

ROYAL MTC ANNOUNCES REGIONAL TOUR FOR 61st SEASON

BUYING THE FARM

A co-production with Magnus Theatre
By Shelley Hoffman and Stephen Sparks
Directed by Thom Currie
January 31 – March 30, 2019

WINNIPEG, March 26, 2018 – The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre and Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries present **BUYING THE FARM**, celebrating our 50th touring anniversary. This charming comedy will travel to 24 communities across Manitoba and Northern Ontario from January 31 to March 30, 2019. The production will be directed by Magnus Theatre's Artistic Director Thom Currie.

Magnus Bjornson is a sixty-something down-to-earth bachelor who has worked on his family farm all his life. His smart-as-a-whip niece, Esme Van Fossen, has been helping her great-uncle for the past four months, but when issues arise things go awry. Magnus's health takes a turn, his finances are out of sorts and there's a real estate developer ready to make an offer. Watch this delightfully comedic story unfold and embrace life's inevitable changes amongst the cows and chickens.

Stephen's inspiration for the production stems from farming roots going back generations and his experience working, time and again, in theatres situated in farming communities where he's witnessed changes for good and ill.

ABOUT SHELLEY HOFFMAN

Shelley's proud to say she's had a varied career that's never left her bored. A recovering actor, she started out working in theatre, television and sketch comedy before shifting into writing and producing corporate events. Next, she became the de facto granddaughter to over 30 Nonnas, Omas, Bubbes and Grandmas when she produced a season and two holiday specials for *Loving Spoonfuls*, the Cooking with Grandmoms television show. Since then she has been developing, story editing and producing award-winning animation properties for kids and kids-at-heart. But once her partner, Stephen Sparks, pitched an idea for a play based on his family's history of farming in the prairies, Shelley was thrilled to return to her theatrical roots. *Buying the Farm* was, and is, a labour of love!

ABOUT STEPHEN SPARKS

As an actor, Stephen has worked in theatres across Canada. Some credits include: *Baskerville* (Lighthouse Theatre); *Mick Unplugged* and *The Myth of Summer* (ATP Playrites Festival); *Man of La Mancha* (Globe Theatre); *The Sound of Music* (Persephone); *The Clock Maker*, *The 39 Steps* and *I had a Job I Liked Once* (Sudbury Theatre); *Colours in the Storm* (Festival Players); *Enchanted April* (Theatre Calgary); *Noises Off* (The Atlantic Theatre Festival); *Real Estate*, *Looking* (Theatre Aquarius); *Private Lives* (Showboat Festival) and many more over his 30-year career.

Tickets for **BUYING THE FARM** can be purchased from representatives in each community.

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Kathleen Cerrer, Publicist | kcerrer@royalmtc.ca | 204 934 0302

Christine Corthey, Production Associate | ccorthey@royalmtc.ca | 204 954 6403

REGIONAL TOUR SCHEDULE

DATE	PERFORMANCE TIME	COMMUNITY
Thu Jan 31	7:30pm	Steinbach
Fri Feb 1	7:30pm	Portage la Prairie
Sun Feb 3	7:30pm	Lac du Bonnet
Mon Feb 4	7:30pm	Gimli
Tue Feb 5	7:30pm	Gimli
Fri Feb 8	8:00pm	Thompson
Sun Feb 10	7:30pm	Flin Flon
Mon Feb 11	7:30pm	Snow Lake
Wed Feb 13	7:30pm	Strathclair
Thu Feb 14	7:30pm	Neepawa
Sat Feb 16	7:30pm	Brandon
Mon Feb 18	7:30pm	Minnedosa
Tue Feb 19	7:00pm	Deloraine
Wed Feb 20	7:30pm	Crystal City
Thu Feb 21	7:30pm	Souris
Sat Feb 23	7:30pm	Virden
Sun Feb 24	7:30pm	Winkler
Mon Feb 25	7:30pm	Carman
Tue Feb 26	7:30pm	MacGregor
Sat Mar 2	7:30pm	Morris
Sun Mar 3	7:30pm	Kenora
Mon Mar 4	7:30pm	Red Lake
Tue Mar 5	7:30pm	Dryden
Wed Mar 6	7:30pm	Sioux Lookout
Thu Mar 7	7:30pm	Atikokan
Thu Mar 14		Opening at Magnus Theatre, Thunder Bay
Sat Mar 30		Closing