

Fugitive actor revived Shaw Festival

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From 1963 to 1967, as the implacable Lieutenant Gerard, Barry Morse relentlessly pursued David Janssen in *The Fugitive*, an American television series that kept viewers on tenterhooks worldwide (he finally got his man.)

British-born Morse died Saturday in England at 89.

Morse trained at the esteemed Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England, beginning a career that led to approximately 3,000 roles on radio, television, stage and in film, according to the actor's website.

In Britain, Morse played 200 roles from 1937 to 1941 at various repertory companies; leading roles, including Hamlet and Hippolytus on the radio; made appearances in films, including *Thunder Rock* (1942), *When We Are Married* (1943) and *Mrs. Fitzherbert* (1947); and played a variety of parts in the West End and on tour, including Andrey in *War and Peace*, Lord Henry Wootton in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Mephistopheles in *Faust*.

Morse relocated to Canada in 1951, becoming a regular performer on CBC radio. And when CBC embraced television, Morse found himself playing a wide range of roles. In *Macbeth*, he insisted on being paid \$1 more than CBC's previous top television salary of \$1,000, thus establishing actors' right to negotiate with a corporation whose payment to artists was regulated by Parliament.

His first television series, *Presenting Barry Morse*, aired in 1960 on CBC.

Morse also served as artistic director of the Shaw Festival of Canada for its 1966 season, and revived the enterprise. With the theatre filled beyond capacity, and with Morse and other leading Canadian actors accepting no more than a flat \$150 a week, Morse was able, in five weeks, to pay off the Shaw's deficit which, after two seasons, was crippling the festival. The Shaw now fills three theatres for most of the year.

Morse's devotion to Shaw remained: after his return in 1976 to part-domicile in London, Morse became vice-president and eventually president of the Shaw Society.

Morse appeared in a variety of British television series, including *The Golden Bowl*.

Morse raised money for the Performing Arts Lodge, an actors' and musicians' retirement home in Toronto, touring his one man show, *Merely Players*, in one-night stands through Canada in 1983 and 1987-88. In 1997 two performances of the show raised \$50,000 for

the Parkinson Foundation, to which he devoted much energy after his wife developed the disease. His last performance of *Merely Players* was in 2003, at age 85.

Morse and actress Sydney Sturgess, who died in 1991, had two children, Melanie, who died in 2005, and Hayward.