

# ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

For Immediate Release:

## **Alberta Theatre Projects Regrets to Share News of the Passing of Darcy Evans, Executive and Artistic Director**

**CALGARY, Nov. 26, 2020** – Alberta Theatre Projects is deeply saddened to announce the passing of Darcy Evans, Executive and Artistic Director. Evans died on Wednesday, November 25, 2020 surrounded by loved ones. Evans had been battling cancer since March, and he unfortunately lost this fight yesterday afternoon.

A leader in Canada's theatre community, Evans had decades of experience with professional companies across North America. His impressive career history includes time spent on Broadway, US National Tours, and nine seasons at the Stratford Festival. He was a celebrated director, actor, and arts administrator.

Evans joined Alberta Theatre Projects in June of 2018 and leaves a tremendous legacy behind. While at Alberta Theatre Projects, Evans directed blockbuster productions including *The New Canadian Curling Club*, *The Wedding Party*, and *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe*.

He loved exploring the possibilities of what the Martha Cohen Theatre could offer and gave audiences experiences that allowed them to be as much a part of the show as the performers on stage. His programming hit a high note with audiences and critics alike, from *Disgraced* and *Old Stock* winning top prizes at this year's Critics' Choice Awards, to *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe* becoming the top selling show in the company's history.

Evans' programming choices resulted in a 23% increase in attendance in his first year of programming, setting a 10-year record for subscription sales, including 600 new subscribers.

As an arts administrator, Evans' strategies to rebuild Alberta Theatre Projects involved everything from modernizing the brand to ensuring financial prudence across all areas of the business. He led the organization to retire an accumulated deficit of \$99,799 in his second year as Executive and Artistic Director, while also netting a surplus of \$78,647 in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Evans was passionate about placing Alberta Theatre Projects at the forefront of the development of new Canadian works. As the company faced the challenge of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Evans focused much of Alberta Theatre Projects' energy on new Canadian play development. Re-igniting the Playwright's Unit, organizing the Playwrights Projects in June of this year, and commissioning eight new works in the summer of 2020 has allowed Alberta Theatre Projects to continue as a catalyst for art, even during a time when audiences cannot attend in person.

"Darcy cared passionately about Alberta Theatre Projects, and its place in Calgary's theatre community," said Andrew Scanlon, Evans' partner, and a playwright for Alberta Theatre Projects. "He so loved welcoming everyone to the Martha Cohen Theatre every night, and was always touched by the generosity and kindness he received in return. On behalf of Darcy's entire family, I'd like to thank the Alberta Theatre Projects staff, board of directors, volunteers, artists and audiences for the support and confidence you have shown him throughout his tenure as Executive and Artistic Director."

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Alberta Theatre Projects will continue to present a live reading of Scanlon's adaptation of L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz* next week in honour of Evans. As a company, Alberta Theatre Projects expresses sincere condolences to Evans' entire family. This loss is felt profoundly by everyone at Alberta Theatre Projects.

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