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## ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

### ***THE NEW CANADIAN CURLING CLUB* BREAKS ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS BOX OFFICE RECORD**

**CALGARY, ALBERTA** – [Alberta Theatre Projects](#) announced today that [The New Canadian Curling Club](#) has officially become the highest-grossing play in single ticket sales for a non-holiday production in the company's 48-year history, eclipsing a mark previously set by the 2010 production of Ronnie Burkett's *Billy Twinkle: Requiem for a Golden Boy*.

"It has been wonderful to witness the incredible response from Calgary audiences to *The New Canadian Curling Club*," says ATP Board President Vishal Saini. "We have been absolutely overwhelmed by the deeply personal, heartfelt reactions to this new Canadian play. Along with our long-time patrons, we have also been able to welcome so many first-time audience members to The Martha Cohen Theatre. This is particularly heartening as we look forward to an exciting future for Alberta Theatre Projects. This production, the first programmed and directed by our new Executive and Artistic Director Darcy Evans, is a truly extraordinary way to wrap up an incredible 2018/19 season."

"The success of any production is hugely dependent on its capacity to reach out and engage with a huge cross-section of our community," says Evans. "Such is the case with Mark Crawford's incredible play. *The New Canadian Curling Club* provided an opportunity to build meaningful connections with a huge range of community groups: The Centre for Newcomers, The Corporate Calgary Challenge Human Bonspiel, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association, The Asian Heritage Foundation, Action Dignity, Calgary Catholic Immigrant Services as well as the Garrison and Chestermere Curling Clubs. We are profoundly grateful for their support and consultation and hope we can continue to work together to support each other's endeavors."

Alberta Theatre Projects' production of *The New Canadian Curling Club* is the play's second. *The New Canadian Curling Club* premiered at The Blyth Festival in the summer of 2018. Playwright Mark Crawford was in attendance for final previews and opening night in Calgary: "I am thrilled that *The New Canadian Curling Club* is playing to big, boisterous crowds at Alberta Theatre Projects and I'm humbled to hear it's breaking box office records," says Crawford. "Thank you to the cast, creative team, and staff for their hard work on this wonderful production of the play. And thanks to the audiences for embracing these five characters as they sweep and slide across the stage of the Martha Cohen Theatre. To quote my own play: 'This

game, eh? It's about the folks you do 'er with.' Thanks for being great folks to do 'er with, Calgary!"

Mark Crawford's plays have been produced by theatres across Canada. Also an actor, he recently performed in his own play *Bed and Breakfast* at Regina's Globe Theatre and Ottawa's Great Canadian Theatre Company. Next up, *Bed and Breakfast* goes to Vancouver's Arts Club and Ontario's Blyth Festival. Mark's first play, *Stag and Doe*, just had its international premiere at Teatr Powszechny in Lodz, Poland; his play for young audiences, *Boys, Girls, and Other Mythological Creatures*, will visit Toronto's Harbourfront Junior Festival in May; and *The Birds and the Bees* has a production this spring at the Sudbury Theatre Centre. *The New Canadian Curling Club* will slide onto the stage over the next year at Victoria Playhouse Petrolia, Thousand Islands Playhouse, Western Canada Theatre, and Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre.

Evans is the Executive and Artistic Director of Alberta Theatre Projects. He has directed at theatres across Canada from Vancouver Island to Prince Edward Island, including The Grand Theatre in London, Sudbury Theatre Centre, Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre, Stage West Calgary, Magnus Theatre, Angel Walk Theatre, and The Watermark Theatre. In the US he has directed Off-Broadway, in regional theatres, and served as Associate Director on Broadway and for US National tours. His productions have been nominated for two Dora Awards including Outstanding Production and 14 Broadway World Awards, including Outstanding Direction, and won the Patron's Pick and Best of the Toronto Fringe awards. Evans spent nine seasons as an actor and associate director over two decades at The Stratford Festival, Canada's largest classical repertory company.

### **About the show:**

*The New Canadian Curling Club* tells the story of a Chinese physician, a Jamaican Tim Horton's manager, a South Asian father, and a 17-year old Syrian refugee who live in a rural Albertan town. In an effort to welcome newcomers to Canada, the community decides to offer a free, "Learn to Curl" program. But when its organizer slips on the ice and breaks her hip, the rink's ice custodian and former champion curler Stuart MacPhail is forced to step in as head coach. Trouble is, Stuart has some strong opinions about immigrants—opinions he has trouble keeping to himself. What follows is the hilarious and inspiring story of a group of unlikely athletes who face off against local prejudice and become a true team.

There is limited ticket availability for the remaining performances of *The New Canadian Curling Club*, which must close March 23. Subscriptions are also currently on sale for Alberta Theatre Projects' 2019/2020 season, which features a rich variety of contemporary Canadian and International plays in various configurations in the Martha Cohen Theatre. Visit [www.albertatheatreprojects.com](http://www.albertatheatreprojects.com) or call 403-294-7402 for details.

Follow the hashtag **#ATPCurlingClub** on Twitter and Instagram for the latest news about this production.

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