



Casting Announced for Canadian Premiere at Drayton Festival Theatre

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

WATERLOO REGION – Shake the winter blues away! Check in to the biggest holiday party of the year as the new Irving Berlin musical *Holiday Inn* makes its triumphant Canadian premiere in Drayton. Don't be fooled – this spectacular musical comedy is not just about the traditional "holiday season" – it spans a full year of celebrations from Thanksgiving and Christmas to Valentine's Day, Easter and more. Step into spring with this festive musical on stage from **May 16 to June 3** at the **Drayton Festival Theatre**.

Based on the beloved 1942 Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire film, this tap-happy musical features twenty iconic songs from Irving Berlin's phenomenal musical catalogue including "Blue Skies," "Cheek to Cheek", "Steppin' Out With My Baby", "Easter Parade," and many more.

Popular nightclub trio Jim Hardy, Ted Hanover, and Lila Dixon suddenly part ways when Jim decides he's had enough of show business. He leaves the bright lights behind to settle down on a farm in Connecticut, but quickly discovers life isn't quite the same without a little song and dance. After meeting Linda Mason, a spirited schoolteacher with talent to spare, the pair turn the farmhouse into a fabulous inn with dazzling performances to celebrate each holiday. When Jim's best friend Ted tries to lure Linda away to be his new dance partner in Hollywood, Jim finds himself competing for her affections. Can he win her heart?

"We are thrilled to be the first theatre company in Canada to produce *Holiday Inn*," says **Alex Mustakas**, Artistic Director and CEO of Drayton Entertainment. "It's a brand new musical with spectacular dancing and terrific songs by Irving Berlin that spans all four seasons – spring, summer, fall and winter. Audiences are in for a real treat."

Renowned Director and Choreographer **Michael Lichtefeld** takes the helm of this premiere production. Lichtefeld has an impressive list of credits including a number of musicals on Broadway and Off-Broadway, many seasons at the Stratford Festival, and past Drayton Entertainment hits including *White Christmas*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Anything Goes*, *South Pacific* and more.

Joining Lichtefeld is Music Director **Jeannie Wyse**, Set Designer **David Boechler**, Costume Designer **Rachel Berchtold**, and Lighting Designer **Kevin Fraser**.

A dazzling cast has been assembled for this grand-scale production including **Zach Trimmer** as Jim Hardy, the heartbroken nice-guy who retires from showbiz but still longs to shine. In addition to playing Jimmy in last season's popular production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Trimmer has played Danny in *Grease* among other notable roles at regional theatres across the U.S., as well as Hans in *Frozen* for Disney Cruise Lines.

Jayne Armstrong is the sweet, small-town schoolteacher Linda Mason, whose budding talent creates a rivalry for her affections. Armstrong is no stranger to Drayton Entertainment stages having appeared as Janet in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, Reno in *Anything Goes*, Betty in *White Christmas* and many other productions, including Millie in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* opposite Trimmer.

Newcomer **Zachary Scott Berger** is the irrepressibly charming playboy Ted Hanover, Jim's best friend and occasional foe. Hailing from New York, Berger has appeared in the U.S. National Tours of *Jekyll & Hyde* and *Hello Dolly!* and in numerous productions across the country including *42nd Street*, *Into The Woods*, and Sting's *The Last Ship*.

Alexandra Herzog makes her Drayton Entertainment debut as the vivacious starlet Lila Dixon, who is reluctant to give up the stage for a quieter life in the country with Jim. Herzog has spent many seasons at the Stratford Festival, playing Kristine in *A Chorus Line* and Liesl in *The Sound of Music*, among other roles. She also appeared on the popular Canadian TV series *Bomb Girls*.

Fresh off his comic turn as the witty butler Underling in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, funny man **Keith Savage** takes on the role of wily agent Danny, while **Laura Caswell** is brassy handywoman, Louise Badger, who helps Jim fix up his farm – and a few other things. **William Thompson**, who charmed audiences as the adorable teacup Chip in last season's smash hit production of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, is Charlie Winslow, a plucky local boy who keeps serving Jim with bank papers regarding the farm's dire financial straits.

Carla Bennett, Micah Enzil, Timothy Gledhill, Josh Graetz, Kayla James, Kelsey Lacombe, Melanie McInenly, Gray Monczka, Matthew Rossoff, and Margaret Thompson round out the talented cast.

Holiday Inn premiered at the Goodspeed Opera House in Connecticut in 2014, and was subsequently workshopped on a bigger stage at The Muny in St. Louis in 2015. It finally opening on Broadway at the Roundabout Theatre Company at Studio 54 in the fall of 2016. The production was filmed for PBS and presented at movie theatres around the world in late 2017. The licensing rights for the production became available shortly thereafter, and Drayton Entertainment is the first professional theatre company in Canada granted the rights to produce the show.

Irving Berlin's *Holiday Inn* is proudly sponsored by **Boggs Financial**. Media Sponsors are **96.7 CHYM, 570 News** and **Waterloo Region Record Community Partnerships Program**. The Design Sponsor is **Elmira Golf Club**. The 2018 Season Media Sponsor is **CTV**.

Holiday Inn is on stage at the **Drayton Festival Theatre** from **May 16** to **June 3**. The show will play two other Drayton Entertainment venues in 2018: the Huron Country Playhouse in Grand Bend September 13 to September 30, and Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge (formerly Dunfield Theatre Cambridge) November 22 to December 30.

Tickets are \$46 for Adults and \$27 for youth under 20 years of age. Tickets for groups of 20 or more and select Discount Dates are \$37. HST is applicable to all ticket prices. Tickets can be purchased online instantly at **www.draytonentertainment.com**, in person at the Box Office or by calling **519-638-5555** or toll free at **1-855-DRAYTON (372-9866)**.

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