

ROYAL MTC ANNOUNCES FINAL YEAR OF THE MASTER PLAYWRIGHT FESTIVAL

WINNIPEG, November 22, 2019 – ShakespeareFest, the 20th anniversary of the Master Playwright Festival, will be the final edition of the festival, as coordinated by the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre.

The original purpose of the **Master Playwright Festival** was to bring work to the stage that was little seen in Winnipeg. Over the years, this has evolved into celebrating the work and life of prolific and important playwrights. The festival has provided opportunities for both professional and emerging artists from a variety of organizations and independent companies to produce work under the umbrella of a larger festival. At the same time, patrons enjoyed the opportunity to immerse themselves in the work of playwrights who may not have had a regular home on Winnipeg stages.

“We’re excited to present William Shakespeare as our final master playwright in what will be the largest festival yet, in terms of participating companies, and I’m looking forward to seeing Winnipeg theatre fans out enjoying all the amazing work. The Master Playwright Festival, like the Fringe, has helped to foster and build Winnipeg’s independent theatre community and I am pleased to have been a part of the event since 2008,” stated *Chuck McEwen, Festival Producer*.

“Royal MTC is very proud to have worked with 103 partner companies in the Master Playwright Festival over the past 20 years; Thank you to the artists, staff, patrons and sponsors who have supported the festival. I look forward to engaging the community with some exciting new initiatives we will be launching in the upcoming 20/21 season,” added *Kelly Thornton, Artistic Director*

The Master Playwright Festival has celebrated the work of Samuel Beckett (2001), Bertolt Brecht (2002), Harold Pinter (2003), Edward Albee (2004), Michel Tremblay (2005), Eugene O’Neill (2006), Tom Stoppard (2007), David Mamet (2008), Arthur Miller (2009), Caryl Churchill (2010), August Strindberg (2011), George Bernard Shaw (2012), Stephen Sondheim (2013), Anton Chekhov (2014), Noël Coward (2015), Alan Ayckbourn (2016), Agatha Christie (2017), John Patrick Shanley (2018) and Henrik Ibsen (2019).

A celebratory Master Playwright Festival event will take place in early January and will include past Master Playwright Festival participants. ShakespeareFest programming details will be announced on December 10. Tickets and passes can also be purchased on December 10.

The 2020/21 Royal MTC season will be announced on Friday, January 31, including details about new programming initiatives.

For more information, please contact:

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