredible legacy and partnership there has been between Jim McLandress and Royal MTC. We have benefitted from many years of leadership and laughs, his extraordinary dedication and enthusiasm for our theatre, capped with a wonderfully collaborative and inclusive Board chairship.

Tony Fletcher has been a strong and loyal member of the Executive, demonstrating his great passion for Royal MTC, with his honest and discerning eye on operations and governance. We will now benefit from his leadership and stewardship of a truly wonderful Board of Trustees, in the role of Chair.

Royal MTC recently received notice that we are one of only 75 arts organizations across the country to receive a small but important grant from the Canada Council's special program to welcome Syrian refugees to the arts in their new communities. We will be using these funds to subsidize the attendance of these new Manitobans to family performances in the Fringe - so 200 people will have the chance to attend a performance at our Kids Venue. It's a small but significant step as we work to truly reflect and honour the province that gave us life.

CAMILLA HOLLAND

MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Diversity. Tolerance. We hear these words every day. They have become the guiding principles for makers of public policy, and a hot topic at cocktail parties and family dinner tables. What's often forgotten in the rush to embrace these buzzwords is that storytellers have always explored these ideas.

Dorothy M. Johnson wrote "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" in 1953, a year before Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas declared racial segregation in schools unconstitutional. Johnson plunks a scholar down in a little western town not known for its broad-mindedness, and then lights a fuse in the shape of a noose around the neck of a young black man named Jim, who's hungry for the knowledge the newcomer offers. Their struggle for justice and equality set the tone for the season in Jethro Compton's compelling stage adaptation.

After one performance of *Liberty Valance*, two boys waited outside for Ray Strachan, who played Jim, hoping for his autograph. They were Ethan Ribeiro and Eamon Stocks, who would share the role of Billy Elliot, a talented young dancer born into a mining town in northern England. Billy's passion for dance sets him apart from his family and his community, just as Jim's book learning seemed out of place in a frontier saloon. Billy's perseverance and ultimate triumph (and the mining town's eventual championing of his cause) inspired our own community, who attended in record numbers.

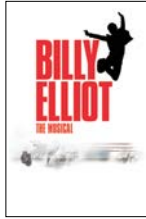
Of course, not every community has the resilience of Billy Elliot's mining town. Suspicion and fear can make us inflexible and defensive, as we saw in *Chimerica*. In the spring of 1989, Beijing authorities opened fire on pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square. Playwright Lucy Kirkwood's characters – in both China and America – haven't yet recovered from the massacre, and their relentless sifting through the past puts them all in jeopardy. The play stunned audiences, and inspired theatre critic Jason Cheung to write: "I got dragged on a pro-democracy march from one end of Hong Kong to almost the other as a 10-year-old, complaining and whining about how hard it was. I didn't know ... the value of the march until now, just six months shy of my 35th birthday."

These plays do more than make our pulses race and our spirits soar. They have meaning. They remind us that our lives are not solitary, that we are all connected to each other throughout time and space. Embracing diversity and practicing tolerance are just the outward manifestations of our shared humanity, and theatre is how we trace the indelible arabesques that link us together.

Yours always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven Schipper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

STEVEN SCHIPPER



THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE

Written by Jethro Compton
Based on the short story by Dorothy M. Johnson

October 15 – November 7, 2015
PREVIEWS • October 13 & 14

Director: Robb Paterson
Set & Costume Designer: Brian Perchaluk
Lighting Designer: Scott Henderson
Composer: Jonathan Sims
Sound Designer: John Bent Jr.
Firearms Consultant: Dave Brown
Fight Director: Jacqueline Loewen
Dialect Consultant: Shannon Vickers
Singing Coach: Donna Fletcher
Apprentice Director: Wren Hookey*
Stage Manager: Chris Pearce
Assistant Stage Manager: Candace Maxwell
Apprentice Stage Manager: Kali Claire Grenier-Prieur

Cast: Tom Anniko, David Coomber, Paul Essiembre, David W. Keeley, Trish Lindström, Justin Otto, Ray Strachan

ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

By Lewis Carroll
Adapted for the stage by James Reaney

November 26 – December 19, 2015
PREVIEW • November 25

Original Director: Jillian Keiley
Revival Director: Christine Brubaker
Set & Costume Designer: Bretta Gerecke
Choreographer: Dayna Tekatch
Composer/Musical Director: Jonathan Monro
Lighting Designer: Kimberly Purtell
Sound Designer: John Gzowski
Associate Set & Costume Designer: Jennifer Goodman
Assistant Lighting Designer: André du Toit
Puppeteer Coach: Jan Skene
Stage Manager: Brian Scott
Assistant Stage Manager: Sandra McEwing
Apprentice Stage Managers: Brett Mikulik, Crystal Staryk

Cast: Mariam Bernstein, Tristan Carlucci, Dorothy Carroll, Terri Cherniack, Gwendolyn Collins, Kevin P. Gabel, Toby Hughes, Kevin Klassen, Jacqueline Loewen, Arne MacPherson, Darren Martens, Paula Potosky, Aaron Pridham, Stefanie Wiens, Rylan Wilkie

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL

Book and lyrics by Lee Hall
Music by Elton John
Originally directed by Stephen Daldry

January 14 – February 6, 2016
PREVIEWS • January 12 & 13

Director: Steven Schipper
Choreography & Staging/Fight Director: Tracey Flye
Music Director: Joseph Tritt
Set Designer: Brian Perchaluk
Costume Designer: Charlotte Dean
Lighting Designer: Scott Henderson
Sound Designer: Michael Wright
Dialect Consultant: Shannon Vickers
Assistant Director/Dialect Consultant:

Teri-Lynn Friesen*
Assistant Choreographer/Dance Captain: Matt Alfano
Apprentice Music Director: Rachel Cameron
Apprentice Costume Designer: Joseph Abetria*
Stage Manager: Melissa Novacosky
Assistant Stage Managers: Jessica Freundl, Leslie Sidley
Apprentice Stage Managers: Holly LaJambe, Paige Lewis
Child Supervisors: Maggie Nagle, Adeline Sokulski
Cast: Matt Alfano, Demetri Apostolopoulos, Shaun Castor, Alexandre Deakin, Stephen Findlay, Peter Huck, Brittany Hunter, Aaron Hutton, Rebekah Jones, Keenan Lehmann, Jennifer Lyon, Debbie Maslowsky, Carson Nattrass, Trevor Patt, Paula Potosky, Jade Repeta, Ethan Ribeiro, Joseph Seville, Eamon Stocks, Markian Tarasiuk, Brett Taylor, Joel Taylor, Carter Treneer, Katie Welham, Tyrell Witherspoon, Cory Wojcik

Ballet Girl Ensemble: Danika Burdeniuk, Aliyah Cole, Zoe Eccleston, Delaney Giesbrecht, Gabriella Janus, Soleil Kunzig, Meaghan Moloney, Sadie Paquette, Ella Rempel, Kiara Sahasrabuddhe, Juliette Schroeder-Suss, Lynea Turner, Elizabeth R.L. White, Annika Zirino

Musicians: Julian Bradford, Steve Broadhurst, Rachel Cameron, Janice Finlay, Derrick Gottfried, Julie Husband, Dave Lawton, Todd Martin, Andrew St. Hilaire, Joseph Tritt

SPONSORED BY THE
GAIL ASPER FAMILY FOUNDATION &
THE ASPER FOUNDATION

CHIMERICA

By Lucy Kirkwood

February 25 – March 19, 2016
PREVIEW • February 24

Director: Chris Abraham
Set & Costume Designer: Judith Bowden
Lighting Designer: Michael Walton
Sound Designer: Thomas Ryder Payne
Video Designer: Deco Dawson
Dialect Designer: Eric Armstrong
Mandarin Chinese Dialect Coach: Yuan Liu
Fight Director: Rick Skene
Assistant Director: Zack Russell
Stage Manager: Karyn Kumhyr
Assistant Stage Manager: Michael Duggan
Apprentice Stage Manager: Jessica Alexander
Apprentice Stage Manager: Linsey Callaghan

Cast: Elena Anciro, Evan Buliung, Jasmine Chen, Terri Cherniack, Laura Condlin, Kevin Klassen, Paul Sun-Hyung Lee, Richard Lee, Doug McKeag, Ross McMillan, Diana Tso, Norman Yeung

A co-production with Canadian Stage

UNNECESSARY FARCE

By Paul Slade Smith

March 31 – April 23, 2016
PREVIEW • March 30

Director: Steven Schipper
Set & Costume Designer: Jamie Plummer
Lighting Designer: Bill Williams
Sound Designer: Michael Wright
Fight Director: Jacqueline Loewen
Assistant Director: Rebecca Steiner
Stage Manager: Margaret Brook
Assistant Stage Manager: Michelle Lagassé
Apprentice Stage Manager: Crystal Staryk
Cast: Ava Darrach-Gagnon, Paul Essiembre, Tom Keenan, John B. Lowe, Arne MacPherson, Megan McArton, Heather Russell

BOOM

Written by & starring Rick Miller

April 28 – May 21, 2016
PREVIEW • April 27

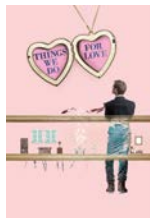
Writer/Director/Performer: Rick Miller
Projection Designer: David Leclerc
Lighting Designer: Bruno Matte
Composer/Sound Designer: Creighton Doane
Set/Costume/Props Designer: Yannik Larivée
Stage & Production Manager: Crystal Salverda
Directing Consultant: Ravi Jain
Executive Producer: Jeff Lord
Director of Outreach Marketing: Craig Francis
Laurence Davis, on Video: Ardon Bess

A Kidoons & WYRD production

*Position funded through the Jean Murray – Moray Sinclair Theatre Apprenticeship Program

*Financial assistance for Teri-Lynn Friesen's work provided by the Manitoba Arts Council and by the City of Winnipeg through the Winnipeg Arts Council

TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE PRODUCTIONS



TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE SEASON SPONSOR: **BMO FINANCIAL GROUP**

SEMINAR

By Theresa Rebeck

October 22 – November 7, 2015

PREVIEW • October 21

Director: Stewart Arnott

Set & Costume Designer: Gillian Gallow

Lighting Designer: Hugh Conacher

Sound Designer: Michael Wright

Apprentice Director: Frances Koncan*

Apprentice Set & Costume Designer:

Darryl Audette*

Stage Manager: Melissa Novecosky

Assistant Stage Manager: Alison Fulmyk

Cast: Andrea Houssin, Nathan Howe, Grace Lynn Kung, Tom McCamus, Ryan James Miller

A co-production with Mirvish Productions

WIESENTHAL

Written by & starring Tom Dugan

November 19 – December 5, 2015

PREVIEW • November 18

Director: Jenny Sullivan

Set Designer: Beowulf Boritt

Costume Designer: Alex Jaeger

Lighting Designer: Joel E. Silver

Sound Designer: Shane Rettig

Production Stage Manager: Katherine Barrett

Production Manager: Mind the Gap, Inc.

Tour General Management:

DR Theatrical Management

Producers: Daryl Roth, Karyl Lynn Burns

Associate Producers: Catherine Adler,

David Bryant, Suzy & Burton Farbman,

Jeffrey Rosen, Anne & Michael Towbes

Cast: Tom Dugan

SPONSORED BY THE

JEWISH FOUNDATION OF MANITOBA

THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE

By Alan Ayckbourn

February 4–20, 2016

PREVIEW • February 3

Director: Mariam Bernstein

Set & Costume Designer: Charlotte Dean

Lighting Designer: Hugh Conacher

Sound Designer: Chris Brett

Fight Director: Rick Skene

Assistant to the Director: Rob Herriot

Apprentice Set & Costume Designer: Jo Chalmers*

Stage Manager: Margaret Brook

Assistant Stage Manager: Ntara Curry

Cast: Sarah Constible, Paul Essiembre, Rob McLaughlin, Laura Olafson

Part of AyckbournFest 2016

SPONSORED BY THE ASPER FOUNDATION

MYTH OF THE OSTRICH

By Matt Murray

March 10–26, 2016

PREVIEW • March 9

Director: Heidi Malazdrewich

Set & Costume Designer: Jamie Plummer

Lighting Designer: Larry Isacoff

Sound Designer: Chris Brett

Dialect Coach: Shannon Vickers

Stage Manager: Leslie Sidley

Apprentice Stage Manager: Holly LaJambe

Cast: Tricia Cooper, Krista Jackson, Jennifer Lyon

REGIONAL TOUR



The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre and Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries were pleased to present *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the 2016 regional tour.

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Adapted by Steven Canny & John Nicholson

January 25 – February 26, 2016

Director: Ann Hodges

Set & Costume Designer: Brian Perchaluk

Sound Designer: Chris Coyne

Choreographer: Sofia Costantini

Stage Manager: Kathryn Ball

Apprentice Stage Manager: Brett Mikulik

Tour Technical Director: Ian Kirk

Tour Technician: Chris Hadley

Cast: Toby Hughes, Arne MacPherson, Aaron Pridham

4,234 ATTENDED 23 PERFORMANCES

JAN. 25 | Deloraine • Southwest Showcase Inc.

JAN. 27 | Atikokan • Atikokan Entertainment Series

JAN. 28 | Red Lake • Wilderness Entertainment Series

JAN. 29 | Dryden • Dryden Entertainment Series

JAN. 30 | Sioux Lookout • Sioux Hudson Entertainment Series

JAN. 31 | Kenora • Lake of the Woods Concert Group

FEB. 3 | Carman • Golden Prairie Arts Council

FEB. 4 | Neepawa • Kaleidoscope Concert Series

FEB. 5 | Minnedosa • Minnedosa Performing Arts Committee

FEB. 6 | Portage la Prairie • William Glesby Centre

FEB. 8 | Gimli • Kiwanis Club of Gimli & District

FEB. 10 | Binscarth • Vagabond Theatre Company

FEB. 11 | Souris • Souris District Arts Council

FEB. 12 | Crystal City • Parklane Theatre Committee

FEB. 13 | Virden, MB • Arts Mosaic

FEB. 14 | Brandon, MB • 7 Ages Productions

FEB. 15 | Strathclair • Strathclair & District Theatre Committee

FEB. 16 | Steinbach • Steinbach Arts Council

FEB. 17 | Lac du Bonnet • Winnipeg River Arts Council

FEB. 21 | Flin Flon • Flin Flon Arts Council

FEB. 23 | Snow Lake • Aurora Borealis Arts Council

FEB. 24 | Thompson • Recreation, Parks & Culture, City of Thompson

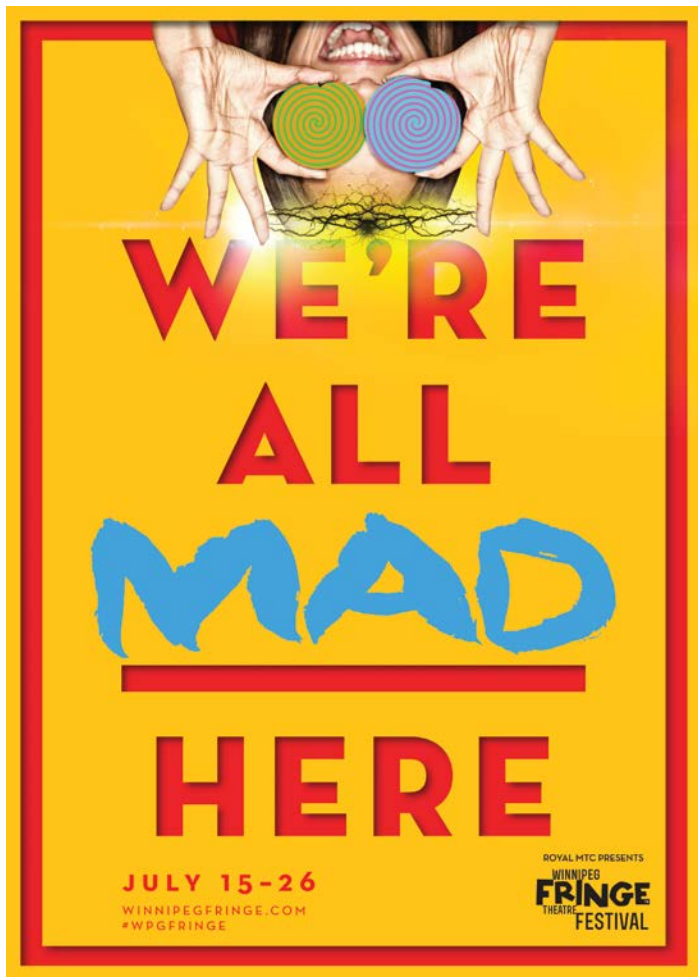
FEB. 26 | MacGregor • Heartland Recreation Commission

Tom Dugan in *Wiesenthal*.

PHOTO BY CAROL ROSEGG



*Position funded through the Jean Murray – Moray Sinclair Theatre Apprenticeship Program



WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL

The Winnipeg Fringe continued its hot streak with a record number of performing companies, shows and sellouts, adding up to the biggest festival yet. Indoor attendance exceeded 108,500, while daily attendance records were broken on seven out of 12 days. The festival featured an impressive 181 companies in 32 venues from July 15 to 26.

Royal MTC is the only regional theatre in Canada to produce a Fringe Festival, and continues to present the event as part of its proud commitment to developing new artists and audiences. The Winnipeg Fringe has enjoyed tremendous growth since it was founded in 1988 and ranks as the second-largest event of its kind in North America.

Because companies are accepted to the festival through a lottery, artists enjoy complete artistic freedom. As part of its mandate, the festival returns 100 per cent of box office revenue to the performing companies.

SUPPORTED BY MANITOBA LIQUOR & LOTTERIES

2015 WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL STATISTICS

TICKETED ATTENDANCE • 108,721

OUTDOOR ATTENDANCE (INCLUDING KIDS FRINGE) • 80,000

KIDS VENUE ATTENDANCE • 4,640

BOX OFFICE REVENUE • \$800,142

NUMBER OF PERFORMING COMPANIES • 181

NUMBER OF INDOOR PERFORMANCES • 1,513

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS • 813



MASTER PLAYWRIGHT FESTIVAL

From February 3 to 21, theatre lovers immersed themselves in the work of prolific British playwright Alan Ayckbourn. During the 16th Master Playwright Festival, Sir Alan Ayckbourn's signature wit was on full display, providing audiences with much-needed laughs in the middle of winter. All told, AyckbournFest showcased 10 productions, two play readings and two free lectures.

Joining Royal MTC to honour this theatre legend were the Actors' Fund of Canada, ACTRA/PAL Winnipeg, Broken Record Productions, Dramatic Theatre, Echo Theatre, Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Young Company, Merlyn Productions, R-G Productions, Shoestring Players, Tara Players Theatre Company and Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre.

2016 MASTER PLAYWRIGHT FESTIVAL (AYCKBOURNFEST) STATISTICS

TICKETED ATTENDANCE • 8,437

FREE EVENTS ATTENDANCE (LECTURES AND FILM SCREENINGS) • 115

OVERALL FESTIVAL ATTENDANCE • 8,552

OVERALL FESTIVAL BOX OFFICE REVENUE • \$184,775

NUMBER OF PERFORMING COMPANIES • 12

NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES • 99

WORDPLAY

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre produces an average of one new play each season. Though no play made its world premiere on our stages this year, we participated in the development of several works. The theatre organized two readings of Maureen Hunter's latest play *Sarah Ballenden* in anticipation of its world premiere here in 2017. At a reading at the University of Manitoba, staff from the Louis Riel Institute applauded Hunter's decision to explore the life of a powerful Metis woman, and the important role she played in the development of our province.

We were also proud to see creations that started at Royal MTC find warm receptions well beyond our theatre. For instance, the Segal Centre in Montreal produced Alix Sobler's *The Secret Annex* (2014) while Neil Weisensel's *Gisela in Her Bathtub* (which premiered at our 1991 Fringe Festival) had its 57th production.

Of course, new work doesn't just happen. Writers and their work must be nurtured. We commission new plays (Royal MTC has several in various stages of development), we provide dramaturgical support, and we program readings and workshops.

In our quest for new work to produce, we also reviewed 103 script submissions this year: plays both new and previously produced that are read by Royal MTC staff and freelance analysts. This year, we hired 75 artists to read eight of the most promising scripts for Royal MTC staff as part of our Wordplay series of readings and workshops.

These diverse activities help playwrights turn their dreams into reality, allow other artists to contribute to the creative process early, and give our audiences the inside track on the best new plays being written here and abroad.

SPONSORED BY INVESTORS GROUP



Tom McCamus, Ryan James Miller, Grace Lynn Kung, Nathan Howe and Andrea Houssin in *Seminar*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

CULTIVATING TALENT

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre cultivates talent through a series of programs. By inviting students to attend performances on our stages and in their schools, we help them imagine a life in the theatre, both as artists and as audience members. Our scholarship program helps bring those dreams within reach, while apprenticeships give artists the hands-on experience they need to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

For those already working in the profession, we help broaden their skills. Joseph Abetria focused on design and production when he attended the University of Winnipeg's Theatre & Film Department, before apprenticing with Costume Designer Charlotte Dean on *Billy Elliot The Musical*. "My experience with the (Royal MTC) apprenticeship was highly insightful," he said. "This program lets you apply the theories you learned in university to a real-life setting, and gives you a deeper understanding of how things work on a professional level."

We also help local artists expand their geographical and artistic horizons. Young Winnipeg actor Ryan James Miller had already impressed Winnipeg audiences in the roles of Tom in *The Glass Menagerie* on our Mainstage, and Prior in WJT's *Angels in America*. Yet it was when director Stewart Arnott cast him in *Seminar* with the Mirvishes in Toronto that Ryan's theatre work was seen outside our city for the first time. He earned a rave review from *Broadway World*: "... Ryan James Miller's portrayal of Douglas ... hits all the right notes. ... Miller's comedic timing carries the show right from the first line, and his snappy remarks and charismatic personality keep the show moving."

Finally, our Winnipeg Fringe Festival offers low-risk opportunities for artists to stretch themselves and to use our festival as a professional springboard. For the 2015 Fringe, ubiquitous young actor-about-town Justin Otto turned his hand to playwriting, and created *Manic Pixie Dream Girl* (co-written with Sydney Hayduk). The play won the Rintoul Award for Best New Manitoban Play at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival, and earned a rave review from CBC: "Not only do [Otto and Hayduk] succeed, they've created that rare kind of story that serves as a prime specimen of its genre while also forcing us to examine the extremes of what that genre can do."

We are also proud to work with local artists and, this year, 79 per cent of all actors at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre were Manitobans. In fact, four plays - *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*, *Unnecessary Farce*, *Things We Do For Love* and *Myth of the Ostrich* - featured casts composed entirely of Manitobans. Without our artists, our theatre would not exist, and we are proud to play some small part in their creative evolutions.





THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Royal MTC schedules student-only matinee performances for selected productions. This year, Royal MTC offered five student-only matinees for three productions: *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* and *Wiesenthal*.

A total of 1,712 attended these student-only matinees.

In addition, 282 students subscribed to our regular performances and 1,678 students attended regular performances casually.

As part of our TFYA programming, study guides were compiled for selected productions and posted on our website where they could be accessed by all Royal MTC patrons.

SPONSORED BY **GREAT-WEST LIFE**

Left: Backstage Pass participants.

PHOTO BY DAVE SWIECICKI

BACKSTAGE PASS: THEATRE PERSPECTIVES FOR STUDENTS

This season-long program gave 25 Grade 11 and 12 students an in-depth look at theatre. Students attended six theatre workshops led by members of Manitoba's professional theatre community followed by a matinee performance of each John Hirsch Mainstage production. Participants were selected based on their application essay and teacher recommendations.

Twenty-five students participated from Winnipeg and rural Manitoba schools:

Gabi Hill	College Jeanne-Sauve
Emily Grant	Garden City Collegiate
Chloe Settee	Garden City Collegiate
Matthew Hamilton	Glenlawn Collegiate
Jared Robinson	Glenlawn Collegiate
Katie Bloom	Homeschool
Giorgio Einarson	J.H. Bruns
Devon Hemmet	Kildonan East Collegiate
Hayden Maines	Kildonan East Collegiate
Kathleen Harland	Lac du Bonnet Senior School
Chayce Dykstra	Miles MacDonnell Collegiate
Megan Boulton	Rosenort School
Beth Assereiro	Springfield Collegiate Institute
Amanda Livingstone	Springfield Collegiate Institute
Floeanne Delgado	St. Mary's Academy
Tyra Brynn Godenir	St. Mary's Academy
MacKenzie Kolton	St. Mary's Academy
Emma Welham	St. Mary's Academy
Joshua Lambert	St. Paul's High School
Jordana Irving	Tec Voc High School
Anyssa Rylee Gates	Treherne Collegiate
Victoria Gutscher	Vincent Massey Collegiate
Julia Blaire Nelles	Vincent Massey Collegiate
Riley Paull	Vincent Massey Collegiate
Jaydin Pommer	Vincent Massey Collegiate

THE 2015/16 LINEUP

THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE • Students had a full backstage tour of the John Hirsch Mainstage. Every department explained how they contribute to each production and students had the chance to talk to Royal MTC staff about the fields that interest them.

ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS • Local playwright Angus Kohm prepared the students for the upcoming Manitoba High School Playwriting Competition's deadline with a workshop about how to pen a dynamite script. Students learned the differences between writing for film and the stage and explored how plays are adapted into movies.

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL • Local dancer and choreographer Brenda Gorlick taught the students how a choreographer works with a director to create the "look" for the movement in a show. Then she got the students on their feet learning how to talk the talk and walk the walk – it was time to dance!

CHIMERICA • Local actor and director Kevin Klassen walked the students through the auditioning process: where to find out about auditions, how to prepare and what to take. They learned about the different types of auditions and had the chance to present a piece and get feedback.

UNNECESSARY FARCE • Jacquie Loewen is a local fight choreographer, stunt performer, actor and educator. She showed the students all the tricks to make stage fighting look convincing while staying safe at the same time. This workshop is always a favourite!

BOOM • Students got creative with the props department as they learned how different objects are made for the stage – not everything on stage is as it appears! They learned tricks about how to make props convincing while also making fake food. Afterwards, students learned the art of stage makeup and special effects from Manitoba Opera head of makeup Chris Hadley.

SPONSORED BY **MTS FUTURE FIRST**

BENEFACTORS: **DEBORAH GRAY & MARTHA BURNS**

JEAN MURRAY - MORAY SINCLAIR THEATRE SCHOLARSHIP

In recognition and celebration of two Winnipeg personalities who contributed to our theatre's development, Royal MTC established the Jean Murray - Moray Sinclair Theatre Scholarship 50 years ago. This fund awards scholarships to successful applicants who are full-time students attending accredited theatre schools or university theatre programs, and who intend to pursue a career in theatre. Also, this fund awards apprenticeships to emerging professional artists and craftspeople who have completed accredited post-secondary training within the past two academic years and are looking for opportunities to gain experience in professional theatre.

The fund is sustained by Royal MTC's patrons, who generously respond each season as we "pass the hat" during the run of one John Hirsch Mainstage production.

During *The Woman in Black* in our 2014/15 season, patrons kindly donated \$21,181.25. Royal MTC awarded a total of \$21,100 for the 2015/16 academic year/theatre season.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Megan Andres	Becky Frohlinger	Suzie Martin
Jessy Ardern	Adrianna Kollar	Emily Meadows
Erik Berg	Hannah Krostewitz	Erica Mitchell
Ksenia Broda-Milian	Kelsey Lacombe	Victoria Popp
Genevieve DeGraves	Montana Lehmann	Maria Zarrillo

APPRENTICESHIP RECIPIENTS

Joseph Abetria	Jane Buttner	Wren Hookey
Darryl Audette	Jody Chalmers	Frances Koncan

MONDAY MIX

Monday Mix is an informal lecture series available to patrons who attend the second Monday of our John Hirsch Mainstage shows. Led by local professionals, each session explores a component of the production.

THE 2015/16 LINEUP

THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE • The season started off with a bang! Firearms Safety Consultant Dave Brown spoke to the preparation and training that was required to create action that was dramatic but safe. Dave demonstrated how firearms are used safely in theatrical performances. Attendees: 50

ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS • A backstage tour of Royal MTC was followed by a talk by Kari Hagness, Head of Props, who spoke about some of the amazing props used in the play and the behind-the-scenes magic that brought the surreal characters and story to life. Attendees: 110

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL • Have you ever wondered what it's like to be a professional ballet dancer? Liam Caines, a Company Dancer from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, spoke about his career and the challenges he overcame to become a professional dancer. Attendees: 70

CHIMERICA • Tina Chen, head of the University of Manitoba Department of History, delved into the historic significance of the "Tank Man" and the impact of the Tiananmen Square protests in China. Attendees: 72

UNNECESSARY FARCE • Being funny is hard work. Winnipeg Free Press humour columnist Doug Speirs, known for his column *The Doug House*, spoke about what it takes to be funny - and how wonderful laughter is. Attendees: 75

BOOM • Social Historian George Buri took audiences on a ride from the 1950s to present day, with emphasis on how the Baby Boom generation has shaped our culture. From the lunar landing to duck-and-cover and Beatlemania, audiences had a dose of nostalgia while brushing up on their history. Attendees: 83

TALKBACKS

Post-show, actors return to the stage for a question-and-answer session with the audience. Talkbacks are hosted after Tuesday evening performances and the final Wednesday matinee at the John Hirsch Mainstage and following Tuesday evening performances and Thursday matinees at the Tom Hendry Warehouse.

Arne MacPherson and
Paul Essiembre in
Unnecessary Farce.

PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT



SPECIAL EVENTS

BLACK & WHITE BALL

A NIGHT OF KINGS & QUEENS

On Saturday, November 7, The Fort Garry Hotel's Grand Ballroom was transformed into a land of wonder for the 33rd Black & White Ball, an evening of elegant abandon. The night began with a special appearance by Tweedledee and Tweedledum from *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*, followed by dancing throughout dinner and into the night to the musical talents of the Danny Kramer Dance Band. The Black & White Ball is the largest annual fundraiser for Royal MTC and funds raised support the production of world-class theatre.

Royal MTC and the event committee sincerely thank the guests, sponsors, corporate table purchasers, donors and volunteers for making this event such a success. These generous contributions support Royal MTC's many programs and productions while ensuring that live theatre continues to thrive in this community. Special thanks to Premier Sponsor RBC for their continued support.

Congratulations to Carla Castelane, winner of the Fillmore Riley Vacation Prize!

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ATTENDANCE • 358

NET PROCEEDS • \$127,432.51

ALL PHOTOS BY MANUEL F. SOUSA PHOTOGRAPHY



The Black & White Ball committee.



Tweedledum (Tristan Carlucci), Royal MTC Board of Trustees Chair Jim McLandress and Tweedledee (Aaron Pridham).



SPECIAL EVENTS

ROYAL MTC/MBA LAWYERS PLAY



WE ARE WHAT WE ARE!

The glittering curtain parted and the showgirls strutted their stuff from April 26 to 30 in *La Cage aux Folles*, St. Tropez's most unusual cabaret nightclub! The musical featured star turns by Richard Yaffe as Albin and Mark O'Neill as Georges, supported by a dedicated cast of 22 Manitoba Bar Association members who volunteered hundreds of (unbillable) hours to create this very special production. The sold-out crowd was wowed by this hilarious and touching story of love and acceptance.

The annual Royal MTC/MBA Lawyers Play is an important fundraising event for the theatre, and has raised more than \$1,000,000 since 1990. The support of our patrons, donors, advertisers and sponsors allows us to offer extraordinary theatre at accessible prices to all Manitobans.

Royal MTC extends sincere thanks to the talented cast and hardworking crew, as well as our many volunteers and audience members.

LA CAGE AUX FOLLES

Book by Harvey Fierstein
Music and Lyrics by Jerry Herman
Based on the play by Jean Poiret

April 26-30, 2016

Director: Steven Schipper*
 Choreographer: Sofia Costantini*
 Music Director: Danny Carroll
 Production Designer: Kari Hagness
 Wardrobe Coordinator: Thora Lamont
 Lighting Designer: Randy Zyla Harder
 Audio: Chris Brett
 Deck Audio: Greg Wood
 Assistant Director: Robb Paterson
 Stage Manager: Chuck McEwen
 Assistant Stage Managers: Jennifer Cheslock,
 Tori Popp, Melinda Tallin

Cast: Gail Asper, Andrea Bellhouse, Kalyn Bombback, Krista Boryskavich, Paul Cooper, Joel Guénette, Melissa Hazelton, Kate Henley, Vivian Hilder, Reannah Hocken, Jessica Isaak, Bryan Klein, Ryan Krahn, Mark O'Neill, Jeff Palamar, Sandi Phillips, Laura Robinson, Evan Roitenberg, Jaime Rosin, Priti Shah, Garth Smorang, Neil Steen, Maria Versace, Richard L. Yaffe

Musicians: Danny Carroll, Norman Rosenbaum,
 Rob Siwik, Eric Vickar, Nenad Zdjelar

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TICKETS SOLD FOR FIVE PERFORMANCES • 1,388

NET PROCEEDS • \$34,946



Richard L. Yaffe as Albin.
 PHOTO BY DAVE SWIECICKI



Lawyers Play committee member Jamie Jurczak with
 Bradley D. Regehr, MBA President. PHOTO BY DAVE SWIECICKI



The cast of *La Cage aux Folles*.
 PHOTO BY RANDY ZYLA HARDER



Mark O'Neill and Richard L. Yaffe.
 PHOTO BY DAVE SWIECICKI

*Appears with permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association

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Heather Russell in *Unnecessary Farce*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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	OPERATING FUND	CAPITAL REPLACEMENT FUND	THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND	STABILIZATION FUND	ASM WORKING CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUNDS	2016 TOTAL	2015 TOTAL
ASSETS								
CURRENT								
Cash and short term investments	2,760,750					53,929	2,814,679	3,021,689
Accounts and grants receivable	901,821						901,821	811,348
Prepaid expenses	425,011						425,011	400,290
Due to/(from) funds	(1,121,607)	500,924	37,305	483,378	100,000		—	—
	2,965,975	500,924	37,305	483,378	100,000	53,929	4,141,511	4,233,327
CAPITAL ASSETS								
		1,361,684					1,361,684	1,708,910
	2,965,975	1,862,608	37,305	483,378	100,000	53,929	5,503,195	5,942,237
LIABILITIES								
CURRENT								
Accounts payable & accrued liabilities	265,100						265,100	291,949
Deferred revenue	2,700,875						2,700,875	2,699,611
	2,965,975						2,965,975	2,991,560
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO CAPITAL ASSETS								
		1,411,046					1,411,046	1,573,378
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS								
						53,929	53,929	54,368
	2,965,975	1,411,046				53,929	4,430,950	4,619,306
NET ASSETS								
Internally Restricted	—		37,305				37,305	39,008
Invested in capital assets	—	451,562					451,562	469,470
Unrestricted	—			483,378	100,000		583,378	814,453
	—	451,562	37,305	483,378	100,000	—	1,072,245	1,322,931
	2,965,975	1,862,608	37,305	483,378	100,000	53,929	5,503,195	5,942,237

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS & CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AS OF MAY 31, 2016

	OPERATING FUND	CAPITAL REPLACEMENT FUND	THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND	STABILIZATION FUND	ASM WORKING CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUNDS	2016 TOTAL	2015 TOTAL
Revenue	10,110,779	385,576	—	—	—	21,100	10,517,455	10,518,874
Expenses	10,316,854	403,484	26,703	—	—	21,100	10,768,141	10,394,245
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(206,075)	(17,908)	(26,703)	—	—	—	(250,686)	124,629
Net assets, beginning of year		469,470	39,008	714,453	100,000	—	1,322,931	1,198,302
Interfund transfers	206,075	—	25,000	(231,075)	—	—		
Net assets, end of year	—	451,562	37,305	483,378	100,000	—	1,072,245	1,322,931

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PHOTOS BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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