



NEWS RELEASE

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AUDIENCES OPEN UP TO STRINDBERG

“Surely there is no figure in [the] literature [of his day], outside of Tolstoy, that laid bare the most secret nooks and corners of his own soul with the sincerity of August Strindberg” – Emma Goldman

WINNIPEG, FEBRUARY 10, 2011 – Winnipeg audiences opened themselves up to Swedish playwright August Strindberg’s brand of naturalistic theatre for the 11th annual Master Playwright Festival. Tackling taboo topics, such as class structure and the hypocrisy of gender roles, Strindberg’s work is intense. **STRINDBERGFEST** audiences bought in and made the festival a success.

A **STRINDBERGPASS** permitted entry to all **STRINDBERGFEST** productions, and 125 passes were purchased. The festival offered 137 ticketed performances, and 8,872 patrons bought tickets. The two free lectures attracted 139 patrons interested in finding out more about Strindberg – was he a madman, a misogynist or a genius? Total festival attendance, for ticketed and non-ticketed events reached 10,011.

Executive Producer Chuck McEwen was pleased with support for **STRINDBERGFEST**. “The record 18 partner companies participating in the festival this year took up the artistic challenge of exploring the creative depths of this year’s master playwright, and some say, the father of modern theatre. These companies not only successfully presented some of August Strindberg’s classic plays, but found inspiration in his many other creative works, artistic endeavours, career and personal life to create original plays that added an exciting element to this year’s festival for our enthusiastic audiences.”

On behalf of the participating companies, we thank Canadian Heritage, the Winnipeg Free Press, The Fairmont Winnipeg, Industry Images, the King’s Head Pub and Saison Voyageur for their support of **STRINDBERGFEST**.

2012 Master Playwright George Bernard Shaw: Jan. 19 – Feb. 5, 2012

“If you can’t get rid of the skeleton in your closet, you’d best teach it to dance” – George Bernard Shaw

An Irish author and playwright known for his role in revolutionizing British drama by replacing sentimental melodrama with issue-driven plays, George Bernard Shaw was best known for making serious social issues relevant by using humour. He used wit to attack social hypocrisies and turned the stage into a forum for discussion rather than pure entertainment. Shaw was irate about what he felt was the exploitation of the working class, and he was ardent in promoting his causes, including gaining equal rights for men and women, and eliminating private ownership of productive land. With more than 60 plays to his name, as well as novels and countless articles and essays, Shaw is the only person to have been awarded both a Nobel Prize for Literature, in 1925, and an Oscar, in 1938 for his work on adapting the stage version of *Pygmalion* for the screen. *Pygmalion* is his best-known play, due partly to its adaptation into the Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*. Other well-known Shaw works include *Candida*, *Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, *Heartbreak House*, *Back to Methuselah*, *Major Barbara* and *The Doctor’s Dilemma*.

For more information, please visit www.masterplaywrightfest.com

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