

To Russia with Love Shack



By [Joe Belanger](#), The London Free Press



London playwright Michael G Wilmot with Russian and English scripts of his work *Love Shack*.
(DEREK RUTTAN, The London Free Press)



It turns out there's a lot of love for that 'shack' . . . even in Russia.

Love Shack, the first play penned by London playwright Michael G Wilmot, is being produced by two Russian theatre companies, one in Moscow next year and another in Astrakhan in the south on the Volga River this month.

"I saw a post on Facebook in 2014 from a guy (Victor Weber, a professional translator) asking for comedy plays to be translated into Russian, so I submitted "*Love Shack*," said Wilmot, who hasn't yet signed the deal with the Moscow troupe.

"Weber translated it and sent me a copy. But I never thought anything would come of it. That's what happens with 90 per cent of the stuff we (playwrights) send out. So, yes, my flabber was gasted when I found out it was being produced in Russia."

Love Shack has been produced professionally several times, including at Port Stanley Festival in 2010 to rave reviews.

It's a romantic comedy about married neighbours who book a motel room to take their flirtations to the next level "or not."

“(Weber) said he liked the play and thought it would work in Russia,” Wilmot said. “I guess he has contacts in theatre in Russia and sent it around.”

Wilmot has since retitled *Love Shack* to *No Tell Motel*. He’s written four other full-length plays, including *7-10 Split* (premiered in Port Stanley), the drama *Summer Comes Late*, the comedy *Buying the Moose* (his most successful play to date with more than 20 productions, including next summer at Port Stanley), and his newest, *The Last Laugh*, which has yet to be staged.

Wilmot was raised in Windsor, Napanee and Sarnia and spent two years studying engineering at Western University, before switching to Fanshawe College where he studied radio. He worked at radio stations in Timmins, Sarnia and London as a DJ.

Wilmot’s jokes have been used in monologues of late-night talk show hosts, including Jay Leno.

Wilmot’s wit is showcased on his Facebook post: “These posters are from the Astrakhan production in late December. At least I hope they are... my Russian is non-existent. If you speak Russian, feel free to translate and let me know if they’re calling me names!”

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