



Drayton Entertainment Announces 2019 Season

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Drayton Entertainment will present a knockout playbill in 2019 packed with Broadway blockbusters, hilarious comedies, captivating dramas, stirring tributes and a number of fun-filled family musicals and pantos. Artistic Director **Alex Mustakas** continues his bid to bring a wide variety of crowd-pleasing productions to the award-winning charitable not-for-profit theatre organization’s seven stages throughout Ontario.

Drayton Entertainment has a history of being among the first outside of Broadway and the National Tour circuit to be granted the opportunity to produce highly sought-after major musicals. The company was among the first professional regional theatres in North America to produce popular mega musicals like Disney’s *Mary Poppins* and *Mamma Mia!*. As part of the current 2018 Season, the company is producing the Canadian premieres of *Ghost* and *Holiday Inn*.

The tradition continues in 2019. Drayton Entertainment will be among the first professional regional theatres in North America to produce the epic stage adaptation of *Rocky: The Musical*, based on the popular Sylvester Stallone film. The company will also produce the Canadian professional regional premieres of both *Newsies* and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. *Newsies* is the exuberant Disney musical based on the true story of the Newsboys’ strike of 1899. *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* is the hit disco musical based on the Academy Award®-winning film about three dazzling drag queens on a hilarious adventure across the Australian outback. This will be the first time the production has been produced professionally in Canada outside of the pre-Broadway run at Mirvish’s Princess of Wales Theatre in Toronto in 2010.

“This landmark season promises to be remembered for years to come,” says Artistic Director **Alex Mustakas**. “The wide selection of shows reflects our commitment to providing quality, affordable entertainment for theatregoers at every stage of life.”

Rocky: The Musical is the heart-pounding story of struggling small-time boxer Rocky Balboa, who gets a once-in-a-lifetime shot to fight against heavyweight champ Apollo Creed in South Philadelphia. Featuring the famous Rocky theme song and Survivor’s “Eye of the Tiger,” this adrenaline-fueled musical about unwavering determination in the face of adversity will have

audiences cheering for the underdog. The production will open the season at the Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge from **March 6 to March 31**, and then run in the summer at the Huron Country Playhouse in Grand Bend from **July 18 to August 3**. Based on the MGM/United Artists Motion Picture, *Rocky: The Musical* is adapted for the stage by **Thomas Meehan** and **Sylvester Stallone** with music by **Stephen Flaherty** and lyrics by **Lynn Ahrens**.

Inspired by a true story, Disney's *Newsies* is the rousing tale of a band of teenaged newsboys in New York City at the turn-of-the century, who rise up and strike against the unfair conditions imposed on them by the titans of publishing. Packed with spectacular dancing and a sensational score, this uplifting Broadway blockbuster has a timeless message that inspires everyone to fight for what's right and seize the day. *Newsies* will be on stage from **June 27 to July 13** at the Huron Country Playhouse in Grand Bend, and then **July 18 to August 3** at the St. Jacobs Country Playhouse. Based on the beloved 1992 Disney movie by **Bob Tzudiker** and **Noni White**, *Newsies* is adapted for the stage by **Harvey Fierstein**, with music by **Alan Menken** (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*) and lyrics by **Jack Feldman**.

Australia's glittering musical masterpiece, *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, will launch the season at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse, playing for four weeks from **March 13 to April 7**. Based on the Academy Award®-winning film, this sparkling stage adaptation follows three dazzling drag queens as they set out on a hilarious adventure across the Australian outback in a battered old bus nicknamed Priscilla. With a spectacular array of outrageous costumes, flamboyant choreography, and a hit parade of classic disco hits including "It's Raining Men," "I Will Survive," "Hot Stuff," and more, this wildly fresh and funny musical is a journey to the heart of fabulous. Based on the Latent Image/Specific Films Motion Picture distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc., *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* is adapted for the stage by **Stephan Elliott** and **Allan Scott**.

In addition to *Rocky*, *Newsies* and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, other major musical blockbusters like *Annie* and *Grease* are also on the playbill, along with the return of popular musicals like Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.

The world's favourite family musical *Annie* tells the story of a brave young orphan who is forced to live in a miserable orphanage run by the wicked Miss Hannigan in 1930s New York. Her hard knock life takes an unexpected turn when the plucky redhead is chosen to spend a fairy tale holiday with famous billionaire industrialist Oliver Warbucks. With notable songs like "Hard Knock Life," "Easy Street," and "Tomorrow," *Annie* will entertain audiences from **June 5 to June 30** at the Drayton Festival Theatre, and then **October 2 to October 27** at the Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge. Based on the popular comic strip *Little Orphan Annie*, the musical has a book by **Thomas Meehan**, with music by **Charles Strouse** and lyrics by **Martin Charnin**.

Summer brings the hit Broadway phenomenon that inspired one of the most successful movie musicals of all time – *Grease*. Featuring memorable characters like Danny, Sandy, Rizzo, Kenickie and the gang, as well as unforgettable songs like "Summer Nights," "Greased Lightnin'," "We

Go Together," and many other popular hits, *Grease* will delight theatregoers from **July 10 to August 3** at the Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge, and then **August 8 to August 31** at the Huron Country Playhouse in Grand Bend. The book, music and lyrics for *Grease* are by **Jim Jacobs** and **Warren Casey**.

After playing to sold out crowds in Cambridge and Grand Bend in 2017, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* is back – this time in Drayton and Penetanguishene. With memorable characters and exciting musical numbers like "Be Our Guest," "Something There," and the award-winning title song, this magical musical will enchant audiences from **July 11 to August 10** at the King's Wharf Theatre in Penetanguishene, and **August 15 to August 31** at the Drayton Festival Theatre. *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* is adapted for the stage by **Linda Woolverton**, with music by **Alan Menken** and lyrics by **Howard Ashman** and **Tim Rice**.

Winner of the Tony Award® for Best Musical, the Roaring Twenties romp *Thoroughly Modern Millie* will launch the season in Grand Bend. This romantic musical comedy follows gutsy small-town girl Millie Dillmount who moves to New York City in 1922 to make her dreams come true. After wowing audiences with its catchy tunes, frisky flappers, and explosive dance numbers in St. Jacobs during the 2017 Season, this fun-filled musical will be on stage at the Huron Country Playhouse from **June 5 to June 22**. With an original story and screenplay by **Richard Morris** for the Universal Pictures Film, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is adapted for the stage by **Richard Morris** and **Dick Scanlan**, with new music by **Jeanine Tesori** and new lyrics by **Dick Scanlan**.

Adding to the variety of offerings, the nostalgic Canadian musical *You'll Get Used To It ... The War Show* will be on stage at two venues in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. The joys and sorrows of war are explored in this sentimental musical that follows the journey of six Canadian infantrymen. This poignant production written by **Peter Colley** brings history alive featuring popular music from the 1930s and 1940s including "The White Cliffs of Dover," "We'll Meet Again," "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square," "I'll Be Seeing You," and many more signature songs of the era. This unforgettable theatre experience in tribute to veterans is on stage **June 5 to June 22** at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse, and **June 27 to July 13** at the Huron Country Playhouse II in Grand Bend.

In addition to its signature musicals, Drayton Entertainment's 2019 playbill also includes plenty of comedies as well as more serious fare.

The new Canadian play *GLORY*, based on the incredible rise of Ontario's Preston Rivulettes Women's Hockey Team, will be on stage at four Drayton Entertainment venues. Set in 1933, this inspiring true story chronicles the lives of four friends who set out to show the nation that Canada's favourite pastime isn't just a sport for men. Featuring electrifying swing choreography inspired by the jazz age, this unique play captures all the thrills, exhilaration, and tension of a great hockey game while celebrating female empowerment. Written by **Tracey Power**, *GLORY* is on stage from **May 15 to June 8** at the Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge, **June 12 to June 22**

at the Huron Country Playhouse II in Grand Bend, **June 26 to July 6** at the King's Wharf Theatre in Penetanguishene, and **July 10 to July 20** at the Drayton Festival Theatre.

After entertaining audiences in St. Jacobs previously, the hit murder mystery comedy *Shear Madness* by **Paul Pörtner** will come to the King's Wharf Theatre in Penetanguishene from **August 14 to August 31**. Listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as America's longest running play, this hilarious whodunit follows hairdresser Tony Whitcomb and manicurist Barbara DeMarco as they comb through the tasks of a normal day ... until concert pianist Isabel Czerny is murdered. Tony, Barbara, and the Shear Madness customers are all suspects, and everyone must put their detective skills to the test to help solve the crime.

Building on the success of praised productions like *Death of a Salesman* and *The Rainmaker*, the acclaimed plays *ART*, *Twelve Angry Men* and *The Miracle Worker* will be on stage next season.

Written by **Yasmina Reza** and translated by **Christopher Hampton**, *ART* is the winner of countless awards and touted as one of the most successful plays ever on Broadway and London's West End. This serious comedy about three friends who disagree on the merit of an expensive painting explores both the value of art and the fickleness of friendship. It will be on stage from **October 2 to October 20** at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse.

Written by **Reginald Rose** and adapted by **Sherman Sergel**, the riveting courtroom drama *Twelve Angry Men* will play two stages in 2019. On a humid summer day, twelve jurors from all strata of society must decide whether an inner-city teen is guilty of the murder of his father, thereby sentencing the young defendant to death. It looks like an open-and-shut case, until Juror #8 plants the seed of reasonable doubt. This clever, compelling and relevant drama about the complicated quest for justice is on stage at the Huron Country Playhouse II in Grand Bend from **July 18 to August 3**, and at the Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge from **August 7 to August 24**.

Based on the extraordinary true story of Helen Keller and her determined teacher Annie Sullivan, the inspiring Tony Award®-winning play *The Miracle Worker* by **William Gibson** will be on stage at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse from **April 24 to May 12**. Young Helen who has been blind, deaf, and mute since infancy is trapped in a secret, silent world, unable to communicate. Refusing to give up on her troubled student, Annie realizes that there is a mind and spirit waiting to be rescued from the dark. Helen's incredible journey from darkness to light is explored in this stirring saga of perseverance.

Two entertaining tribute shows are also on the docket – *Fiddler on the Loose* and *Good Ol' Country Gospel*, both conceived by **David Rogers** with musical arrangements by **Mark Payne**.

Anchored by the extraordinary talents of fiddler and showman **Jesse Grandmont** (*Canada 151*), *Fiddler on the Loose* is a gregarious musical variety show that features over 60 songs running the gamut of genres from country and bluegrass to Celtic, classical, pop, and more. The eclectic song list includes "Dust in The Wind," "Devil Went Down to Georgia," "You Raise Me Up,"

“Footloose,” “Tennessee Waltz,” “Orange Blossom Special,” and more. This high-energy musical extravaganza is on stage from **July 24 to August 10** at the Drayton Festival Theatre.

Good Ol’ Country Gospel is a heartfelt tribute to the beloved canon of sacred hits ... with a country twist. Featuring glorious arrangements and heavenly voices, this uplifting celebration shines a new light on spiritual favourites including “Amazing Grace,” “Peace in the Valley,” “How Great Thou Art,” “When The Saints Go Marching In,” “I Saw the Light,” and many more. This inspirational musical tribute is on stage from **September 11 to December 22** at the St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre.

With a winning combination of popular songs, energetic dancing, tongue-in-cheek humour, and outrageous characters, two fun-filled pantos will be on stage for families to enjoy. Featuring magic beans, a gigantic beanstalk, a headstrong princess, and a humungous giant with an even bigger appetite, *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto* will entertain audiences from **June 5 to June 22** at the King’s Wharf Theatre in Penetanguishene, and then **August 8 to August 31** at the Huron Country Playhouse II in Grand Bend. *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto* is by **Caroline Smith**.

Later in the season, the beloved fairy tale *Sleeping Beauty* will bring its dozy princess, feisty fairies, dashing prince, and malevolent villainess to St. Jacobs for the holiday season. This panto adaptation of the cherished fable follows the story of a young princess cursed to prick her finger on a mystical spinning wheel causing her to fall asleep for hundreds of years. Doomed by fate, can the prince stir her from a ceaseless slumber? Boo the baddie and cheer the heroine in this dreamy holiday panto at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse from **November 27 to December 22**.

The Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge will have a spectacular Christmas musical on stage during the holiday season from **November 20 to December 22**. Details are still being finalized and the name of this exciting production will be “unwrapped” in the New Year.

Creative teams and casting will be announced at a later date.

On Sale Information

Tickets are on sale this fall exclusively to Members on **Thursday, November 1**, followed by Groups of 20 or more on **Thursday, November 15**, Subscribers on **Monday, November 19**, and the General Public on **Monday, December 3**, just in time for the holidays. For more information about the 2019 Season, please visit <https://www.draytonentertainment.com/season-2019-announcement>.

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For more information or to schedule an interview please contact:

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Drayton Entertainment 2019 Season At-A-Glance

Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge

Rocky: The Musical	Mar 6 to Mar 31
Glory	May 15 to June 8
Grease	July 10 to Aug 3
Twelve Angry Men	Aug 7 to Aug 24
Annie	Oct 2 to Oct 27
To Be Announced	Nov 20 to Dec 22

Drayton Festival Theatre

Annie	June 5 to June 30
Glory	July 10 to July 20
Fiddler on the Loose	July 24 to Aug 10
Disney's Beauty and the Beast	Aug 15 to Aug 31

Huron Country Playhouse Mainstage, Grand Bend

Thoroughly Modern Millie	June 5 to June 22
Disney's Newsies	June 27 to July 13
Rocky: The Musical	July 18 to Aug 3
Grease	Aug 8 to Aug 31

Huron Country Playhouse II, Grand Bend

Glory	June 12 to June 22
You'll Get Used To It: The War Show	June 27 to July 13
Twelve Angry Men	July 18 to Aug 3
Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto	Aug 8 to Aug 31

King's Wharf Theatre, Penetanguishene

Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto	June 5 to June 22
Glory	June 26 to July 6
Disney's Beauty and the Beast	July 11 to Aug 10
Shear Madness	Aug 14 to Aug 31

St. Jacobs Country Playhouse

Priscilla, Queen of the Desert	Mar 13 to April 7
The Miracle Worker	April 24 to May 12
You'll Get Used To It: The War Show	June 5 to June 22
Disney's Newsies	July 18 to Aug 3
Art	Oct 2 to Oct 20
Sleeping Beauty: The Panto	Nov 27 to Dec 22

St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre

Good Ol' Country Gospel	Sept 11 to Dec 22
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