

2025/26

Annual Report



Land Acknowledgement

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, Inninewak, Anishinewak, Dakota Oyate and Denesuline, 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 spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.



Jeremy Proulx, James Dallas Smith and Daniel Knight in *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines*. Set Designer Adam Parboosingh, Costume Designer Amy McPherson, Lighting Designer Kahentanó:ron Brianna Montour. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT



Joe and Mister from Ronnie Burkett's *Wonderful Joe*. PHOTO BY IAN JACKSON



Gwendolyn Collins and Devin Lowry in *Hockey Mom, Hockey Dad*. Set & Costume Designer Daina Leitold, Lighting Designer Joshua Gehman. PHOTO BY LEIF NORMAN



"Great mashup of modern and historical approach."

– PATRON

Blake Beachell, Katie Welham, Cory Wojcik, Amelia Sargisson and Julie Lumsden in *The Last Wife*. Set Designer Brian Perchaluk, Costume Designer Joseph Abetria, Lighting Designer Hugh Conacher. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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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 Evan Klassen, Royal MTC remains Manitoba's flagship theatre.

Cover: Cast of *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*. Set Designer Brian Perchaluk, Costume Designer Joseph Abetria, Lighting Designer Hugh Conacher. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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.



"Rooney earns unanimous approval for his more than a dozen characterizations, keeping the audience meaningfully invested"

– FREE PRESS

"I was profoundly impressed... who knew a show about big business and the competition bureau could be so entertaining."

– PATRON

"A fast paced, sparkling, and ruthless satire/observation of Canadian corporate culture. Five thumbs up."

– PATRON

"It was a stunning tour-de-force. Tom Rooney was electric."

– PATRON

Tom Rooney in *Rogers v. Rogers*, Set Designer Joshua Quinlan, Lighting Designer Imogen Wilson, Video Designer Nathan Bruce. PHOTO BY DAHLIA KATZ

92,877

**JOHN HIRSCH
MAINSTAGE**

8,611 subscribers attended 6x
41,211 single tickets

14,520

**TOM HENDRY
WAREHOUSE**

2,191 subscribers attended 4x
5,756 single tickets

84,945

**WINNIPEG FRINGE
THEATRE FESTIVAL**

157 sold-out performances
145 indoor companies

2,919

**REGIONAL
TOUR**

19 communities

4,147

**THEATRE FOR
YOUNG AUDIENCES**

5 student-only matinees



199,408

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

**ROYAL
MTC**
MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre operates as a non-profit charitable organization, led by the Artistic Director, Executive Director 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 our dedicated, enthusiastic, accountable and responsible Board and staff. An open annual general meeting was held September 28, 2026 to report artistic and financial results to interested subscribers, patrons and community members.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS



Prairies Economic
Development Canada

Développement économique
Canada pour les Prairies

Canada



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

Manitoba



MANITOBA
ARTS COUNCIL

CONSEIL DES ARTS
DU MANITOBA



WINNIPEG
ARTS COUNCIL

★★★★★ 1/2

“Life of Pi might be one of the most visually breathtaking productions on this stage in recent memory”

– FREE PRESS

“Outstanding! One of the best we’ve ever seen at MTC in almost 50 years of attending.”

– PATRON

“I left the theatre in a state of joy for what I had just seen. Thank you to everyone who brought this masterpiece to life!”

– PATRON



Cast of *Life of Pi*. Puppet Design & Fabrication by Puppet Stuff Canada, Set Designer Beyata Hackborn, Costume Designer Joseph Abetria, Lighting Designer April Viczko, Video Designer Corwin Ferguson. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



An Unforgettable Journey.

It is an honour to reflect on an unforgettable year at Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre – and an even greater honour to do so as I complete my first year as Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Theatre is a journey. It takes us somewhere new, invites us to see the world through another perspective, makes us laugh, challenges us to think differently and, at its very best, brings us together. This past year has been a wonderful reminder of the extraordinary people who make that journey possible and the important place Royal MTC holds in our community.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my first year as Chair has been getting to know our staff more closely. I have gained an even deeper appreciation for the passion, creativity and dedication that exists throughout this organization. From the artists and production teams who bring stories to the stage, to those working in the box office, front of house, administration, marketing, fundraising, education and countless other roles, every member of the Royal MTC team contributes to the experience our audiences enjoy. Theatre may happen in the spotlight, but it takes an entire community behind the scenes to make the magic happen.

This year also gave us an exciting opportunity to look beyond the present and imagine the future. Participating in a strategic planning process with our Board, leadership and staff allowed us to reflect on where Royal MTC has been, consider where we want to go and identify the opportunities that will help us continue to serve Manitobans for generations to come. It was inspiring to see so many people bring their ideas, experience and enthusiasm to this important conversation.

I am deeply grateful to my fellow members of the Board of Trustees for their commitment, insight and stewardship. In particular, I thank Laurie Speers and John Guttormson, as our past co-chairs of the Board of Trustees, for their tireless leadership of the organization for many years, and wish them all the best as they step down from the board. Serving alongside such a dedicated group has been one of the highlights of my

first year as Chair. I would also like to recognize Executive Director Evan Klassen and Artistic Director Kelly Thornton for their leadership and vision. Their commitment to both the artistic and organizational strength of Royal MTC is instrumental to our continued success.

To our volunteers, thank you for the countless hours, warm welcomes and generosity you bring to our theatres. You are an essential part of the Royal MTC experience.

And to our audiences, thank you for taking this journey with us. Thank you for choosing live theatre, for sharing your laughter and applause, for engaging with challenging stories and joyful ones, and for making theatre part of your lives. Your support makes everything we do possible.

As I look to the future, I am filled with optimism. Over the next year, I look forward to working with other arts and culture organizations to underscore the vital role we play in our community and to advocate for greater public and private sector support. Together, we can elevate our collective importance and our ability to make a meaningful, material contribution to the revitalization of our community. There are new stories to tell, new journeys to take and new memories waiting to be made.

I am grateful to have shared this first season as Board Chair with so many remarkable people. Together, we are helping write the next chapter of Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre – and I look forward to seeing where this unforgettable journey takes us.

DAVID KROFT
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Momentum.

This has been a year of growth, confidence and optimism. Across Royal MTC, we have seen unmistakable signs that our community continues to believe in **the essential role live theatre plays in Manitoba**. On our stages and in our seats, that momentum was clear, **reaffirming the power of great storytelling to bring Manitobans together**.

It was also a year of reflection, planning and ambition. Together with our Board of Trustees, staff, artists, volunteers and community partners, we undertook our most significant strategic planning process in many years. Those conversations challenged us to **think boldly about the future: strengthening our connections across Manitoba, investing in artists, deepening accessibility and belonging, building long-term sustainability, and ensuring MTC remains a place where talented people can do their very best work**.

One of the great privileges of my role is my **strong partnership** with Kelly Thornton, Artistic Director. Kelly's brilliant artistic programming is matched by exceptional organizational acumen, and our close collaboration strengthens every aspect of the theatre. It is a genuine pleasure to work alongside her as we imagine what is possible for MTC.

And ultimately, everything we imagine for MTC's future depends upon the people who will make it possible. Our greatest strength has always been our people.

My sincere thanks to our Board of Trustees for their thoughtful leadership, and to our senior leadership team for leaning into the future with creativity, curiosity and optimism.

To every member of our staff and volunteer community, thank you.

Whether welcoming audiences, building productions, supporting artists, maintaining our facilities, delivering programs, raising essential resources or working behind the scenes, your dedication is the foundation of every success.

Even as new colleagues bring fresh energy and ideas, we are strengthened by those whose commitment spans decades. Their collective knowledge, loyalty and stewardship are an important part of who we are.

Our gratitude extends to our loyal supporters: the donors, sponsors, corporate partners, foundations, and all levels of government. Your continued investment makes ambitious work possible and helps ensure theatre remains accessible to all Manitobans.

Most importantly, **thank you to our audiences**. Every ticket purchased, every conversation in our lobbies and every return visit reminds us that **theatre continues to matter**. Your enthusiasm this season has been extraordinary, and your belief in MTC gives us tremendous optimism about what comes next.

As we look toward Royal MTC's 70th anniversary in 2027/28, plans for the theatre's next chapter are beginning to come together. Alongside celebrating seven decades of extraordinary storytelling, we are working with the Province of Manitoba and the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation to explore the long-term renewal and expansion of our campus, ensuring it can serve artists, audiences and our community for generations to come.

The work is strong, the future is bright, and there is much to look forward to.

Thank you for believing in Royal MTC and for being part of the journey.

EVAN KLASSEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



A Sense of Belonging.

The heart of our success at Royal MTC has always been in the relationships we foster. Our theatre creates a sense of belonging for our community, bringing joy and inspiration to thousands of Manitobans year after year. Together we make history and build legacy. Between the artists on our stage, those behind the scenes, the dedicated subscribers, new audience members, generous donors, sponsors and funders, along with our devoted staff, board and volunteers, we all play our part in MTC's continued success. This is our story. It's one of shared commitment and a collective vision to make extraordinary theatre here at home, in our beautiful province at the heart of the country.

This year, we delivered 10 amazing productions on our stage, employed 256 artists and supported nearly 83 others through our training programs. We developed and commissioned new work for the stage, visited 19 communities with our regional tour, presented another fabulous Fringe Festival, and successfully navigated our team through a comprehensive strategic planning process. It was a banner year.

Artistically, we took a leap of faith, running an extension of *Elf - The Musical* over the holidays. This production was the largest musical we've ever produced, and it became the highest-grossing show in our history. **Our season programming continues to receive highly positive feedback, with 88% of patron surveys rating our Mainstage shows as excellent, making this the highest-rated season in 12 years of tracking.** Overall audiences grew by 10,000 patrons, resulting in just over 58,000 single ticket attendees this year. Our subscriber base saw steady growth, and this box office success, paired with strong fiscal management, allows us to continue to program bold and exciting playbills well into the future.

Both Pimootayowin Creators Circle and the National Mentorship Program entered their sixth year with continued growth. The Pimootayowin Festival transitioned onto the Warehouse stage, resulting in record-breaking attendance for our play readings. A *Looking Forward Grant* from the Manitoba Arts Council and the Winnipeg Foundation allowed us to convene the past six cohorts of Pimootayowin to envision

the future of the program and discuss the ambitions for Indigenous Theatre in our province. We honour Pimootayowin founder Ian Ross, whose untimely passing left us with both grief and gratitude for this visionary program.

Our commitment to new work continues to bear fruit as we ushered two world premieres onto the stage in 2025/26 with *Holland, In the Shadow Beyond the Pines*. On the horizon, a newly commissioned play, *Intrepid*, has been programmed for the 2026/27 season. And momentum remains strong as *The Comeback*, also commissioned and produced by MTC, will see a new production at National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre and Citadel Theatre next season. Additionally, we were one of four companies chosen nationally to attend the National Arts Centre's Creators' Intensive in Banff with our commissioned musical *Rizal* by Joseph Aragon.

As we celebrate our success, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our incredible staff, our Board of Trustees, led by Chair David Kroft, and my Executive Director, Evan Klassen. Our leadership relationship thrives on a highly collaborative co-executive model that balances artistic innovation with robust operational management. This natural rapport goes beyond professional and has led to a genuine friendship that anchors our organizational success.

Thank you to you all for sharing the stage, and for everything you do to advance the mission of our beloved theatre.

KELLY THORNTON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Together, we brought extraordinary theatre to life!



Cultivating Talent

Royal MTC invests in developing and championing artistic and creative talent. The 2025/26 season showcased exceptional talent on and off stage with **256 ARTISTS** including actors, directors, designers and stage managers. A total of **163** of these artists call Manitoba home.

Royal MTC presented **33 SCHOLARSHIPS, 8 APPRENTICESHIPS** and **7 ASSISTANTSHIPS** to Manitoba artists to foster their career development. These valuable opportunities are directly supported by the generosity of donors.

The Tom Hendry Warehouse featured two world premieres: *Holland*, written by local playwright Trish Cooper in partnership with Theatre Projects Manitoba, and *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines* by Rhonda Apetagon. Rhonda's work is the third play developed from the Pimootayowin Creators Circle to be produced at Royal MTC.

Royal MTC plays an important role in giving new Canadian work a life beyond its premiere. In 2025/26, *The Comeback* by Trish Cooper and Sam Vint, which received its world premiere at Royal MTC in 2023/24, was announced for upcoming productions at the Citadel Theatre and National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre, giving the work a second life on stages beyond Manitoba.

"It was a true laugh out loud comedy, with such an important topic to think about" – PATRON



Jessy Ardern and Jennifer Lyon in *Holland*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

256

ARTISTS
163 local

33

SCHOLARSHIPS

8

APPRENTICESHIPS

7

ASSISTANTSHIPS

2

WORLD PREMIERES



Jeremy Proulx, Daniel Knight and James Dallas Smith in *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

"Great suspense, and truly frightening" – PATRON



Connecting with the Community

Royal MTC ensures more Manitobans see themselves reflected throughout the theatre.

On more than **200 DAYS EVERY YEAR**, Royal MTC presents extraordinary theatre that aims to inspire, illuminate and ignite critical conversation. The plays offered by MTC provide a balance of stories, ensuring that voices within our community and across many generations are heard.

The six plays on the John Hirsch Mainstage and four plays at the Tom Hendry Warehouse create the core programming for Royal MTC. However, there is much more that is produced, shared, offered and presented so that all Manitobans have the opportunity to experience theatre.

Hockey Mom, Hockey Dad, this year's Regional Tour, visited **19 COMMUNITIES** in Manitoba and Ontario, delighting **2,919 AUDIENCE MEMBERS**.

The Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival presents independent theatre by **MORE THAN 160 PERFORMING COMPANIES** at accessible prices over **12 DAYS** with over **30,000** enjoying the free outdoor entertainment.

Everyone who attends MTC can enhance their theatre experience with pre-show chats, post-show talkbacks and enrichment guides.

MTC continues to offer performances with reduced barriers. New this year, MTC offered Touch Tours for the low vision community, joining performances offered with ASL interpretation, live audio descriptions and relaxed performance environments.

Engaging with audiences of tomorrow through a variety of programming for teenagers and young adults that provide the opportunity to see behind the scenes and watch the performances.

Pimootayowin Creators Circle and Festival of New Work annually introduces new Indigenous written plays into the Canadian theatre scene.

Literary development is a key area of focus, where MTC commissions playwrights to create new works for the stage resulting in world premieres.



Devin Lowry in
Hockey Mom, Hockey Dad.
PHOTO BY LEIF NORMAN

Royal MTC strives to stabilize our business model, so we can deliver programming in a financially sustainable way.

162

STAFF

full-time, part-time & seasonal

30

SPONSORSHIPS

6

THEATRE COLLABS

local & national

Royal MTC attracts and grows audiences with artistic excellence and meaningful dialogue.

234

**PATRONS AT
PRE-SHOW CHATS**

21

TALKBACKS
1,000+ patrons

19

**COMMUNITIES
VISITED**

160+

**INDEPENDENT
THEATRE
PRODUCTIONS**

181

**PEOPLE ATTENDED
FACILITY TOURS**
8 school and community groups

8,002

**STUDENTS
ATTENDED PLAYS**

628

**THEATRE UNDER
30 MEMBERS**

1,738 tickets sold for \$25 a seat

83

**ARTISTS WERE
TRAINED OR
MENTORED**

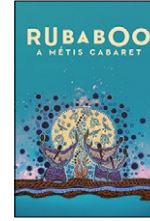
National Mentorship Program,
scholarships, apprentices, assistants
and Pathways to the Fringe

9

**ORGANIZATIONS WERE
INVOLVED WITH
COMMUNITY EVENTS**

24+

**COMMUNITY
COLLABORATIONS**



Life of Pi

Based on the novel by Yann Martel
Adapted by Lolita Chakrabarti

October 16 - November 8, 2025
PREVIEW • October 15

Director: Haysam Kadri
Puppetry Director: Dayna Tietzen
Puppet Design & Fabrication: Puppet Stuff Canada
Set Designer: Beyata Hackborn**
Costume Designer: Joseph Abetria†
Lighting Designer: April Viczko**
Video & Projection Designer: Corwin Ferguson**
Composer & Sound Designer: Joelysa Pankanea
Fight Director: Morgan Yamada
Assistant Director: Steven Conde
Assistant Set Designer: Amy Dass**
Lighting Design Assistant: Charlie Peters
Lighting Design Assistant: Victor Snaith Hernandez
Stage Manager: Molly Pearson
Assistant Stage Manager: Anna Davidson
Apprentice Stage Manager: Darlene Dela Cruz†
Apprentice Stage Manager: Tia Morann

Cast: Davinder Malhi, Deena Aziz, Andrea Cheung, Bailey Chin, Braydon Dowler-Coltman, Troy Feldman, N Girgis, Ali Kazmi, Kevin Klassen, Anaka Maharaj-Sandhu, Azeem Nathoo, Kristen Padayas, Garrett Ross, Suchiththa Wickremesooriya

In partnership with Citadel Theatre

SPONSORED BY THE ASPER FOUNDATION AND
GAIL ASPER FAMILY FOUNDATION

16,265 ATTENDED 27 PERFORMANCES



Kevin Klassen, Davinder Malhi, N Girgis, Azeem Nathoo and Kristen Padayas in *Life of Pi*.
PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

Elf – The Musical

Book by Thomas Meehan and Bob Martin
Music by Matthew Sklar
Lyrics by Chad Beguelin

Based upon the New Line Cinema film
written by David Berenbaum

Originally produced by Warner Bros. Theatre
Ventures in association with Unique Features

November 27 - December 28, 2025
PREVIEWS • November 25 & 26

Director / Choreographer: Julie Tomaino
Music Director: Joseph Tritt
Set Designer: Scott Penner**
Costume Designer: Jessica Oostergo**
Lighting & Video Designer: Hugh Conacher**
Sound Designer: Chris Coyne
Fight Director: Darren Martens
Assistant Director / Choreographer: Rebekah Jones
Assistant Music Director: Paul Rodermond
Apprentice Director: Kyle Mroz**
Apprentice Lighting & Video Designer: Oak Girard*
Stage Manager: Michael Duggan**
Assistant Stage Manager: Samantha Desiree
Assistant Stage Manager: Tori Popp†
Apprentice Stage Manager: Carolin Schroeder†
Child Supervisor: Matthew Paris-Irvine
Child Supervisor: Sarah Gerbrandt

Cast: Daniel Bogart, Ryan Brown, Cassandra Consiglio, Victoria Exconde, Megan Fry, Xaiden Garcia, Tiana Jung, Rochelle Kives*, Tyler Leighton, Kevin McIntyre, Reid McTavish, Luke Opdahl, Jade Repeta*, Alex Schaeffer, Joseph Seville, Jillian Willems

Youth Ensemble: Pierson Alibudbud, Zoé Gautron, Alicia Kliewer, Nathan Malolos, Alba Manuel, Philip Paley, Anastasia Rautert, Sophie Sewell, Jada Tackie, Silver Tennant

Musicians: Joseph Tritt, Paul Rodermond, Andrew St. Hilaire, Ruslan Rusin, Brendan Thompson, Sean Irvine, Julie Husband, Matt Walden, Joel Green, Dave Lawton

28,566 ATTENDED 33 PERFORMANCES

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express

Adapted for the stage by
Ken Ludwig

January 15 - February 7, 2026
PREVIEW • January 14

Director: Kelly Thornton
Set Designer: Brian Perchaluk***
Costume Designer: Joseph Abetria†
Lighting Designer: Hugh Conacher**
Associate Lighting Designer: April Viczko**
Sound Designer: Dave Clarke
Fight Director: Jacquie Loewen
Intimacy Director: Sharon Bajer†
Dialect Coach: Jane Gooderham
Assistant Director: Ava Darrach-Gagnon
Assistant Costume Designer: Katherine Hochman
Stage Manager: Katie Hoppa
Assistant Stage Manager: Zahra Larche
Apprentice Stage Manager: Tia Morann

Cast: Jill Agopsowicz, Rodrigo Beilfuss†, Daniel Briere, Dutchess Cayetano, Donna Fletcher, Kristin Johnston, Tom Keenan, Ian Leung, Alex Poch Goldin, RobYn Slade, Davina Stewart, Ray Strachan†, Isla Verot

In partnership with Citadel Theatre

20,851 ATTENDED 28 PERFORMANCES

Rogers v. Rogers

Adapted for the stage by Michael Healey

Based on *Rogers v. Rogers: The Battle for Control of Canada's Telecom Empire* by Alexandra Posadzki

February 19 - March 14, 2026
PREVIEW • February 18

Director: Chris Abraham
Set Designer: Joshua Quinlan**
Lighting Designer: Imogen Wilson**
Sound Designer: Thomas Ryder Payne
Video Designer: Nathan Bruce**
Dialect Coach: Chloë Dirksen
Costume Coordinator: Elaine May
Assistant Director: Bryn Kennedy
Stage Manager: Melissa Rood
Replacement Stage Manager: Zahra Larche
Apprentice Stage Manager: Darlene Dela Cruz†

Cast: Tom Rooney

A Crow's Theatre Production

10,897 ATTENDED 27 PERFORMANCES

The Last Wife

By Kate Hennig

March 26 – April 18, 2026

PREVIEW • March 25

Director: Cherissa Richards†
 Set Designer: Brian Perchaluk***
 Costume Designer: Joseph Abetria†
 Lighting Designer: Hugh Conacher**
 Sound Designer & Composer: Torquil Campbell
 Intimacy Director: Aria Evans
 Fight Director: Jacquie Loewen
 Assistant Director: Alissa Watson†
 Apprentice Director: Montana Lehmann**
 Apprentice Costume Designer: Raphael Estillore*
 Stage Manager: Karyn Kumhyr
 Assistant Stage Manager: Jazz Marcelino†
 Apprentice Stage Manager: Keira Jordan†
 Child Supervisor: Bailey Chin
 Research Dramaturg: Emma Welham†

Cast: Blake Beachell, Sébastien Heins,
 Julie Lumsden, Amelia Sargisson, Katie
 Welham†, Cory Wojcik

12,002 ATTENDED 27 PERFORMANCES

Rubaboo – A Métis Cabaret

Written by Andrea Menard

Music by Andrea Menard and Robert Walsh

April 30 – May 23, 2026

PREVIEW • April 29

Director: Alanis King
 Set Designer: Cimmeron Meyer**
 Costume Designer: Samantha McCue**
 Lighting Designer: Emilie Trimbee**
 Associate Lighting Designer: Anika Binding***
 Sound Designer: Mary Jane Coomber**
 Stage Manager: Katie Schmidt†
 Assistant Stage Manager: Tia Morann
 Indigenous Cultural Consultant:
 Summer Bressette

Cast: Nathen Aswell, Karen Donaldson Shepherd,
 Andrea Menard, Robert Walsh

In partnership with Persephone Theatre

11,443 ATTENDED 26 PERFORMANCES

TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE PRODUCTIONS

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



Wonderful Joe

Created and Performed by Ronnie Burkett

October 9 – 26, 2025

PREVIEWS • October 7 & 8

Music Arrangements & Production: John Alcorn
 Lighting Design: Kevin Humphrey**
 Production Manager / Artistic Associate: Terri Gillis
 Stage Manager / Technical Director: Crystal Salverda
 Associate Producer: John Lambert

4,470 ATTENDED 17 PERFORMANCES

A Number

By Caryl Churchill

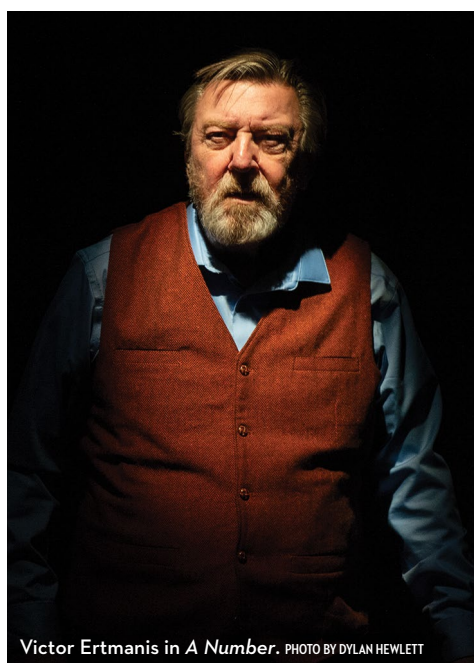
November 13 – 29, 2025

PREVIEW • November 12

Director: Alex Poch Goldin
 Set Designer: Kara Pankiw***
 Costume Designer: Daina Leitold
 Lighting Designer: Ksenia Broda-Milian***
 Composer & Sound Designer: Ashley Au**
 Assistant Director: Sarah Constible
 Assistant Sound Designer: Natanielle Felicitas
 Stage Manager: Katie Hoppa
 Apprentice Stage Manager: Larissa Shabaga

Cast: Rodrigo Beilfuss†, Victor Ertmanis

3,246 ATTENDED 18 PERFORMANCES



Victor Ertmanis in *A Number*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

Holland

By Trish Cooper

February 5 – 21, 2026

PREVIEW • February 4

Director: Suzie Martin†
 Set Designer: Ksenia Broda-Milian***
 Costume Designer: Daina Leitold**
 Lighting Designer: Anika Binding***
 Lighting Design Mentor: Hugh Conacher**
 Composer & Sound Designer: Daniel Roy
 Fight Director: Jacquie Loewen
 Production & Accessibility Dramaturg:
 Debbie Patterson
 Assistant Set Designer: Joyce Licup***
 Apprentice Director: Samantha Machado*
 Apprentice Sound Designer: Tyler Sneesby
 Stage Manager: Margaret Brook
 Apprentice Stage Manager: Devon Helm

Cast: Jessy Arden†, Daniel Bogart, Toby Hughes,
 Jennifer Lyon, Jane Testar

In partnership with Theatre Projects Manitoba

SPONSORED BY **THE ASPER FOUNDATION**

4,212 ATTENDED 18 PERFORMANCES

In the Shadow Beyond the Pines

By Rhonda Apetagon

March 12 – 28, 2026

PREVIEW • March 11

Director / Dramaturg: Jimmy Blais
 Set Designer: Adam Parboosingh**
 Costume Designer: Amy McPherson
 Lighting Designer: Kahentanó:ron Brianna Montour
 Sound Designer & Composer: Jason Burnstick
 Fight Director: Darren Martens
 Knowledge Keeper: Jhaik Windy Hair
 Cultural Support: Erin McGregor
 Apprentice Director: Key Caguioa††
 Projection Design Assistant: Lovissa Weins
 Stage Manager: Samantha Desiree
 Apprentice Stage Manager: Carolin Schroeder†

Cast: Daniel Knight, Jeremy Proulx,
 James Dallas Smith

4,186 ATTENDED 18 PERFORMANCES

**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

REGIONAL TOUR



Royal MTC and Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries were pleased to present the 2026 Regional Tour:

Hockey Mom, Hockey Dad

By Michael Melski

February 20 - March 17, 2026

Director: Matthew Paris-Irvine
 Set & Costume Designer: Daina Leitold**
 Sound Designer: Justin Stadnyk
 Intimacy Director: Carly Rackal
 Fight Director: Darren Martens
 Stage Manager: Sadie Wannamaker
 Apprentice Stage Manager: Larissa Shabaga
 Tour Technical Director / Lighting Designer: Joshua Gehman
 Tour Technician: Carter Happy
 Cast: Gwendolyn Collins, Devin Lowry

2,919 ATTENDED 19 PERFORMANCES

FEB 20 | Portage la Prairie • Prairie Fusion Arts & Entertainment
 FEB 21 | Arborg • Arborg & District Multicultural Heritage Village
 FEB 22 | Great Falls • Winnipeg River Arts Council
 FEB 24 | Atikokan • Atikokan Entertainment Series
 FEB 26 | Sioux Lookout • Sioux Hudson Entertainment Series
 FEB 27 | Dryden • Dryden Entertainment Series
 FEB 28 | Kenora • Lake of the Woods Concert Group
 MAR 1 | Steinbach • Steinbach Arts Council
 MAR 5 | Flin Flon • Flin Flon Arts Council
 MAR 6 | Snow Lake • Aurora Borealis Arts Council
 MAR 8 | Strathclair • Strathclair & District Theatre Committee, Ltd.
 MAR 9 | Minnedosa • Minnedosa Performing Arts Committee
 MAR 10 | Deloraine • Southwest Showcase Inc.
 MAR 12 | Souris • Souris District Arts Council
 MAR 13 | Dauphin • Dauphin Arts Council
 MAR 14 | Crystal City • Parklane Theatre Committee
 MAR 15 | Brandon • Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium
 MAR 16 | MacGregor • Heartland Recreation Commission
 MAR 17 | Gimli • Kiwanis Club of Gimli and District

SPONSORED BY MANITOBA LIQUOR & LOTTERIES

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

FESTIVALS

Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work

Since 2020, Pimootayowin: A Festival of New Work has publicly presented the plays in development created by the Pimootayowin Creators Circle. Held at the Tom Hendry Warehouse from September 22-27, 2025, this festival celebrated the 2024/25 cohort and featured the works of Andrea Friesen (*Redwood Woman*), Kirby Fults (*Dreaming of Him*), Dannielle Morrisseau (*The Bottom Line*), Donnie Osler (*The Harvest*), Julia Ross (*The Ojib-Way to Paradise*) and Martha Troian (*The Creatives*). Led in 2025 by Ian Ross, the Pimootayowin Creators Circle supports the creation and development of new plays by Manitoba-based Indigenous artists.

An Anishinaabemowin word meaning 'journey', Pimootayowin was chosen by the program founder, the late Ian Ross, who was instrumental in guiding the writers of the Pimootayowin Creators Circle and Festival of New Work on their own writing journey. Ian's legacy is profound, and the wisdom he shared was instrumental in seeding a new generation of Indigenous storytellers. We are grateful for Ian's dedication to the Pimootayowin program. To continue his legacy, Royal MTC engaged the consultation support of Melanie Badger and Susan Swan to host two conversations that invited past Pimootayowin cohort members to envision the future of the program.

SPONSORED BY TD READY COMMITMENT

PHOTOS BY RACHELLE BLATTA



6
 NEW PLAYS BY
 INDIGENOUS
 ARTISTS

FESTIVALS



Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival

The Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival wrapped up its 38th year on July 27, 2025. Performing companies from across the globe brought comedy, improv, dance, drama, musicals and more to stages across downtown Winnipeg. Fringe fans enjoyed 12 days of theatre as well as free entertainment at the Bell MTS Outdoor Stage and Kids Fringe at Old Market Square.

The total indoor ticketed attendance was 84,945 with 157 sold-out performances and \$841,416 in box office revenue that was returned to the performing companies, a 4% increase over last year. The festival featured 145 indoor companies with 1,149 total performances. Outdoor attendance at Old Market Square was estimated to be over 30,000.

The Manitoba Association of Playwrights (MAP) presented the 2025 Harry S. Rintoul Award for Best New Manitoba Play at the Winnipeg Fringe to *The Goose* by Ellen Peterson. Honourable mention went to *Third Party* by Thomas McLeod. Other nominees included *Daredevils* by Ellen Peterson, *I Hope You Know* by Adia Branconnier and *Tycho Freakin' Brahe!* by Heather Madill and Joseph Aragon.

SUPPORTED BY MANITOBA LIQUOR MARTS



PHOTOS BY LEIF NORMAN

84,945
TICKETED
ATTENDANCE

30,000+
OUTDOOR
ATTENDANCE
(approx.)

2,135
KIDS FRINGE
ATTENDANCE

3,601
KIDS VENUE TICKETED
ATTENDANCE

\$841,416
BOX OFFICE
REVENUE
4% growth from previous year

145
PERFORMING
COMPANIES

1,149
INDOOR
PERFORMANCES
157 sold out

710
VOLUNTEERS

Literary Development

Royal MTC is proud to continue its commitment to the creation and development of new work by local and national artists. Within the Pimootayowin Creators Circle, we are grateful to Herbie Barnes (Artistic Director of Young People's Theatre, actor, director and playwright) for quickly stepping in to guide the 2025/26 Pimootayowin cohort which consisted of April Seenie-Penner, Arlea Ashcroft, Curtis Kaltenbaugh, Jordan and Kim Wheeler, Liz Barron, and Michael Hutchinson. The Pimootayowin Creators Circle was generously sponsored by **TD Ready Commitment**.

Royal MTC once again presented a world premiere, *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines* by Rhonda Apetagon (originally created in the 2023/24 cohort), becoming the third play from the Pimootayowin program to be produced. Additional support was provided to the development of *The Buffalo in the Room* by Erin McGregor (with additional dramaturgical support by Eric Coates), *The Ballad of Sylvie Gynt* by Andraea Sartison, and a new play commission was issued to Rosanna Deerchild for the creation of *The Brotherhood of Wolf and Raven (The Ceremony of War)*.

In preparation for the 2026/27 season, Royal MTC worked to develop *Intrepid* by Alex Poch-Goldin with additional workshops. Further supporting the development of *Rizal* by Joseph Aragon, members of Royal MTC's administrative team attended a two-week staged workshop intensive at the Banff Centre, where local actors and creatives participated in script dramaturgy, choreography and musical exploration.

"Fantastic! I didn't know what to expect but was blown away!"

– PATRON



James Dallas Smith in *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines*.
Set Designer Adam Parboosingh, Costume Designer Amy McPherson,
Lighting Designer Kahentanó:ron Brianna Montour. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

National Mentorship Program

Since 2020, Royal MTC has been dedicated to the growth of Manitoban theatre artists through national networking and skill development via the National Mentorship Program. Designed to overcome the geographic isolation of the prairies and build national support for its participants, the program celebrated its sixth year of nurturing the brightest emerging local talent. We are proud to have supported the growth of the following mentees and mentors across disciplines such as performance, production and administration:

2025/26 NATIONAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

MENTEES	MENTORS
Artie Lorraine	Tom Rooney
Denise Piche	Megan Dart
Jodi Kristjanson	Kimberley Rampersad
Kara Joseph	Weyni Mengesha
Katie Welham	Jessica B. Hill
Keely McPeck	Joelle Peters
Kelly Rae Jenken	Krista Jackson
Kyle Mroz	Stafford Arima
Raphael Estillore	Linda Muir
Sarah Flynn	Jordi Mand

10
NATIONAL
MENTORSHIP
PARTICIPANTS

SPECIAL EVENT

Daan: A Journey through Song

Royal MTC presented *Daan: A Journey Through Song* at the John Hirsch Mainstage on May 30, starring two of musical theatre's most celebrated divas, Stephanie Sy and Ma-Anne Dionisio. It showcased Broadway's most beloved hits, contemporary works from Filipino-Canadian musicals, and a sneak peek at a new work in development about the life and legacy of José Rizal, written and composed by Joseph Aragon.

Director: Jillian Willems
Music Director: Larry Roy
Set Designer: Jamie Plummer
Sound Designer: Jessica Rose
Lighting Coordinator: Claude Robert
Show Manager: Leslie Watson

Band: Larry Roy, Will Bonness, Julian Bradford, Sean Irvine, Steve Broadhurst

444 ATTENDED 1 PERFORMANCE



Stephanie Sy and Ma-Anne Dionisio. PHOTO BY REINER CABALQUINTO

★★★★★ 1/2

“a guns-blazing production
full of righteously madcap
decision-making”

– FREE PRESS

*“One of the funniest
plays I have seen in
my 50+ years as a
subscriber.”*

– PATRON

*“Amazing acting and
wonderful directing.
So proud of this
homegrown play.”*

– PATRON



Toby Hughes, Daniel Bogart, Jennifer Lyon (on ground) and Jessy Ardern in *Holland*.
Set Designer Ksenia Broda-Milian, Costume Designer Daina Leitold, Lighting Designer Anika Binding. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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 **\$37,650** for the 2025/26 academic year/theatre season. Our generous patrons donated **\$53,304** online and at "pass-the-hat" performances of *Waitress*, with \$5,000 matched by the Zita and Mark Bernstein Foundation.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Aurora Andrews	Veronica Ford	Lauren Minaker
Julia Armstrong	Zoe Gagnon	Yasmine Ravandi
Eliza Binding	Cyan Gargol	Andrew Riley Singh
Victoria Brimble	Al Gilbert	Jason Roberts
Micah Buenafe	Anderson Green	Philip Rogalsky
Josh Calabio	Keira Jordan	Hannah Schaeffer
Samantha Campbell	Menal Kashalo	Natalie Stefanson
Saraya Clayton	Alora Kempthorne	Katrina Van Damme
Mad Delaat	Kali Kosolowski	Sophie Vermeylen
Chael Donald	Evelyn Little	Alissa Watson
Sam Ferguson	Josephine Long	Emma Welham

APPRENTICESHIP RECIPIENTS

Key Caguioa - Apprentice Director for *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines*
 Darlene Dela Cruz - Apprentice Technical Director
 Raphael Estillore - Apprentice Costume Designer for *The Last Wife*
 Oak Girard - Apprentice Lighting Designer for *Elf - The Musical*
 Montana Lehmann - Apprentice Director for *The Last Wife*
 Samantha Machado - Apprentice Director for *Holland*
 Kyle Mroz - Apprentice Director for *Elf - The Musical*
 Beth Toderash - Wardrobe Apprentice

Many past recipients of scholarships and apprenticeships were involved in the season: 27 worked as actors, crew and creative team members on MTC's 2024/25 productions, while 9 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. **New this season, the Jean Murray - Moray Sinclair Fund also provided the honoraria for these positions.**

Sarah Constible - Assistant Director for *A Number*
 Ava Darrach-Gagnon - Assistant Director for *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*
 Katherine Hochman - Assistant Costume Designer for *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*
 Rebekah Jones - Assistant Director / Choreographer for *Elf - The Musical*
 Joyce Licup - Assistant Set Designer for *Holland*
 Paul Rodermond - Assistant Music Director for *Elf - The Musical*
 Alissa Watson - Assistant Director for *The Last Wife*

Student Shadow Days

Students in grade 10-12 spend a day at MTC where they learn how things operate in a large theatre, plus a tailored experience relevant to their primary interests such as stage management, wardrobe or other areas in the industry.

PARTICIPANTS

Allen Alleyne Jordan Deeton Kaia de Haan Campbell Wood

Student Placement

From October 2025 to April 2026, MTC hosted grade 12 student Ehrian Federis from Seven Oaks MET School for a weekly internship.



Enrichment Guides

Enrichment Guides were compiled for all 10 shows of the Mainstage and Warehouse seasons and the provincial tour. They are posted online for all patrons to get extra insight into the productions. Creators and contributors included Ksenia Broda-Milian, Tala Gammon, Lori Tully, Jhaik Windyhair, and Sarah Farrant, with recommended book lists for each curated by the Winnipeg Public Library.

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 \$25 a seat! In the 2025/26 season, **628 MEMBERS** purchased a total of **1,738 TICKETS** throughout the year.

Facility Tours

The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's John Hirsch Mainstage is a National Historic site recognized for its contribution to Canadian theatre and for its unique Brutalist architecture. During the season, we gave tours to approximately **181 PEOPLE FROM 8 SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY GROUPS**.

Young Expressions Program

Young Expressions participants were invited to see shows, broaden their minds, sharpen their critical eyes, converse with theatre reviewers and artists, challenge their preconceptions, and express their opinions. The season culminated with them making a zine together. **11 PARTICIPANTS** from eight schools were chosen based on their application and teacher recommendation.

PARTICIPANTS

Adrien Côté	Ellen Bradshaw	Micah Kehler-Guest
Alexander Renton	Frankie Ward	Miles Nabo
Angel Nnamene	Kaloyana Momtichilov	Vidhi Bhavsar
Callie Syrenne	Keaton Delaurier-Jones	

GUESTS

- Melissa Langdon, actor and MTC's Artistic Programs Coordinator
- Ben Waldman, Winnipeg Free Press theatre reviewer
- Hope McIntyre, playwright, director and theatre professor
- Daniel Thau-Eleff, leadership of Manitoba Association of Playwrights

Backstage Pass

Backstage Pass is a long-standing program for students in Grade 11 and 12 that provides an in-depth perspective into the world of theatre through workshops led by professionals followed by attending a performance. **18 PARTICIPANTS** were selected from 11 schools.

PARTICIPANTS

Anya Naherniak	Luisa Read	Olivia Kawaleski
Emma Grosshans	Maria Baraban	Phin Giesbrecht
Fiona Hyde	Matthew McKay	River Ling-Balez
Gabi Trudeau	Gustafson	Sam Elkin
Haylyn Aitken	Mia Bennie	Tay Appler
Jo Wieden	Natalie Paterson	
Lila Klassen	Nice Omer	

BACKSTAGE PASS WORKSHOPS

LIFE OF PI • Technical Director **Donnie Osler** took the participants through Royal MTC's backstage, followed by a puppetry workshop with **Charlene van Buekenhout**.

ELF - THE MUSICAL • Assistant director/choreographer **Rebekah Jones** taught one of the show's Broadway-style numbers, and the students visited MTC's artisans in their workshops.

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS • A workshop with **Gwen Collins** on collaborative creation stretched imaginations and had participants making connections.

ROGERS V. ROGERS • Students experienced mock auditions with feedback from Artistic Programs Coordinator **Melissa Langdon** and devised their own marketing campaigns under the guidance of **Sue Caughlin**, Marketing and Communications Manager.

THE LAST WIFE • Fight director **Jacqueline Loewen** helped students see the importance of crafting fight scenes that drive the play's action forward and taught them technique.

RUBABOO - A MÉTIS CABARET • Inspired by a set featuring artwork by Leah Dorion, participants created their own set models based on the work of famous painters, guided by professional designer and program facilitator **Ksenia Broda-Milian**.

WHAT BACKSTAGE PASS STUDENTS HAD TO SAY

"There's many different things and people involved in the industry. Everyone is needed in some way and they all work together to make shows the best they can!"

"I got to tap into my imaginative and playful side that I don't often get to explore as a teenager."

"I liked connecting with new people and experiencing all of the new personalities. It was nice being uncomfortable but accepted with no judgement."

"I'm glad I joined this successful program to get help for my future career. Thank you!"

"I learned more about the day-to-day of the people who work here and it was cool to see what it's really like to work here. It was also cool to see all of the different job opportunities backstage."

"I really enjoyed getting to use the creative side of my brain."

"Talking to people who are actually working in this industry, with processes to enter that aren't commonly known, really makes it feel like it's possible for me to get to these careers in my own life!"



29
YOUNG
THEATRE
ENTHUSIASTS



NextGen Fringers

NextGen Fringers brought together 36 individuals aged 16-23 who love the Fringe, or had never been and wanted to see what it's all about! The 2025 cohort included 8 first-time Fringers.

PARTICIPANTS

Semira Abolore	Alyssa Friesen	Quinn McMullan
Victoria Alexander	Serena Friesen	Simeon Momtchilov
Tay Appler	Arlo Giesbrecht	Luca Morin
Mikaël Beaudry	Anderson Green	Osahon Okoro
Maija Buduhan	Emma Grey	Marley Passante
Hailey Collom	Romi Haims	Sylvia Press
So'Lanna Dallaire	Kai Hildebrand	Luisa Read
Mad Delaat	Keira Jordan	Amandeep Saini
Aurora Diamond	Gurleen Kalsi	Hannah Schaeffer
Danica Dumore	Menal Kashalo	Gabby Shim
Emily Dyer	Annabella Katiniaris	Savanna Tanasychuk
Tyesha Edwards-Gagne	Kevin Manness	James Webster

WHAT NEXTGEN FRINGERS HAD TO SAY

"I discovered the Fringe through this program, and it helped me make friends within the theatre community and showed me shows beyond what I thought theatre offered, especially by putting a highlight on local talent! This program is fantastic... it makes the Fringe feel welcoming and less daunting (by sharing thoughts with peers, seeing familiar faces in the crowds, and planning to see shows with NextGen friends)."

"I love being able to see more shows and the program lets me see shows I otherwise wouldn't, and share the experience with friends! I also enjoy writing reviews and like the chance to review both regular shows as well as street performances and vendors!"

"I had the opportunity to experience theatre in a new format, hang out with friends, and meet a bunch of talented artists. It was truly such an amazing experience and I would love to continue to support fellow artists and spread the word about the arts to my community."

36

NEXTGEN
FRINGERS

15

PATHWAYS TO THE
FRINGE PARTICIPANTS

Pathways to the Fringe

In its second year, Pathways has grown by 25%. We are halfway through this program that bridges our seasons. Pathways aims to give participants the tools to be confident in presenting a show at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. A dedicated group of adults from different backgrounds meet one Saturday each month from January to October for a workshop on a different skill with the goal to enter the lottery in November to try for a spot in the 2027 Fringe!

This program is facilitated by Fringe Festival Manager Tori Popp and Education and Enrichment Manager Ksenia Broda-Milian.

The 2026 cohort is:

PARTICIPANTS

Elizabeth Denny	Alex Mutcheson	Jean Gurr
Bridget Courchene	Veronica Reynolds	Sandra Moore
Tyler Joy White	Chantal Best	Jim Priebe
Eva Maia Miranda	Francis Hanlon	Sara Groleau
Azeezah Ibrahim	Sasha Kucas	Madly Friesen
Eliza Binding	Megan McGonigal	Tim Hogue
Julie Fernanda	Rhonda Kennedy Rogers	

GUESTS

Ellen Peterson, playwriting
Gwen Collins, non-script-based creation
Ksenia Broda-Milian, design
Matthew Paris-Irvine, directing
Theresa Thomson and Daphne Finlayson, producing

Upcoming topics will include marketing with Sue Caughlin, venues and technical skills with Alex Sinclair.



NextGen Fringers. PHOTO BY RACHELLE BLATTA

★★★★★ 1/2

“A big, beautiful early
Christmas gift wrapped in a
splashy showbiz bow”

– FREE PRESS

**HIGHEST-GROSSING
SHOW IN MTC HISTORY!**



Cast of *Elf - The Musical*. Set Designer Scott Penner, Costume Designer Jessica Oostergo,
Lighting & Video Designer Hugh Conacher. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

Theatre for Young Audiences

Royal MTC schedules student-only matinees for selected productions. This year, MTC offered student shows for five productions: *Life of Pi* (2 performances), *Elf - The Musical*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines* and *Rubaboo - A Métis Cabaret*.

3,808 STUDENTS attended student-only performances

4,045 STUDENTS attended regular performances

149 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS attended regular performances

SUPPORTED BY CANADA LIFE

TESTIMONIALS FROM TEACHERS

"MTC has been an awesome experience for my students - I have been bringing for 10+ years and will continue for years to come. Thank you!"

"This is a great program to expose students to the arts! I think it is particularly beneficial for rural students as they have less opportunity to attend events such as these plays."

"Without the school rate, Royal MTC would not be an option for us or for our students, so we are extremely grateful! It is an enriching learning experience for our students and inspires them to grow in their skills and pursue their dreams!"

"Congratulations - an excellent job. Students came back gushing about the performance and dreaming about their own future opportunities as musicians! Also the staff were incredibly kind and helpful. All around, excellent."

"This performance inspired a VERY spirited class discussion; well-done!"

Pre-Show Chats

Patrons enrich their experience through behind-the-scenes conversations with theatre professionals and special guests from our community. Over the course of the season, **234 PATRONS** joined us to enjoy the following:

LIFE OF PI • Local puppeteer Shawn Kettner revealed the intricacies of this art form.

ELF - THE MUSICAL • Assistant director/assistant choreographer Rebekah Jones talked about the creative and rehearsal processes of this massive show.

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS • Carla Schroeder, Head Scenic Artist, covered her department's role in bringing this and other productions to life with an array of "show and tell" pieces.

ROGERS V. ROGERS • Kelly Thornton spoke about her job as Artistic Director as well as the importance of MTC championing new works.

THE LAST WIFE • After a mini-tour of MTC's workshops, Head of Wardrobe Jackie Van Winkle gave insight into the costuming process of this production and others.

RUBABOO - A MÉTIS CABARET • Singer-songwriter Brandi Vezina and trained ethnomusicologist Sean McManus had a conversation about music's importance to cultures worldwide and Manitoba's own Métis community.

Talkbacks

Post-show, actors return to the stage for a question-and-answer session with the audience facilitated by volunteers Aaron Penner, Brandon Christopher, Christopher Brauer, Jack Fraser, Jeff Hirsch, and Katrina Dunn. Over the course of the season **MORE THAN 1,000 PATRONS** are estimated to have participated at 21 talkbacks.



Talkback with the cast of *Rubaboo - A Métis Cabaret*.
PHOTO BY REINER CABALQUINTO

ACCESSIBILITY

Royal MTC strives to make theatre accessible for all Manitobans through a variety of initiatives.
For more information, please visit royalmtc.ca/accessible

Relaxed Performances

Royal MTC offered a relaxed performance of *Elf - The Musical* at the Mainstage December 7, 2025, *Holland* at the Warehouse February 13, 2026 and *Rubaboo - A Métis Cabaret* at the Mainstage May 15, 2026.

This is the seventh 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 preshow 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 *Elf - The Musical* at the Mainstage on December 17, 2025, *Holland* at the Warehouse on February 19, 2026 and *Rubaboo - A Métis Cabaret* at the Mainstage on May 10 2026.

Audio Described Performances

Royal MTC offered Audio Described performances of *Life of Pi* on October 28 2025, *Murder on the Orient Express* on January 27 2026, *Holland* on February 17 2026 and *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines* on March 24 2026.

Touch Tours (New!)

Prior to the Audio Described performances of *Murder on the Orient Express* and *In the Shadow Beyond the Pines*, members of the blind/low-vision community and their companions were invited to explore the set to understand its layout and materials. Trained staff guided the group, and stage management and crews shared their expertise and explained props and effects.

Low Vision-Friendly Performances

Royal MTC designated two productions, *Rubaboo - A Métis Cabaret* and *A Number*, as "low-vision friendly." These are shows that can be well-understood by dialogue alone. Written and audio pre-show introductions fill in context. These can be listened to on our website in advance and via QR code at the venue.

3

**RELAXED
PERFORMANCES**

3

**ASL
PERFORMANCES**

4

**AUDIO DESCRIBED
PERFORMANCES**

2

**TOUCH
TOURS**

2

**LOW VISION
FRIENDLY SHOWS**

Jill Agopsowicz and Daniel Briere in *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*.
Set Designer Brian Perchaluk, Costume Designer Joseph Abetria,
Lighting Designer Hugh Conacher. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

**"Outstanding. Superb acting and
gorgeous set design."** – PATRON



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Royal MTC continued to build and nurture its community connections throughout the 2025/26 season. This was the first full season with a Director of Community Engagement and Audience Development in place, allowing the organization to take a more intentional, relationship-based approach to community engagement and audience development.

Building Community Connections

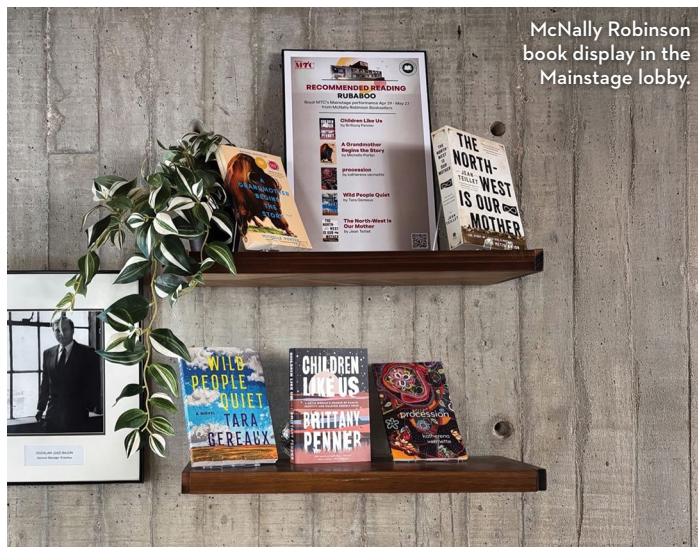
The season began with efforts to strengthen relationships across cultural, educational, tourism and economic sectors. Royal MTC continued to develop its relationship with McNally Robinson, including a new lobby display connected to each Mainstage production. The theatre also explored connections with the travel and tourism industry and continued to build relationships with organizations such as United Way Winnipeg.

For *Wonderful Joe*, Royal MTC invited Rainbow Resource Centre's Over the Rainbow program to attend a preview performance. This invitation created an opportunity for participants to experience the production in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Leading up to *Holland*, Royal MTC connected with the Children's Rehabilitation Centre by facilitating an on-site event where the cast gave a reading of the play's first act. Parents of children with disabilities were invited to enjoy a night out while their children participated in the program. The production also provided an opportunity for public engagement through a classroom session facilitated in partnership with McNally Robinson, featuring Trish Cooper, Debbie Patterson and Tyler Sneesby in a discussion about integrating disability stories and people with disabilities into theatre.

To improve access to *Holland* for community members, Royal MTC also promoted a \$25 inclusive ticket offer. This offer was extended to Manitoba Possible, Inclusion Winnipeg and Imaginability, helping make the production more accessible to people with disabilities and their communities.

Royal MTC also connected with the community through *Life of Pi*, including attending Diwali celebrations at the RBC Convention Centre. These opportunities helped the organization learn more about Winnipeg's diverse communities and consider how future engagement can be more thoughtful and relevant. As people transition from traditional media channels, community engagement has become more critical as a way to get new audiences to hear about, attend and keep returning to future productions.



McNally Robinson book display in the Mainstage lobby.

Partnerships Around Productions

Community partnerships and promotional initiatives continued throughout the season. For *Elf - The Musical*, a festive lobby experience included themed décor and cross-promotion with Fête Ice Cream and Coffee. They created unique flavours for the show, available at MTC's concessions and the local ice cream shop. Graffiti Art Programming engaged inner city artists and youth to connect deeply with MTC and make magical memories at the theatre by creating "Buddy's Bar."

During *Elf - The Musical* a collection for Koats for Kids gave audience members an opportunity to support local families while attending the production. The partnership reflected Royal MTC's commitment to using the theatre as a space for community participation and charitable giving.

Engagement continued around *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*, *The Last Wife*, *Rubaboo - A Métis Cabaret* and *Daan*. These productions offered opportunities to consider how Royal MTC can connect with communities through shared interests, cultural relationships, education, local organizations and relevant public conversations.



Buddy the Elf (Ryan Brown) with Fête Ice Cream & Coffee co-owners Teri-Lynn Friesen and Élise Allard. PHOTO BY RACHELLE BLATTA

Indigenous Engagement and Learning

Royal MTC continued to deepen its understanding of Indigenous history, culture and community relationships. Staff and board members participated in an Indigenous-focused tour of the Forks by Turtle Tours to build an understanding of the site's history and significance.

This learning supported a broader shift in the organization's approach to Indigenous engagement. Rather than relying primarily on discount-driven initiatives, Royal MTC is working toward meaningful relationship-building, greater cultural understanding and engagement practices informed by Indigenous communities and sectors.

This work is ongoing. It requires listening, learning from partners and allowing relationships to develop over time. Royal MTC is committed to continuing this work with care and intentionality.

Participation in the Wider Community

Royal MTC continued to be visible in the broader community through participation in events such as the Winnipeg Pride Parade. These opportunities allowed staff and representatives to show support for local communities and to connect with audiences outside the theatre.

The organization also continued to strengthen relationships with local businesses and community partners. Royal MTC made further progress toward its goal of offering as many local products as possible through its concessions, supporting Manitoba businesses while providing audiences with a more distinctly local theatre experience.

Looking Ahead

The 2025/26 season reinforced the importance of relationship-based community engagement. The strongest opportunities came from listening to partners, connecting outreach to the work on stage and creating accessible ways for people to participate.

Looking ahead, Royal MTC's priorities will remain focused on deepening community relationships, improving access for members of traditionally underrepresented communities at the theatre, strengthening Indigenous engagement, expanding local partnerships and testing initiatives that can be developed into sustainable, scalable programs. By continuing to learn, adapt and build trust, Royal MTC can support long-term audience development and ensure the theatre remains an active and welcoming part of the community.



Royal MTC at the Winnipeg Pride Parade in June 2025

SPECIAL EVENTS

Black and White Ball

A MAGNIFICENT JOURNEY

On Saturday, November 1, 510 guests joined us ON A MAGNIFICENT JOURNEY at the 2025 Black & White Ball in support of the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre. Held at the Manitoba Museum's Alloway Hall, guests were welcomed into the world of *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express* by Royal MTC artists and emcees Justin Stadnyk and Donna Fletcher. Surrounded by art deco glamour, guests enjoyed an elegant meal, appearances by Hercule Poirot (Alex Poch Goldin) and Buddy the Elf (Ryan Brown) and danced into the early hours of the morning.

Royal MTC is grateful to all the guests, sponsors, corporate table purchasers, donors and volunteers for creating another unforgettable evening. Thank you for making this season possible!

Congratulations to Lynn Hawkeye, winner of the **Fillmore Riley** Vacation Prize!



2025 Black & White Ball Committee

L TO R: Kathryn Gompf, Kirsten McConnell, Colleen Kroeker, Ryan Leech, Sharan Atwal, Jenny-Lou Ryan, Rhonda Plett, Dana Plett, Elsebeth Hansen-Kriening, Heidi Struck & Antonio Buccini.

NOT PRESENT: Kaela Acheson, Kim Boughton, Nicole Fay, Meaghan Fletcher, Stacey Grocholski, Andrea Mancini, Brad McCabe, Julie-Anne McCallum, Stephanie Porrior, Shelly Smith-Hines & Ellie Topnik.



2025 Black & White Ball Volunteers

L TO R: Patricia Vineberg, George Nyman, Irene Shapira, Bettina Nyman, Casey Challes, Melissa Hazelton, Denise Piche, Eiden French, Maxx Bonikowsky, Bonnie MacDonald, Mika Beaudry, Donna Korban, Tessa Pearen, Keith Love & Anne Love. NOT PRESENT: Carlos Betonio, Donna Korban and Leslie Watson



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ATTENDANCE • 510

PROCEEDS • \$305,739

SPECIAL EVENTS

Royal MTC / MBA Lawyers Play



CRAZY FOR YOU

Everyone was tapping their toes during *Crazy for You*, the 33rd Lawyers Play, which played from May 5 to 9 at the Tom Hendry Warehouse. The Lawyers Play is one of Royal MTC's largest annual fundraisers to support the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival. As of 2026 over \$1.2 million has been raised through this wonderful partnership!

The volunteer cast of Manitoba Bar Association members brought audiences to their feet with their singing and dancing to familiar Gershwin melodies.

Finally, a huge thanks to our patrons, donors, advertisers, sponsors, cast and crew, as well as the volunteers and committee members!

Crazy for You®

Music and Lyrics by
George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin
Book by Ken Ludwig

Co Conception by
Ken Ludwig and Mike Ockrent
Inspired by Material by
Guy Bolton and John McGowan

Originally produced on Broadway by
Roger Horchow and Elizabeth Williams
Original Broadway Choreography by
Susan Stroman

May 5-9, 2026

Director / Choreographer: Rebekah Jones*
Music Director: Cary Denby
Set Designer: Kari Hagness
Head Scenic Artist: Carla Schroeder
Scenic Artist: Larissa Shabaga
Wardrobe Coordinators: Jackie Van Winkle
& Thora Lamont
Wardrobe Staff: Heather Thorliefson & Martha Boyce
Lighting Designer / Head Electrician: Evan King
Head of Sound: Tim Clark
Deck Audio / Head Carpenter: Ryan Spracklin
Associate Technical Director: Alex Sinclair
Wigs Supervisor: Nico Pielou
Props Coordination: Jamie Plummer, Zoë Leclerc-
Kennedy & Khaeler Bautista
Assistant Choreographer: Melissa Baert
Producer / Stage Manager: Chuck McEwen
Assistant Producer: Tori Popp
Assistant Stage Manager: Meagan Chrest
Assistant Stage Manager: Darlene Dela Cruz

Cast: Gail Asper, David Barbour, Victor Bargaen,
Kathrine Basarab, Andrea Bellhouse, Jennifer Bird,
Meghan Bjorklund, Tashia Dreger, Caleigh Glawson,
Benji Greenberg, Kate Henley, Deanna Hiebert,
Jamie Jurczak, David Kroft, Joel Lebois, Hayley Main,
Jeff Palamar, Myron Pawlowsky, Sandi Phillips,
Jodi Plenert, Nadine Plourde, Nalini Reddy,
Ashley Rees, Jaime Rosin, Steve Scarfone,
Mike Segstro, Reed Sitarik

Musicians: Cary Denby, Eric Vickar, Cameron Denby,
Nenad Zdjelar, Julie Husband

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Joel Lebois
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Jim McLandress
Michelle Falk
Anjali Sandhu

ATTENDANCE • 1,405

PROCEEDS • \$169,182

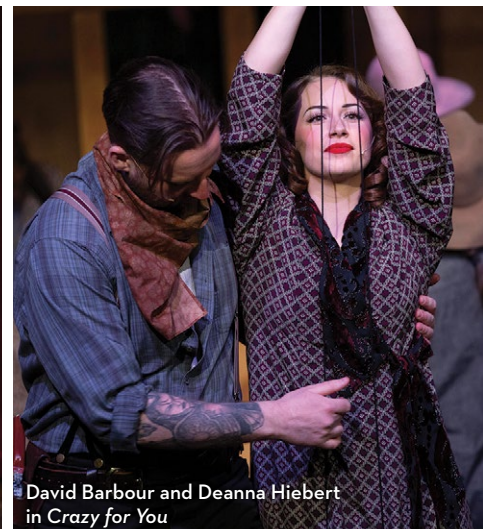
PHOTOS BY DAVE SWIECICKI



The cast of *Crazy for You*



Manitoba Bar Association Vice President Stacey
Soldier and Artistic Director Kelly Thornton



David Barbour and Deanna Hiebert
in *Crazy for You*

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

“Sargisson’s portrayal of Katherine ranges from frightened vulnerability to ballsy self-assurance.”

– FREE PRESS



“I loved it, I thought the modern take was perfect and so timely in our current world.”

– PATRON

“I was captivated from beginning to end”

– PATRON

Amelia Sargisson and Sébastien Heins in *The Last Wife*.
Set Designer Brian Perchaluk, Costume Designer Joseph Abetria,
Lighting Designer Hugh Conacher. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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Rodrigo Beilfuss and Victor Ertmanis
in *A Number*. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT



Alex Schaeffer, Ryan Brown and
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“The play was outstanding and it was made all the more special by the extraordinary set. What a triumph!”

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Alex Poch Goldin and Dutchess Cayetano in Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*.
Set Designer Brian Perchaluk, Costume Designer Joseph Abetria, Lighting Designer Hugh Conacher. PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT

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MAINTENANCE

Mason Campbell, Building Custodian
Chris Fletcher, Building Manager

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Rachelle Blatta, Communications & Social Media Manager*
Ksenia Broda-Milian, Education & Enrichment Manager
Reiner Cabalquinto, Digital Content Coordinator
Sue Caughlin, Marketing & Communications Manager
Micaella Langit, Database Support Technician
Desiree La Vallee, Ticketing Application Specialist
Savannah Lillies, Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Christina Reuther, Sales Coordinator
Jocelyn Unrau, Director of Marketing & Communications

PAINT

Carla Schroeder, Head Scenic Artist
Larissa Shabaga, Interim Assistant Head Scenic Artist

PRODUCTION

Christine Corthey, Production Associate*
Eiden French, Assistant Technical Director*
Ian Kirk, Production Driver
Allison Loat, Director of Production
Donnie Osler, Technical Director
Denise Piche, Assistant Production Manager
Alex Sinclair, Associate Technical Director

PROPERTIES

Khaeler Bautista, Props Builder
Zoë Leclerc-Kennedy, Assistant Head of Props & Buyer
Jamie Plummer, Head of Props

STAGE CREW

Kayla McSwain, Head of Wardrobe (Stage)
Claude Robert, Head Electrician
Jessica Rose, Head of Audio
Liam Shattuck, Head Stage Hand
Chris Thomson, Head Carpenter

TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE

Meagan Chrest, Scenic Carpenter
Tim Clark, Head of Sound
Evan King, Head Electrician
Ryan Spracklin, Master Carpenter

WARDROBE

Martha Boyce, Wardrobe First Hand
Thora Lamont, Lead Cutter
Heather Thorleifson, Associate Head of Wardrobe
Jackie Van Winkle, Head of Wardrobe/Buyer

WIGS

Beverley Covert, Head of Wigs/Make-Up
Nico Pielou, Interim Head of Wigs

WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL

Chuck McEwen, Executive Producer
Tori Popp, Festival Manager

HONORARY STAFF

Zaz Bajon, General Manager Emeritus
Steven Schipper, CM, OM, Artistic Director Emeritus



PHOTO BY DAVE SWIECICKI

*Denotes past employee §Fondly Remembered

FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position AS AT MAY 31, 2026

	OPERATING FUND	CAPITAL REPLACEMENT FUND	THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND	STABILIZATION FUND	SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND	2026 TOTAL	2025 TOTAL
ASSETS							
CURRENT							
Cash and cash equivalents	4,906,576	—	—	—	106,715	5,013,291	4,060,466
Accounts and grants receivable	1,247,256	—	—	—	—	1,247,256	1,299,745
Due from MTC Foundation	2,345	—	—	—	—	2,345	54,134
Prepaid expenses	536,105	—	—	—	—	536,105	461,130
Due to/(from) funds	(2,224,390)	545,900	128,517	1,549,973	—	—	—
	4,467,892	545,900	128,517	1,549,973	106,715	6,798,997	5,875,475
CAPITAL ASSETS							
	—	2,538,022	—	—	—	2,538,022	1,892,917
	4,467,892	3,083,922	128,517	1,549,973	106,715	9,337,019	7,768,392
LIABILITIES							
CURRENT							
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	765,468	—	—	—	—	765,468	597,137
Deferred revenue	3,702,424	—	—	—	—	3,702,424	3,260,046
	4,467,892	—	—	—	—	4,467,892	3,857,183
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO CAPITAL ASSETS							
	—	2,963,266	—	—	—	2,963,266	2,076,847
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS							
	—	—	—	—	106,715	106,715	99,405
	4,467,892	2,963,266	—	—	106,715	7,537,873	6,033,435
NET ASSETS							
Internally restricted	—	—	128,517	—	—	128,517	110,269
Invested in capital assets	—	120,656	—	—	—	120,656	148,303
Unrestricted	—	—	—	1,549,973	—	1,549,973	1,476,385
	—	120,656	128,517	1,549,973	—	1,799,146	1,734,957
	4,467,892	3,083,922	128,517	1,549,973	106,715	9,337,019	7,768,392

Statement of Operations & Changes in Net Assets AS AT MAY 31, 2026

	OPERATING FUND	CAPITAL REPLACEMENT FUND	THEATRE DEVELOPMENT FUND	STABILIZATION FUND	SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND	2026 TOTAL	2025 TOTAL
Revenue	12,158,230	273,672	—	—	36,600	12,468,502	11,500,168
Expenses	11,976,642	301,319	89,752	—	36,600	12,404,313	11,507,169
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	181,588	(27,647)	(89,752)	—	—	64,189	(7,001)
Net assets, beginning of year	—	148,303	110,269	1,476,385	—	1,734,957	1,741,958
Interfund transfers	(181,588)	—	108,000	73,588	—	—	—
Net assets, end of year	—	120,656	128,517	1,549,973	—	1,799,146	1,734,957

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

CORE FUNDERS



EXCLUSIVE PRODUCTION SUPPORTER



TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE SEASON SPONSOR



JOHN HIRSCH MAINSTAGE PRODUCTION SPONSORS



TOM HENDRY WAREHOUSE PRODUCTION SPONSOR



LOYAL PARTNERS



2026 REGIONAL TOUR



2025 BLACK & WHITE BALL



2025 WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL



★★★★★ 1/2

“a bright celebration of
Métis culture”

– FREE PRESS

*“Wonderful way to end
the season. Exceptionally
talented performers.”*

– PATRON

*“I actually don’t have the
words to describe what an
incredible show it was!”*

– PATRON



Robert Walsh, Andrea Menard, Karen Donaldson Shepherd and Nathen Aswell in the Grand Theatre production of *Rubaboo – A Métis Cabaret*.
Set Design by Cimmeron Meyer, Costume Design by Samantha McCue, Lighting Design by Kimberly Purtell. PHOTO BY DAHLIA KATZ

ROYAL
MTC
MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE

174 Market Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba • Canada • R3B 0P8
P 204 956 1340 F 204 947 3741 E info@royalmtc.ca

BOX OFFICE

P 204 942 6537 TOLL-FREE 1 877 446 4500

RoyalMTC.ca

