

Annual Report

2023/24



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.

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: Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work (founded in 2021) 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 Kelly Thornton and Executive Director Camilla Holland, Royal MTC remains Manitoba's flagship theatre.

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The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre is proud to call Manitoba home. Royal MTC is located in Winnipeg on Treaty 1, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Anishinew and Dakota people, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We are thankful for the benefits sharing this land has afforded us, acknowledge the responsibilities of the Treaties, and embrace the opportunity to partner with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

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.

Vision

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

Mission

Royal MTC 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.

Values

EXCELLENCE

Our commitment to excellence is reflected in the writing of each play and the artists who create each production, and is a promise to 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.

INCLUSION

Our commitment to inclusion ensures that as we share theatre throughout our city and province, we create a welcoming space for everyone.

ACCESSIBILITY

Our commitment to accessibility requires that we broaden our understanding of barriers to engagement, and work to eliminate them.

AFFORDABILITY

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

SUSTAINABILITY

Our commitment to sustainability begins with understanding our environmental impact, and implementing best practices in environmental sustainability in theatre.

LONGEVITY

Our commitment to longevity is evident in our governance structure, business practices and financial management.



Darren Martens, Tess Bengler, Mike Melino, Laura Olafson in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. PHOTO BY EMELIA HELLMAN

Attendance

JOHN HIRSCH MAINSTAGE.....	90,716
TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE.....	13,271
WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL.....	81,500
REGIONAL TOUR.....	2,768
THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES.....	3,720
Attended 6 student-only matinee performances	
TOTAL.....	191,975



The cast of *The Comeback*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

“MTC’s dedication to fostering local talent and showcasing Canadian playwrights adds a distinctive flair to their programming. It’s evident that the theatre’s artistic direction is carefully curated to resonate with the community while pushing artistic boundaries. Overall, Manitoba Theatre Centre stands out as a cultural gem in Winnipeg, offering compelling productions that entertain, provoke thought, and celebrate the rich tapestry of Canadian theatre. For anyone looking to immerse themselves in the arts scene of Manitoba, a visit to MTC promises an unforgettable theatrical journey.” – PATRON



The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre operates as a non-profit charitable organization, led by the Artistic Director, Executive Director, 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 26, 2024 to report artistic and financial results to interested subscribers, patrons and community members.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS



★★★★ 1/2

“...Benger is sunny and warm,
evoking the exact range of emotions
audiences feel when listening to
King’s music” – FREE PRESS



Tess Benger in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*.
PHOTO BY EMEJIA HELLMAN

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Under the extraordinary leadership of Artistic Director Kelly Thornton and Executive Director Camilla Holland, Royal MTC once again delivered an incredible season!

The 2023/24 season was filled with new plays, local talent and incredible stories about families. We enjoyed musicals that made us quietly sing “so long, farewell” and we felt the earth move under our feet. Together we laughed out loud, witnessed vulnerabilities and uncompromising humanity, experienced love and forgiveness and, most importantly, we came away with a strong sense of hope.

To bring these stories of resilience, hope and love to our stages takes a staggering amount of planning and teamwork. We are so fortunate to have such a committed team of dedicated staff and volunteers. Together with the Board of Trustees, I thank you all for your strong commitment not only to the theatre, but to our patrons and community. A special thank you to the senior leadership team – you were instrumental in the success of the season and meeting our strategic goals and priorities. Your ideas, dedication and passion were very much appreciated – as well as the long days.

The Board and leadership team continue to be guided by Royal MTC’s Strategic Renewal Plan and its four priorities: cultivating talent, fostering a deeper connection with community, engaging audiences, and balancing the organizational foundation. When you look back over the past season, I am confident that you will agree that we delivered on these priorities.

In a long-planned transition, Executive Director Camilla Holland is bidding us farewell after 13 remarkable years. Camilla has led with integrity, empathy, intention and resilience. Her strategic lens, advocacy and strong financial oversight will ensure Royal MTC continues to be vital to our city’s arts and culture scene. A wonderful Search Committee worked with national firm Searchlight Partners on a robust search process. We feel incredibly proud to have announced Evan Klassen as our new Executive Director. An energetic, inclusive and forward-thinking administrator, not only does Evan bring the experience and expertise required, he is a former Winnipegger who is thrilled to return home.

I would like to thank and extend our gratitude to our government partners, sponsors, donors, funders, volunteers and patrons for your tangible expressions of confidence and support. I would like to particularly mention the following funding partners – the Winnipeg Foundation, the Province of Manitoba, and the Federal Government and United Way who supported a Community Services Recovery Fund. Thanks to their support, MTC was able to help ensure uninterrupted performances by engaging understudies in the 2023/24 season, and we have extended this support into the 2024/25 season to help ensure that the show will go on.

I extend my gratitude to the entire Royal MTC Board of Trustees and to those who have taken on additional responsibilities on the Search Committee, and the Executive Committee. We have a very engaged Board and I look forward to our discussions and deliberations, focusing on growth, welcoming current and new audiences – and holding close our strategic values.

I look forward to seeing all of you next season for another extraordinary year, as we invite Manitoba theatre lovers to share in the power of story.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Speers". The signature is fluid and cursive.

LAURIE SPEERS

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



For a lucky 13 years, it has been my privilege to serve – first as General Manager, and now Executive Director. My family and I have made a home on Treaty One, surrounded by an inspiring artistic and arts-supporting community.

I worked with Artistic Director Emeritus Steven Schipper for eight seasons. Steven has an incredible gift for thinking three steps ahead of the rest of us. He is generous and patient, curious and smart, and I learned so much from him. Steven would often quote Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, “The whole world is a very narrow bridge, the essential thing is to not be afraid”. I look back on our years co-leading and believe that together, we walked that bridge with joy and confidence.

Kelly and I have known each other since we were upstart theatre makers in Toronto in the 1990s. I knew she was strategic, intelligent and compassionate. Her positivity served our entire community incredibly well when we lurched into a pandemic within nine months of her arrival. I am in awe of her enormous capacity to listen, to lead fearlessly, and to hold fast to her values. Together with incoming Executive Director Evan Klassen, the organization is in great hands.

Royal MTC’s leadership team and our Board of Trustees are confident that the path forward is to attract, regain and retain audiences that support programming at the scope and scale expected from Manitoba’s largest theatre. We want both our theatres and stages full of people, and the 2023/24 season is significant proof that we can grow our way back to sustainability. We are actively seeking a path that enables more, not fewer, opportunities for audiences and artists to engage in the act of imagining.

We couldn’t make it happen without the steady support of our public funders – the Canada Council for the Arts, Manitoba Arts Council, Winnipeg Arts Council, Winnipeg Foundation and Canadian Heritage.

It has been my privilege to work alongside more than 60 members of our Board of Trustees – enormous thanks to all of them for bringing their time, talent and treasure to Royal MTC. First among equals are the seven

Chairs of the Board of Trustees with whom I worked closely – Gary Hannaford, Kerry Dangerfield, Jim McLandress, Dave Christie, Tony Fletcher, John Guttormson and Laurie Speers. Each were great champions, trusted counsel, and gifted leaders. Current Chair Laurie brought a compassionate and strategic approach to a robust search process, supported the organization through a number of stressful years, and at a time of transition, said “yes” to a third year of service. My enormous thanks to her for her dedication and exuberant engagement.

What will I remember most joyfully from my time at MTC? The shows! This winter I would routinely sneak into the back of the balcony to hear the extraordinary Tess Bengler blow off the roof with the final song in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*.

*I have often asked myself the reason for the sadness
In a world where tears are just a lullaby
If there’s any answer, maybe love can end the madness
Maybe not, oh, but we can only try*

*You’ve got to get up every morning
With a smile on your face
And show the world all the love in your heart
Then people gonna treat you better
You’re gonna find, yes you will
That you’re beautiful*

With much love to everyone at Royal MTC, it’s been a beautiful journey!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Camilla Holland". The signature is fluid and cursive.

CAMILLA HOLLAND

MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



When I walked the Camino Trail in 2015, a friend gifted me this phrase: “Don’t forget to look back.” As I stumbled along the trail, this mantra became a lesson. Remember where you come from, relish this present moment, but don’t forget to take stock of your efforts and with every step, your transformation.

The success of the 2023/24 season is the culmination of a huge collective effort, a course of action that began many, many months ago. Together we did an extraordinary thing – as we continued to strategize around organizational recovery, we took a calculated risk, and with an entrepreneurial spirit we decided to grow our way out of the problem. To bring not one, but two musicals to our stage, we aimed to delight and entertain our audiences, and remind them that there is nothing like great theatre to ignite us. This season did just that: while the financial risks were real, we delivered extraordinary plays on our two stages, and across Manitoba on the Regional Tour.

I have profound gratitude to all who walked beside me on this journey, who not only had faith but approached the work with optimism and energy. This year was a record-breaking year for ticket sales. We saw a return in our attendance that approached pre-pandemic, we grew our subscriptions back by 8%, and while the ratio between subscriptions and single tickets is different than pre-pandemic, it bodes well for our future as we remind Manitobans of the extraordinary power of theatre in their lives.

I am deeply grateful to the artists – the extraordinary actors, directors, choreographers, designers, craftspeople, carpenters, stage managers and crew, who make magic on our stage, and who with open hearts tell our stories. Thank you to our audiences whose appetite for great art filled our theatres this year, our co-producers whose partnerships made it all possible, and our volunteers who greet our patrons every day, radiating with a passion for theatre. And huge thanks to our incredible staff

who worked tirelessly to accomplish a level of excellence unmatched in Canadian theatre. Almost every artist I speak with who works at MTC remarks on this extraordinary team.

To the Board of Trustees, led by our passionate chair Laurie Speers, who are the most committed and avid ambassadors for our work, profound thanks. Much gratitude to our funders, whose belief in our mission propels us forward, and our donors whose immense generosity sustains us. And to my partner Camilla, whose astonishing journey is finally complete here at MTC. It has been an exceptional time working with her, and I am elated that our efforts have delivered such a successful season as her swan song at Royal MTC.

We’re thrilled to welcome our new Executive Director Evan Klassen, who brings energy, enthusiasm and a deep sense of purpose to this next leg of the journey. I am excited for what lies ahead, and humbled to dedicate myself to this incredible theatre.

Thank you, one and all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Thornton". The signature is fluid and cursive.

KELLY THORNTON

It was a truly extraordinary season here at Royal MTC and we have you to thank for helping us achieve our vision!



Exceptional Talent

The 2023/24 season presented exceptional talent on and off stage with **171 ARTISTS** including actors, directors, designers, stage managers, and more!

MTC presented **25 SCHOLARSHIPS, 4 ASSISTANTSHIPS** and **5 APPRENTICESHIPS** to the next generation of talent to support their growth. Many past recipients of scholarships and apprenticeships were involved in the season. 21 worked as actors, crew and creative team members on productions, while 7 past recipients are on MTC staff.

The Tom Hendry Warehouse season welcomed **BRILLIANT NEW CANADIAN STORIES** by award-winning playwrights celebrating our stories. *among men* playwright David Yee was awarded the 2023 Siminovitch Prize and *The Piano Teacher* by Dorothy Dittrich won the 2022 Governor General's Literary Award for Drama.



Jane Testar and Gwendolyn Collins in *The Piano Teacher*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

On the Mainstage, the season concluded with the **PREMIERE** of *The Comeback* penned by one of Winnipeg's most beloved theatre couples, Trish Cooper and Sam Vint.

“The Comeback was by far the best play of the season for me. The energy on opening night was electric and the play was touching and hilarious. So great to have a local story like that at MTC” – PATRON



Engaged Communities

Our Regional Tour visited **21 COMMUNITIES** across Manitoba and Ontario. From Thompson to Kenora to Minnedosa, **2,768 PATRONS** celebrated professional theatre right in their backyard.

At home on the John Hirsch Mainstage, MTC welcomed **OVER 190 PEOPLE** for mini tours during Culture Days on September 23. During the season, we gave tours to approximately **350 PEOPLE** from 13 school and community groups.

7,245 STUDENTS enthusiastically filled the theatre through the Theatre for Young Audience program, a **21% INCREASE** from last year. Alongside schools attending regularly scheduled performances, an additional six student-only matinees filled the theatre with excited youth. Youth programs hosted **29 TEENS** through Backstage Pass and Young Expressions from 16 different schools.

“This program was made of everything I love. I now know what I want to be when I grow up!”
– YOUNG EXPRESSIONS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Extraordinary Productions



“This year I have laughed, I’ve sang, I’ve danced in my seat, I’ve cried. I’ve come home feeling moved and inspired.” – PATRON

Be it a laugh-out-loud farce, a beloved family classic or a meaty drama to chew on, the magic of storytelling was brought to life by our incredibly talented craftspeople and stage crew. These artisans were charged with 96 different children's outfits, hand painted 20-ft. tall trees and the movable steel frame for 40-ft. projections. Our scenic artists, wardrobe team, props creators and carpenters created the magical worlds for our shared theatrical experience.

This season included collaborations near and far, giving our artists national reach while sharing production costs. Audiences outside of Winnipeg were wowed by our local talent and by the incredible creations from our artisans and stage crew. *Clue's* awe-inspiring set featuring two levels that revolved, a floating roof, and many secret passageways travelled to the Grand Theatre to acclaimed performances in London, ON. *The Sound of Music* travelled to the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton and *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* came to us after a run at the Segal Theatre in Montréal. At home, *among men* was co-produced with Theatre Projects Manitoba.

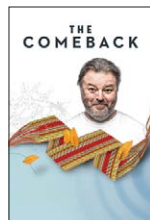
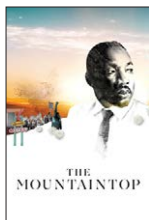


“Thrills are alive”

– FREE PRESS



JOHN HIRSCH MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS



Clue

Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn

Written by Sandy Rustin

Additional Material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price

Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture

Based on the Hasbro board game CLUE

Original Music by Michael Holland

October 19 - November 11, 2023

PREVIEWS • October 17 & 18

Director: Dennis Garnhum

Set & Costume Designer: Brian Perchaluk***

Lighting Designer: Kevin Lamotte**

Intimacy Director: Sharon Bajer†

Fight Director: Jacquie Loewen

Apprentice Director: Theresa Thomson*

Apprentice Set & Costume Designer:

Julia Anderson**

Stage Manager: Michael Duggan**

Assistant Stage Manager: Samantha Desiree

Apprentice Stage Manager: Jazz Marcelino†

Cast: Sharon Bajer†, Petrina Bromley, Rosie Callaghan, Kamal Chioua, Beau Dixon, Alex Furber, Jesse Gervais, Toby Hughes, Reena Jolly, Tracy Penner†, Derek Scott, Rosalie Tremblay

Understudies: Rosie Callaghan, Kamal Chioua, Alex Furber, Tracy Penner†

A co-production with The Grand Theatre

18,849 ATTENDED 29 PERFORMANCES

The Sound of Music

Music by Richard Rodgers

Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse

Suggested by "The Trapp Family Singers"
by Maria Augusta Trapp

November 30 - December 23, 2023

PREVIEWS • November 28 & 29

Director: Rachel Peake

Music Director: Andrew St. Hilaire

Choreographer: Ainsley Hillyard

Set Designer: Lorenzo Savoini

Costume Designer: Jessica Oostergo**

Lighting Designer: Larry Isacoff*

Sound Designer: Emily C. Porter**

Intimacy Director & Apprentice Director/

Choreographer: Sam Hutchings**†

Assistant Music Director: Paul Rodermond

Assistant Costume Designer: Kate George†

German Language Coach: Carolin Schroeder

Military Consultant: JP Hoekstra

Religious Consultants: Fr. Geoffrey Angeles & Fr. Darrin Gurr

Stage Manager: Madison Henry

Assistant Stage Manager: Zahra Larche

Assistant Stage Manager: Tori Popp†

Assistant Stage Manager: Katie Schmidt†

Apprentice Stage Manager: Sarah Lamoureux

Child Supervisor: Kira Chisholm

Child Supervisor: Devon Helm

Cast: Vance Avery, Micah Buenafe, Lara Ciekiewicz, Julia Davis, Renee DeSilva-Bissell, Isaac Di Cresce, Jesse Drwiega, Charlie Gallant, Xhantelle Garcia, Davison Gee, Katie German, Kristi Hansen, Kevin Klassen, Sarah Luby, Andrew MacDonald-Smith, Arne MacPherson, Nathan Malolos, Alba Manuel, Ida May Meacham, Priya Narine, Christina Nguyen, Layla North, Ellie Prescott, Anastasia Rautert, Garrett Ross, Alex Schaeffer, Jan Skene, Justin Stadnyk†, Madelyn Torres

Understudies: Julia Davis, Renee DeSilva-Bissell, Katie German, Sarah Luby, Andrew MacDonald-Smith, Garrett Ross, Jan Skene, Justin Stadnyk

Musicians: Andrew St. Hilaire, Joseph Tritt, Nenad Zdjelar, Tony Cyre, Janice Finlay, Tracy Wright, Sharon Atkinson, Matt Walden, Joel Green, Todd Martin, Dave Lawton

A co-production with Citadel Theatre

SPONSORED BY THE ASPER FOUNDATION &
THE GAIL ASPER FAMILY FOUNDATION

21,204 ATTENDED 29 PERFORMANCES

Beautiful: The Carole King Musical

Book by Douglas McGrath

Words & Music by

Gerry Goffin & Carole King

Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil

Music by Arrangement with

Sony/ATV Music Publishing

Orchestrations, Vocal and Incidental Music
Arrangements by Steve Sidwell

January 11 - February 3, 2024

PREVIEWS • January 9 & 10

Director: Kelly Thornton

Music Director: Floyd Ricketts

Choreographer: Jaz Sealey

Set Designer: Gillian Gallow**

Costume Designer: Louise Bourret

Lighting Designer: Hugh Conacher**

Sound Designer: Sylvain Sévigny

Intimacy Directors: Lisa Rubin & Sharon Bajer†

Assistant Director: Justin Stadnyk†

Apprentice Lighting Designer: Anika Binding

Stage Manager: Melanie St-Jacques

Assistant Stage Manager: Zahra Larche

Assistant Stage Manager: Tori Popp†

Apprentice Stage Manager: Kyra Krassnigg

Cast: Tess Bengler, Ruth Acheampong, Andre Anthony, Lisa Bell, Louise Camilleri, Jeremy Carver-James, Ellen David, Matthew Fletcher†, Darren Martens, Mike Melino, Davis Okey-Azunnah, Laura Olafson, Jonathan Patterson, Alana Randall, Rhea Rodych-Rasidescu†, Dakota Jamal Wellman, Chase Winnicky†, Cory Wojcik

Understudies: Jillian Willems, Ruth Acheampong, Andre Anthony, Lisa Bell, Louise Camilleri, Jeremy Carver-James, Matthew Fletcher†, Davis Okey-Azunnah, Jonathan Patterson, Alana Randall, Rhea Rodych-Rasidescu†, Dakota Jamal Wellman, Chase Winnicky†

Musicians: Floyd Ricketts, Andrew St. Hilaire, Rachel Cameron, Brendan Thompson, Julian Bradford, Larry Roy, Janice Finlay, Shane Hicks, Dave Lawton

A co-production with The Segal Centre

18,790 ATTENDED 28 PERFORMANCES

The Mountaintop

By Katori Hall

February 15 - March 9, 2024

PREVIEW • February 14

Director: Hazel Venzon†

Original Director: Audrey Dwyer†

Set Designer: Brian Perchaluk***

Costume Designer: Rachel Forbes**

Lighting & Video Designer: Hugh Conacher**

Sound Designer: Chris Coyne

Fight Director: Jacquie Loewen

Intimacy Director: Sharon Bajer†

Dialect Coach: Amani Dorn

Assistant Director: Melissa Langdon

Apprentice Lighting Designer: Anika Binding†

Apprentice Lighting Designer: Katriona Dunn

Stage Manager: Michael Duggan**

Replacement Stage Manager: Leslie Watson†

Assistant Stage Manager: Katie Hoppa

Apprentice Stage Manager: Key Caguioa

Cast: Cherissa Richards†, Ray Strachan†

10,698 ATTENDED 29 PERFORMANCES

The Lehman Trilogy

By Stefano Massini
Adapted by Ben Power

March 21 – April 13, 2024
PREVIEW • March 20

Director: Richard Greenblatt
Set & Costume Designer: Gillian Gallow**
Lighting & Video Designer: Hugh Conacher**
Original Compositions & Sound Designer:
Ashley Au
Dialect Coach: Jane Gooderham
Apprentice Director: Cora Matheson*
Assistant Lighting & Video Designer:
Katriona Dunn
Apprentice Lighting & Video Designer:
Anika Binding†
Language Consultants: Diane Flacks,
Dr. Stephanie Hatzifilalithis, Maria Syrgiannis,
Arpad Szigeti & Maria Vacratsis
Stage Manager: Dustyn Wales
Assistant Stage Manager: Katie Schmidt†
Apprentice Stage Manager: Samantha Sage
Cast: Ari Cohen†, Jordan Pettle, Alex Poch Goldin
10,056 ATTENDED 24 PERFORMANCES

The Comeback

By Trish Cooper and Sam Vint

April 25 – May 18, 2024
PREVIEW • April 24

Director / Production Dramaturg: Eric Coates
Set Designer: Brian Perchaluk***
Costume Designer: Joseph Abetria†
Associate Costume Designer: Amy McPherson
Lighting Designer: Larry Isacoff†
Composer & Sound Designer: Daniel Roy
Assistant Director: Charlene Van Buekenhout
Cultural Consultant: Val Vint
Cree Translation: Michael Lawrenchuk
Music Coach: Marion Day
Stage Manager: Michael Duggan**
Assistant Stage Manager: Ridge Romanishen
Apprentice Stage Manager: Meaghan Fletcher
Child Supervisor: Devon Helm
Calla Adubofour-Poku, Mariam Bernstein†,
Damien Broomes, Gwendolyn Collins,
Myles Grantham, Marsha Knight, Michael
Lawrenchuk, Tracey Nepinak, Melanie Whyte,
Cory Wojcik

11,119 ATTENDED 28 PERFORMANCES



First Métis Man of Odesa

Written and Performed by
Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova

November 2 – 18, 2023
PREVIEW • November 1

Director: Lianna Makuch§
Production Designer: Daniela Masellis
Projection Designer: Amelia Scott
Composer: Daraba
Sound Designer: Aaron Macri
Choreographer: Krista Lin
Dramaturg: Matt McGeachy
Stage Manager: Lore Green*
Production Manager & Technical Director:
Trent Crosby

Associate Designer: Cameron Fraser
Design Consultation & Scenic Artwork:
Dawn Marie Marchand
Beadwork: Krista Leddy & Maria Nelson
Producer: Sheiny Satanove
Associate Producer: Alyson Dicey
Head Scenic Painter: Emily Randall
Painters: Ashley Hiibner & Amy Powell
Drape Stitching: Theatre Garage
Fabrication: art lab

A Punctuate! Theatre Production

3,348 ATTENDED 19 PERFORMANCES

among men

By David Yee

January 25 – February 10, 2024
PREVIEW • January 24

Director: Suzie Martin†
Set Designer: Adam Parboosingh**
Costume Designer: Daina Leitold
Lighting Designer: Hugh Conacher**
Sound Designer: Ashley Au
Fight Director: Rick Skene
Dialect Coach: Tom Soares
Assistant Director: Christine Leslie†
Assistant Set Designer: Joyce Licup**
Assistant Lighting Designer: Anika Binding**
Production Dramaturg: Dana Tanner-Kennedy
Assistant Production Dramaturg: Jasmine Hopfe
Stage Manager: Ridge Romanishen
Apprentice Stage Manager: Jazz Marcelino†

Cast: Eric Blais†, Tom Keenan

A co-production with Theatre Projects Manitoba

3,286 ATTENDED 18 PERFORMANCES

The Piano Teacher

By Dorothy Dittrich

February 29 – March 16, 2024
PREVIEW • February 28

Director: Simon Miron†
Set Designer: Shauna Jones**
Costume Designer: Joseph Abetria†
Lighting Designer: jaymez**
Sound Designer: Justin Stadnyk†
Intimacy Director: Sharon Bajer†
Assistant Director / Piano Coach: Jodi Kristjanson†
Stage Manager: Margaret Brook
Apprentice Stage Manager: Devon Helm

Cast: Gwendolyn Collins, Chris Sousa,
Jane Testar

3,626 ATTENDED 18 PERFORMANCES

Guilt: A Love Story

Written and performed by Diane Flacks

April 4 – 20, 2024
PREVIEW • April 3

Director: Alisa Palmer
Movement Coach: Rebecca Harper
Set & Costume Designer: Jung-Hye Kim
Lighting Designer: Leigh Ann Vardy**
Associate Lighting Designer: Aurora Torok**
Sound Designer: Deanna H. Choi**
Associate Sound Designer: Jacob Lin 林鴻恩**
Stage Manager: Sandy Plunkett
Apprentice Stage Manager: Angela Mae Bago

A Tarragon Theatre Production

SPONSORED BY THE ASPER FOUNDATION

3,011 ATTENDED 18 PERFORMANCES



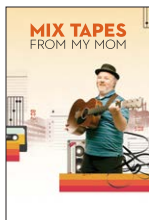
Diane Flacks in
Guilt: A Love Story.
PHOTO BY CYLLA VON TIEDEMANN

**Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

*Position funded through the Jean Murray - Moray Sinclair Theatre Apprenticeship Program *Past Jean Murray - Moray Sinclair Scholarship award winner

†Past Naomi Levin Theatre Scholarship award winner §The participation of these Artists are arranged by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance-Opera-Theatre Policy.

REGIONAL TOUR



Royal MTC and PlayNow.com were pleased to present our Regional Tour of *Mix Tapes From My Mom*.

Mix Tapes From My Mom

Written and Performed by Cory Wojcik
Featuring a live band

February 12 – March 12, 2024

Director: Trish Cooper
Set Designer: Daina Leitold
Music Director: Rusty Robot
Stage Manager: Sadie Wannamaker
Apprentice Stage Manager: Larissa Shabaga
Tour Technical Director: Joshua Gehman
Tour Technician: Jess Rose

2,768 ATTENDED 21 PERFORMANCES

- FEB 12 | MacGregor • Heartland Recreation Commission
- FEB 13 | Gimli • Kiwanis Club of Gimli and District
- FEB 16 | Thompson • Recreation, Parks and Culture, City of Thompson
- FEB 17 | Snow Lake • Aurora Borealis Arts Council
- FEB 18 | Flin Flon • Flin Flon Arts Council
- FEB 20 | Dauphin • Dauphin Arts Council
- FEB 22 | Souris • Souris District Arts Council
- FEB 23 | Minnedosa • Minnedosa Performing Arts Committee
- FEB 24 | Pinawa • Winnipeg River Arts Council
- FEB 25 | Strathclair • Strathclair & District Theatre Committee, Ltd.
- FEB 26 | Brandon • Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium
- FEB 27 | Deloraine • Southwest Showcase Inc.
- MAR 1 | Crystal City • Parklane Theatre Committee
- MAR 2 | Portage la Prairie • Prairie Fusion Arts & Entertainment
- MAR 4 | Red Lake • Wilderness Entertainment Series
- MAR 5 | Sioux Lookout • Sioux Hudson Entertainment Series
- MAR 6 | Dryden • Dryden Entertainment Series
- MAR 8 | Atikokan • Atikokan Entertainment Series
- MAR 10 | Kenora • Lake of the Woods Concert Group
- MAR 11 | Steinbach • Steinbach Arts Council
- MAR 12 | Carman • Golden Prairie Arts Council

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FESTIVALS



Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival

The 36th annual Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival brought the community together for a city-wide celebration of indie theatre. Featuring local, national and international performing companies, the festival showcased dramas, musicals, comedies, stand-up, improv and more! Ticketed attendance totalled 81,500 with 108 sold-out performances and \$718,505 in box office revenue returned to the performing companies. Audiences were delighted by 141 performing companies with 1,217 performances.

New to the festival this year was the inclusion of Pay-What-You-Can shows to provide Fringers with the most accessible and affordable ticket price yet. This included PWYC door tickets at the Kids Venue and Fringe Open Mic, along with a PWYC Sherlock Holmes self-guided adventure.

SUPPORTED BY **MANITOBA LIQUOR MARTS**

2023 WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL STATISTICS

- TICKETED ATTENDANCE • 81,500
- OUTDOOR ATTENDANCE (INCLUDING KIDS FRINGE) • 40,000-50,000 (APPROX.)
- KIDS VENUE ATTENDANCE • 3,421
- BOX OFFICE REVENUE • \$718,505
- NUMBER OF PERFORMING COMPANIES • 141
- NUMBER OF INDOOR PERFORMANCES • 1,217
- NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS • 658

Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work

Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work showcased the first public readings of six new plays written by the 2022/23 cohort of the Pimootayowin Creators Circle. From September 24-29, 2023, Royal MTC welcomed audiences to the Tom Hendry Warehouse lobby to enjoy the free script-reading festival.

This year's works included *Coming Home* written by Mary Black and directed by Ashley Cook; *7 Tips for Being a Good Indian* written by Ryan Black and directed by Marsha Knight; *Babylon* written by Michael Lawrenchuk and directed by Christopher Brauer; *The Shape of Paint Water* written by Emily Meadows and directed by Simon Miron; *Love, Louis* by Victoria Perrie and directed by Darla Contois; and *Differential Colours Waking in Darkness* written by Eric Plamondon and directed by Danielle Sturk. 33 local artists helped bring these shows to life as actors and directors.

The next Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work will be presented September 23-27, 2024.

SUPPORTED BY **TD READY COMMITMENT**

PHOTO BY LESLIE WATSON



2022/23 Pimootayowin Creators Circle cohort.



Reading of *Differential Colours Waking in Darkness* by Eric Plamondon. PHOTO BY LEIF NORMAN

Literary Development

Royal MTC, in its dedication to reconciliation and collaboration, is committed to the support and development of Indigenous playwrights across Manitoba. In the fall of 2023, the Pimootayowin Creators Circle welcomed four new writers and two returning artists, to write and workshop plays to be presented at the Pimootayowin Festival in the fall of 2024. These artists created new pieces or continued to develop existing works. The cohort included Erin McGregor, Gabriel Daniels, Jordan McPeck, Mark Head, Rhonda Apetagon and Victoria Perrie. The Pimootayowin Creators Circle, now in its fourth year, is led by Governor General Award-winning playwright Ian Ross and coordinated by Melissa Langdon. The Pimootayowin Creators Circle was generously sponsored by **TD Ready Commitment**.

In preparation for its world premiere in the 2023/24 Mainstage season, *The Comeback*, a commissioned play by Trish Cooper and Sam Vint, received two pre-production workshops led by director and dramaturg Eric Coates.

In other news, we are thrilled to continue the development of *Rizal*, a new musical by Joseph Aragon which received a three-day workshop in June 2023 with Nina Lee Aquino leading as director and dramaturg. Seed funding was provided to Marie Barlizo for continued work on her new play *The Warrior*, which received a workshop during her residency in February. And additional seed funding was offered for a treatment of *Intrepid*, by Alex Poch Goldin, a new work exploring William Stephenson.

Two Manitoban plays, *Control Yourself* by Ross McMillan, and *The Recipe* by Armin Wiebe, were read and workshopped with actors at Royal MTC with *The Recipe* being programmed with Theatre Projects Manitoba as a part of the 2024/25 season. Development funding was also provided to *Little Women*, adapted by Jordi Mand, and *ELEVATE: Manaaji'idiwin*, a new play from Pimootayowin member David McLeod which were both programmed as part of the 2024/25 season.



National Mentorship Program

Beginning in October of 2023, Royal MTC began its selection process for the fourth iteration of the National Mentorship Program. This program is designed to aid Manitoban theatre artists and practitioners to overcome the geographic isolation of the prairies and build a web of connections and opportunities. The National Mentorship Program is a part of Royal MTC's commitment to nurture and support the local talent pool, connecting the brightest emerging talent with the most innovative and exciting talent from across the country.

Following the selection of 12 mentees, one-on-one meetings were scheduled from January to May of 2024 to discuss theatre, leadership, skill development, personal growth and skill application. The Program culminated in a final wrap-up where mentees spoke on their experiences and relationships with their mentors. The National Mentorship Program was generously supported by **RBC Foundation - Emerging Artist Program**.

2023/24 NATIONAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

MENTEES	MENTORS
Angelina Alberto	Sharron Matthews
Ntara Curry	Philip Akin
Geneva Halverson	Chelsea Preston
Alison Holliday	Leila Ghaemi
Joyce Jugo	Stephanie Sy
Sophia Lobe	Michelle Bohn
Honey Pham	Kimberley Rampersad
Zanifa Rasool	Jacquie Thomas
Anaka Sandhu	Christine Quintana
Justin Stadnyk	Stafford Arima
Sarah Struthers	Eric Rose
Hazel Wallace	Elena Juatco

CITY OF SONG - WINNIPEG 150 EVENT

Tapestry Sing-along

In celebration of City of Song - Winnipeg 150, we hosted a free sing-along to Carole King's album *Tapestry* on Sunday, January 28. **470 patrons** participated in the event, which was led by cast members from *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, including Ruth Acheampong, Andre Anthony, Tess Bengler, Jeremy Carver-James, Louise Camilleri, Ellen David, Matthew Fletcher, Mike Melino, Laura Olafson, Jonathan Patterson, Alana Randall, Floyd Ricketts, Rhea Rodych-Rasidescu, Dakota Jamal Wellman, Jillian Willems and Chase Winnicky.

This special event was offered in partnership with the **Winnipeg Arts Council / City of Song**.



Pre-Show Chats

This informal lecture series is free to attend for ticket-holders to the third Thursday evening of our Mainstage season. Before the show, patrons enrich their experience through behind-the-scenes conversations with theatre professionals and special guests from our community. Over the course of the season, **208 patrons** joined us to enjoy the following:

CLUE • Olaf Pyttlik, board game expert and owner of our neighbour Across the Board Game Café, spoke about the history of the game.

THE SOUND OF MUSIC • Assistant Costume Designer Kate George let us in on the process of designing and building costumes for this well-loved musical.

BEAUTIFUL: THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL • Musicologist John Einarson brought the audience back in time to the Brill Building and shared insight into the music industry and Carole King's career.

THE MOUNTAINTOP • Assistant director of the original production and remount director Hazel Venzon spoke about the rehearsal process.

THE LEHMAN TRILOGY • Lighting and video designer and longtime MTC artist Hugh Conacher told us about his career and the challenges and opportunities in this epic production.

THE COMEBACK • Trish Cooper and Sam Vint, the playwrights of this world premiere, spoke about the journey from story to stage.

Talkbacks

Post-show, actors returned to the stage for a question-and-answer session with the audience. Talkbacks were hosted after the first Tuesday evening performance and second Wednesday matinee at the Mainstage, and after the first Tuesday evening performance and Thursday matinee at the Warehouse. At a total of 21 public Talkbacks, **over 1,000 patrons** are estimated to have participated.

Our Talkback Facilitator volunteers were Aaron Penner, Brandon Christopher, Christopher Brauer, Jack Fraser and Katrina Dunn.

Relaxed Performance

Royal MTC offered a Relaxed performance of *The Sound of Music* on December 10, 2024. This is the fifth season Royal MTC has engaged in this accessibility initiative, which is designed to welcome audience members who would benefit from a more relaxed environment. A detailed pre-show announcement prepares audience members for content and startling effects, and there is a relaxed attitude towards audience noise and movement. All patrons were invited to come, be themselves and experience live theatre.

ASL-Interpreted Performances

Royal MTC offered American Sign Language-Interpreted performances of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* on January 18, 2024 and *The Comeback* on May 5, 2024, arranging for ASL users and members of the Deaf community to have seats with clear sightlines to take in the interpreter and the action onstage.

Open Caption Performance

Royal MTC's Open Caption performance of *Clue* was offered on October 25, 2023. An electronic text display is positioned at the front of the stage to show what the actors are saying or singing and describe sound effects. This benefits not only Deaf patrons or those with hearing loss, but also enhances the performance for the hearing audience as a whole who may have missed a word, phrase, joke or lyric.

Audio Described Performance

Royal MTC offered Audio Described performances of *among men* on February 6, 2024 and *The Comeback* on May 10, 2024. During audio described performances, audience members who are blind or have low vision use a receiver and earpiece to hear about the physical action and visual elements of the production. These descriptions are voiced live, in real time, by a trained describer from VIEW.

Facility Tours

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre John Hirsch Mainstage is a National Historic site recognized for its contribution to Canadian theatre and for its unique Brutalist architecture. Facility tours provide a look behind the scenes at Royal MTC to gain a unique perspective on how we produce plays. Tours may visit the carpentry shop, wardrobe, props department and more! As a special event during Culture Days, MTC welcomed over **190 people** for mini-tours on September 23, 2023. During the season, we gave tours to approximately **350 people** from 13 schools and community groups.

Play on Words

The Winnipeg Public Library's talented Librarians provide amazing Explore More reading lists of resources that help you better connect with the play. In 2023/24, librarian-recommended reading lists were created for *First Métis Man of Odesa*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *The Piano Teacher* and *The Comeback*. These lists stay available on MTC's website for anyone who wants to dive deeper.

Enrichment Guides

Enrichment guides were compiled for all ten shows of the Mainstage and Warehouse seasons and the provincial tour. These guides were posted online for educators, students, and all other patrons to provide extra insight into our productions. They included plot synopses, playwright biographies, contextual background, glossaries, suggested classroom activities for educators and/or discussion prompts, and links to other resources including books, articles, videos and podcasts. Creators and contributors from outside of MTC included Desiree Pappel, Charlene Van Buekenhout, Sarah Farrant, Noah Boonov, Elliot Lazar and Tala Gammon.

Scholarships and Apprenticeships

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 Fund. 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. This fund also awards apprenticeships to emerging professional artists and craftspeople who are looking for opportunities to gain experience in professional theatre.

Royal MTC awarded a total of **\$25,000** for the 2023/2024 academic year/theatre season. Our generous patrons donated **\$47,917** online and at “pass-the-hat” performances of *Into the Woods*, with a generous match from the Zita and Mark Bernstein Foundation for all online donations.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Aurora Andrews	Olaluwa Fayokyn	Madeline Paulic
Julia Armstrong	Veronica Ford	Danika Robb
Eliza Binding	Artie Lorraine	Sarah Rossen
Victoria Brimble	Zoe Gagnon	Carolin Schroeder
Kirstin Caguioa	Haeln Gebre	Natalie Stefanson
Josh Calabio	Taylor Izon	Erin Teodoro
Samantha Campbell	Keira Jordan	Alissa Watson
Saraya Clayton	Rhianna Mathers	Katie Welham
Kinsey Donald	Kyle Mroz	Elio Zarrillo
Taryn Edgeworth	Leaf Pankratz	

APPRENTICESHIP RECIPIENTS:

Julia Anderson – Apprentice Set & Costume Designer for *Clue*
 Samantha Hutchings – Apprentice Director & Choreographer for *The Sound of Music*
 Cora Matheson – Apprentice Director for *The Lehman Trilogy*
 France Richards – Props Apprentice
 Theresa Thomson – Apprentice Director for *Clue*

Many past recipients of scholarships and apprenticeships were involved in the season. 21 worked as actors, crew and creative team members on productions, while 7 past recipients are on MTC staff.

Assistant Roles

Royal MTC is committed to the cultivation of local talent by providing opportunities for early career artists to refine and strengthen their craft. Assistants work with established theatre artists to broaden their skills and obtain professional experience.

Kate George – Assistant Costume Designer for *The Sound of Music*
 Christine Leslie – Assistant Director for *among men*
 Paul Rodemond – Assistant Music Director for *The Sound of Music*
 Charlene Van Buekenhout – Assistant Director for *The Comeback*

Student Placement

In 2023/24, Royal MTC hosted a student from Exchange Met School for a weekly placement from October–April. Grade 12 student Emily worked with Props, Scenic Art, Patron Services, Communications, Education and Enrichment, Fringe and Development to help with production work, administrative tasks, research, ushering shows, sourcing social media ideas and proofing documents.

Theatre for Young Audiences

Royal MTC schedules student-only matinee performances for selected productions. This year, MTC offered student-only matinees for six productions: *Clue*, *The Sound of Music*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *The Comeback*, *First Métis Man of Odesa* and two performances of *The Mountaintop*. A total of 3,720 students attended student-only matinee performances and 3,421 students attended regular performances with their school, along with 104 students using promo codes specific to their university classes, for a total of **7,245 students** at shows this season. Many students and teachers stayed for a talkback with actors after attending a performance.

SPONSORED BY CANADA LIFE

TESTIMONIALS FROM TEACHERS

“This field trip is ranked in my top 5 in a twenty-year career.”

“The booking process was very easy... The enrichment guide encompassed everything that the students experienced. The performance was of the most excellent quality, actors and production value included. Overall, my students and I had an incredible experience at MTC.”

“[The Talkback] is an important and meaningful learning tool.”

“My students were buzzing! My oldest students, especially, came out inspired. Thank you!”

“Everything that MTC does to support school is amazing. You have gone out of the way to make theatre accessible for our programs.”

“My students LOVED the performance. I overheard some saying, ‘this won’t be my last time at this theatre!’”

“The students immensely enjoy themselves and are very appreciative of the excellent performances. Thank you for a great year.”

“The customer service we received from our initial booking to the performances itself was absolutely top-notch! For our small-town students to experience a professional, live performance is eye-opening and inspiring.”

“I think every high school should be doing this.”

Theatre Under 30

Theatre Under 30 is a free membership program for young people aged 18–29. Members have exclusive access to world-class theatre for just \$20 a seat! In the 2023/24 season, **615 members purchased a total of 1,534 tickets** throughout the year.

NextGen Fringers

NextGen Fringers brought together **31 youth** aged 16-23 who love the Fringe, or had never been and wanted to see what it's all about! Each got a pass for up to six free tickets to Fringe plays, opportunities to win prizes, and joined gatherings to connect with their theatre-going peers. The NextGen Fringers posted on social media to spread the word about the Fringe to other young people, contributed to a sticky-note wall at MTC with their discoveries and tips about the festival, and sent in their Fringe Faves to be shared by MTC. This year's cohort included 13 first-time Fringers.

PARTICIPANTS

Semira Abolore	Mad Delaat	Noah Luis
Alyssa Adair	Jaymie Desrochers	Alex McKechnie
Logan Addison	Caitlyn Dion	Quinn McMullan
Eseosa Ataga	Daye-Obong Ekong	Sonja Monastyrski
Victor Balmana	Madeline Fox	Jayden Paradis
Hawanatu Bangura	Keira Jordan	Sydney Rubletz
Mikaël Beaudry	Maeve Kehler	Em Saban
Eliza Binding	Salomé King	Brody Sjodin
Victoria Brimble	Andrea Kizuik	Tal Tougas
Kirstin Caguioa	Parker Koepnick	
Samantha Campbell	Nicole Lopez	

WHAT NEXTGEN FRINGERS HAD TO SAY

"This year was so so fabulous. I saw so many amazing shows and even got my whole family to see a show together...It's nice to be able to see a wide range of shows."

"I love seeing all the incredible talents and appreciating the overlooked joy of live theatre. Fringe makes me see all the community, joy, and laughter in the city."

"The culture is amazing, it was an amazing week being able to go out every day and support fellow artists."

"I'm planning on coming back next year. Overall, I had a great time and cannot wait for next year's Fringe."

"It was so wonderful to see so many local theatre artists in one place! I had a lot of fun trying out new styles of theatre!"

"I saw the most shows I've ever seen at Fringe. I really felt like I got the most out of it, I put myself out there and tried so many new foods and talked to the actors after shows. It felt good to be so involved because I love the Winnipeg theatre community so much!"

"Overall my first Fringe experience was perfect."



Young Expressions Program

Young Expressions Program (YEP) students were amongst the first to see our Mainstage shows. They were invited to broaden their minds, sharpen their critical eyes, converse with theatre reviewers and artists, challenge their preconceptions, and express their opinions. Students also had the opportunity to bring one or two guests to see *The Mountaintop* and were able to experience the production with their friends and family. The season culminated with them creating a zine together.

8 participants were chosen based on their application and teacher recommendations. They came from 6 schools.

PARTICIPANTS

Victoria Alexander	Anderson Green	Tatiana Tuazon
Tayla Appler	William Green	Xander Woodhouse
Mad Delaat	Quinn McMullan	

2023/24 Young Expressions special guests:

- Melissa Langdon, Actor and MTC's Artistic Associate
- Aisling Murphy, Theatre Critic and Editor of Intermission Magazine
- Ben Waldman, Free Press Theatre Reviewer
- Kelly Thornton, MTC's Artistic Director
- Ray Strachan, Actor and Director

FEEDBACK FROM THE STUDENTS

"I love Young Expressions, it allows me to get to see cool shows, meet cool people, and have cool conversations."

"An amazing place to explore and experience theatre while you develop your critical sense in a safe positive space."

"I really enjoyed Young Expressions. I found it was a fantastic opportunity to consume theatre and have wonderful discussion with my peers. It was a chance to have educational and hilarious moments!"

"This is not only invaluable to youth going into theatre, is an invaluable experience for all youth, to explore the arts, one's own critical thinking, and have an incredible time overall."

"This program helped me affirm what I want to do with my life!"



Young Expressions Students. PHOTO BY LEIF NORMAN

Backstage Pass

This season-long program gave 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 the current Mainstage production. They were selected based on their application and teacher recommendations.

21 participated from 14 schools.

PARTICIPANTS

Maxx Bonikowsky	Jasmine Dale	Menal Kashalo
Cassidy Busby	Mad Delaat	Larissa Lagasse
Luke Carlson-Fraser	Raven Fergusson	Lauryn Mestito-Dao
Camila Cisneros	Vincent Gagne	Sasha Pearn
Juno Corbett-Thomas	Ephraim Giesbrecht	Ethan Pereira
Emily Cortez	Addy Gross	Kathleen Starr
Ayla Cottes	Daniel Henderson-Yendrys	Kat Therrien

BACKSTAGE PASS WORKSHOPS

CLUE • Stage Manager and Company Manager Leslie Watson took the participants through Royal MTC's hidden spaces to meet our talented craftspeople followed by Education and Enrichment Manager and designer Ksenia Broda-Milian guiding students in set and costume design discussion and creation.

THE SOUND OF MUSIC • Actor and director Simon Miron, along with collaborative accompanist Rachel Cameron, helped students to read between the lines and find connections between text and music, and answered questions about all things musical theatre.

BEAUTIFUL: THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL • Theatre artist Tanner Manson led participants through different ways to use sound to give context and tell a story, and then Head of Audio Christopher Coyne welcomed them into MTC's booth for a look at the technical side of sound.

THE MOUNTAINTOP • Secrets of theatre magic were revealed by Kari Hagness who shared stories from her time as MTC's Head of Props, taught techniques for script analysis, and encouraged participants in creating fake food from unconventional materials.

THE LEHMAN TRILOGY • Actor and clown Spenser Payne facilitated an exploration of character creation including status, physicality and imagination. Students worked individually and in groups to bring characters to life.

THE COMEBACK • The participants dove into the creative process of writing for the stage with the guidance of playwright Trish Cooper, before seeing the play she co-wrote on the Mainstage.



Backstage Pass Students. PHOTO BY LEIF NORMAN

FEEDBACK FROM THE STUDENTS

"Backstage Pass has pushed me out of my comfort zone in many positive ways, and I've met so many kind, new friends here!"

"I discovered that I really like prop and set design and it would be something I'm interested in as a career."

"It is awesome that we get to speak to so many professionals in the industry."

"I really put my critical thinking skills and creativity to work."

"Talking about the process of creating was really interesting."

"I learned about the many different jobs in a theatre, and how easy it can be to share your ideas and work together."

"I loved having the chance to watch shows that I would not push myself to see."

"Anyone can write plays and perform!"

"I grew a larger understanding about set creating, appreciation for how much work the prop team does, and about different lighting for stages."

"This has been such an amazing experience and has really helped me feel confident and secure in my decision to pursue theatre as a career."

"I was amazed at the talent in this room."

"Backstage Pass has been so enlightening and all of these workshops have made me feel so much more connected to theatre!"

"I love the community we all have built."



SPECIAL EVENTS

Black and White Ball

AN EVENING OF MYSTERY...

On Saturday, November 4, more than 440 guests joined us in support of Royal MTC to UNCOVER THE MYSTERY at the Black & White Ball. It was a killer evening from start to finish as guests enjoyed a delicious meal in one of four *Clue* themed rooms, solved a very puzzling murder mystery, and then danced the night away.

On behalf of the artists supported by this fundraising event, we are deeply grateful to all the guests, sponsors, corporate table purchasers, donors and volunteers for creating another unforgettable evening.

Every season, Royal MTC invites audiences to the theatre to share in the act of imagining. Thank you for making this experience possible.

Congratulations to Bill Whiteway, winner of the **Fillmore Riley** Vacation Prize!



2023 Black & White Ball Committee

L TO R: Antonio Buccini, Kelly Johnston, Rhonda Plett, Eden Jamieson, Victoria Taylor, Samantha Duha, Kathryn Gompf, Dana Plett, Jenny-Lou Ryan, Karen Duha, Elsebeth Hansen-Kriening & Shelly Smith-Hines.
NOT PRESENT: Brandi Johnson, Rachel Nedelec, Andrea Mancini



2023 Black & White Ball Volunteers

L TO R: Anne Love, Keith Love, Irene Shapira, Bonnie McDonald, Sarah Rossen, Melissa Hazelton, George Nyman, Bettina Nyman, Isabelle Ly, Leslie Watson, Brenda Vaca, Meaghan Fletcher & Patricia Vineberg.
NOT PRESENT: Murray Gadd, Manvir Kaur & Donna Korban



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Nicole Zajac

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Big City All Star Band
Shelby Bond
Our incredibly hardworking volunteers,
and Royal MTC Staff

ATTENDANCE • 442

NET PROCEEDS • \$106,926

SPECIAL EVENTS

Royal MTC/MBA Lawyers Play



URINETOWN - IT WAS A ROYAL FLUSH!

The 2024 cast certainly stuck it to “the man” during our 31st Lawyers Play *Urinetown, The Musical!* Bringing their extraordinary skills to the Tom Hendry Warehouse, the exceptional cast wowed audiences during the May 7-11 run. Between rousing song and dance numbers and laugh-out-loud comedy, this thoughtful satire brought audiences to their feet.

Cast entirely with Manitoba Bar Association members, the Lawyers Play is one of Royal MTC’s largest fundraisers. Since its inception, this gala event has raised over \$1.1 million to support MTC and the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival.

Our deepest gratitude to patrons, donors, advertisers and sponsors for supporting our efforts. We’d also like to extend sincere thanks to the talented cast and hardworking crew, as well as our many volunteers and committee members.

Urinetown, The Musical

Music & Lyrics by Mark Hollmann
Book & Lyrics by Greg Kotis

Urinetown was produced on Broadway in September, 2001 by the Araca Group and Dodger Theatricals in association with TheaterDreams, Inc., and Lauren Mitchell

May 7-11, 2024

Director: Erin McGrath*
Music Director: Renate Rossol
Choreographer: Rebekah Jones*
Set Design Consultant: Ksenia Broda-Milian**
Wardrobe Coordinators: Thora Lamont,
Jackie Van Winkle & Heather Thorleifson
Lighting Designer / Electrician: Fisher Wohlgenut
Audio: Tim Clark
Deck Audio: Ryan Spracklin
Stage Manager: Chuck McEwen
Assistant Producer: Tori Popp
Assistant Stage Manager: Denise Dela Cruz

Cast: Andrea Bellhouse, Jennifer Bird, Paul Cooper, Tasha Dreger, Sean Gallop, Caleigh Glawson, Benji Greenberg, Kate Henley, Deanna Hiebert, Melanie LaBossiere, Jordan Lang, Joel Lebois, Jerritt Lipski, Hayley Main, Jennifer Malabar, Jeff Palamar, Victoria Perrie, Sandi Phillips, Jodi Plenert, Steve Scarfone, Reed Sitarik

Musicians: Renate Rossol, Eric Vickar, Julie Husband, David Rosenbaum, Erika Einarson

PRODUCTION PARTNER **THE MANITOBA BAR ASSOCIATION**

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NET PROCEEDS • \$20,594

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Peter Kingsley
David Kroft
Joel Lebois
Jim McLandress
Stacey Soldier
Stéphanie Tétrault



The cast of *Urinetown, The Musical*. PHOTO BY MIKE SUDOMA



Committee member Jamie Jurczak and Manitoba Bar Association Secretary Treasurer Bryton Moen.



The cast of *Urinetown, The Musical*. PHOTO BY MIKE SUDOMA

*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

**The participation of these Artists are arranged by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance-Opera-Theatre Policy.



“Played brilliantly by Keenan and Blais, with both Winnipeg actors at the top of their game”

– FREE PRESS



SUPPORTERS

DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE

Many thanks to our generous donors who made a difference with a gift during our 2023/24 season!

\$10,000+

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The cast of *The Sound of Music*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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In memory of my treasured brother, John
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The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre honours the passing of those dear to our theatre - people who've made a lasting commitment to this ephemeral art form.

Coney Cunningham, MTC volunteer usher

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Dr. Douglas MacEwan, long-time supporter

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“Strachan and Richards..
are terrific alone, but
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Cherissa Richards and Ray Strachan in *The Mountaintop*.
PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

*Denotes past employee §Fondly Remembered

FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position AS AT MAY 31, 2024

	OPERATING FUND	CAPITAL REPLACEMENT FUND	THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND	STABILIZATION FUND	SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUNDS	2024 TOTAL	2023 TOTAL
ASSETS							
CURRENT							
Cash and cash equivalents	3,541,281	–	–	–	81,599	3,622,881	4,114,141
Accounts and grants receivable	1,398,842	–	–	–	–	1,398,842	1,124,882
Prepaid expenses	563,364	–	–	–	–	563,364	440,414
Due to/(from) funds	(1,913,399)	344,838	131,939	1,436,621	–	–	–
	3,590,088	344,838	131,939	1,436,621	81,599	5,585,086	5,679,437
CAPITAL ASSETS							
	–	1,752,530	–	–	–	1,752,530	1,289,582
	3,590,088	2,097,369	131,939	1,436,621	81,599	7,337,616	6,969,019
LIABILITIES							
CURRENT							
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	516,628	–	–	–	–	516,628	443,230
Deferred revenue	3,073,460	–	–	–	–	3,073,460	3,105,704
	3,590,088	–	–	–	–	3,590,088	3,548,934
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO CAPITAL ASSETS							
	–	1,923,969	–	–	–	1,923,969	1,592,391
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS							
	–	–	–	–	81,599	81,599	57,557
	3,590,088	1,923,969	–	–	81,599	5,595,656	5,198,882
NET ASSETS							
Internally restricted	–	–	131,939	–	–	131,939	124,481
Invested in capital assets	–	173,400	–	–	–	173,400	198,839
Unrestricted	–	–	–	1,436,621	–	1,436,621	1,446,817
	–	173,400	131,939	1,436,621	–	1,741,960	1,770,137
	3,590,088	2,097,369	131,939	1,436,621	81,599	7,337,616	6,969,019

Statement of Operations & Changes in Net Assets AS AT MAY 31, 2024

	OPERATING FUND	CAPITAL REPLACEMENT FUND	THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND	STABILIZATION FUND	SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUNDS	2024 TOTAL	2023 TOTAL
Revenue	12,049,677	183,141	–	–	23,875	12,256,693	10,491,815
Expenses	11,989,873	208,582	62,542	–	23,875	12,284,872	11,357,477
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	59,804	(25,441)	(62,542)	–	–	(28,179)	(865,662)
Net assets, beginning of year	–	198,839	124,481	1,446,817	–	1,770,137	2,635,799
Interfund transfers	(59,804)	–	70,000	(10,196)	–	–	–
Net assets, end of year	–	173,398	131,939	1,436,621	–	1,741,958	1,770,137

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Matthew MacKenzie and Mariya Khomutova in *First Métis Man of Odesa*.
PHOTO BY ALEXIS MCKEOWN

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