



Smash Hit ABBA Musical Mamma Mia! Extended By Popular Demand Before The Show Even Opens *On stage at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse until July 16*

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Feel the beat of the tambourine and get ready for an ABBA-solutely fabulous theatre experience! *Mamma Mia!*, the hit musical featuring the chart-topping catalogue of Swedish supergroup ABBA, will be on stage beginning **June 15** at the **St. Jacobs Country Playhouse**. The initial 4-week run is almost sold out, so the production has been extended by popular demand – it will now run for an additional week until July 16 with 8 new performances added to the schedule. All new performances will be at full capacity.

Additional performances:

- Tuesday, July 12 at 7:30 pm
- Wednesday, July 13 at 2:00 pm & 7:30 pm
- Thursday, July 14 at 2:00 pm & 7:30 pm
- Friday, July 15 at 7:30 pm
- Saturday, July 16 at 2:00 pm & 7:30 pm

“Mamma Mia! is one of the most successful musicals of all time,” says **Alex Mustakas**, Artistic Director of Drayton Entertainment. “The show exudes fun – and we all need a little more joy in our lives right now. We are thrilled that people are so excited to see the show – it’s wonderful to have such a demand for tickets that we are adding performances before the run even starts.”

Mamma Mia! tells the story of Donna, an independent, single mother on an idyllic Greek island who is preparing for her daughter Sophie’s wedding. The guest list includes two lifelong girlfriends from her one-time band, Donna and the Dynamos ... but Sophie has secretly invited three guests of her own.

On a quest to find the identity of her father to walk her down the aisle, Sophie has arranged for three men from Donna’s past to make a trip to paradise, where over the next 24 hectic hours, new love will bloom and old romances will be rekindled on an island full of possibilities.

Mamma Mia! is a celebration of mothers and daughters, old friends and new family. In addition to the iconic title song, the show includes ABBA’s hits “Dancing Queen,” “The Winner Takes It

All," "Lay All Your Love on Me," "Money, Money, Money," "Knowing Me, Knowing You," "SOS," and "Take a Chance on Me."

This upbeat, feel-good musical is brought to life on stage by Director and Choreographer **David Connolly**, whose impressive résumé includes work on major musicals like *First Wives Club* in Chicago and many Drayton Entertainment productions including Disney's *Newsies*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, and the company's popular pantos. **Connolly** is joined by Music Director **Mark Camilleri**, Set Designer **Brandon Kleiman**, Costume Designer **Rachel Berchtold**, and Lighting Designer **Jeff Johnston Collins**. **Cat MacFarlane** is the Stage Manager with Assistant Stage Managers **Kelly Boudreau** and **Sadie Wannamaker**.

Mamma Mia! is packed with star power including **Blythe Wilson** as Donna Sheridan, the role made famous by Meryl Streep in the film version. Wilson's illustrious career has taken her from Vancouver to Stratford and beyond, including a Broadway debut as Mrs. Banks in Disney's *Mary Poppins* in 2011.

AJ Bridel will play Donna's plucky daughter and the bride-to-be, Sophie. This production will be a homecoming for Bridel, who was raised in Kitchener. Bridel has appeared on stages across the country including playing the title role in *Anne of Green Gables* at the Charlottetown Festival and Lauren in the Toronto production of *Kinky Boots*. She has also been in many Drayton Entertainment productions including *You'll Get Used To It ... The War Show*, and *The Wizard of Oz*. Originally from Winnipeg, Sheridan College graduate **Vinnie Alberto** will make his Drayton Entertainment debut as Sophie's fiancé Sky. Alberto has previously appeared in *The Wizard of Oz* at Rainbow Stage and *Destination Wedding* at The Musical Stage Toronto.

Jackie Mustakas and **Nicola Dawn Brook** will play Donna's friends and fellow Dynamos Tanya and Rosie respectively. Mustakas has played a variety of roles in Drayton Entertainment productions like *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto*, *The Rainmaker*, *Hairspray*, and *Cinderella: The Panto*. Brook's expansive resume includes roles in London's West End, as well as with many theatre companies across Canada such as The Grand Theatre, Segal Centre Montreal, and Theatre Aquarius.

Kyle Blair, **Mark Harapiak**, and **Stephen Sparks** will play Donna's former beaus and Sophie's potential dads, Harry Bright, Bill Austin, and Sam Carmichael. Blair is a staple at the Shaw and Stratford Festivals having played leading roles in productions such as *Sweeney Todd*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *42nd Street*, *Into the Woods*, and others. In addition to roles on many stages across the country, Harapiak has been in several Drayton Entertainment shows including *Rock of Ages*, *Footloose*, and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Sparks has appeared in many film and television projects and last appeared as Pulitzer in Disney's *Newsies* for Drayton Entertainment.

The stellar cast also includes **Hadley Mustakas** and **Mirabella Sundar Singh** as Sophie's best friends Ali and Lisa, and **Preston Vendramin** and **Caulin Moore** as Sky's buddies Eddie and Pepper. **George Absi**, **Hailey Balaz**, **Louise Camilleri**, **Will Jeffs**, **Sash Striga**, **Lukas Vernon**, **Trayvon Ward**, and **Christine Watson** round out the stellar cast.

The original West End production of *Mamma Mia!* opened 23 years ago. The show closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and reopened at the Novello Theatre in August of 2021 where it is still running. The Broadway production closed in September of 2015 after 5,773 performances, and the international tour has visited more than 74 cities in 35 countries. The feature film adaptation was a major blockbuster grossing over \$600 million worldwide and was followed by a successful sequel called *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again*.

Mamma Mia! has music & lyrics written by **Benny Andersson, Björn Ulvaeus**, with some songs with **Stig Anderson**. The book is by **Catherine Johnson**. Additional Material & Arrangements are by **Martin Koch**. The production was originally produced in London by **Judy Craymer, Richard East** and **Björn Ulvaeus** for Littlestar in association with Universal. Music is published by Universal Music Publishing Group and EMI Grove Park Music Inc. and EMI Waterford Music Inc.

Mamma Mia! is proudly sponsored by **Strassburger Windows & Doors** and **St. Jacobs Furniture House**. Media Sponsors are **Durham WAVE FM, Zoomer Radio** and the **Waterloo Region Record**. The Design Sponsor is **The McIntyre Team - RE/MAX Solid Gold Realty (II) Ltd.** The Orchestra Sponsor is **ARCA Financial**.

Don't miss your chance to dance, jive, and have the time of your life! *Mamma Mia!* is on stage beginning **June 15** and extended to **July 16** at the **St. Jacobs Country Playhouse**. In order to accommodate patrons of all comfort levels, performances are offered at various capacity limits and with differing vaccination requirements; some performances are full capacity with no vaccination requirement, some performances are limited capacity with no vaccination requirement, and some performances are limited capacity with vaccinations required.

With the run over 95% sold out already, patrons should get tickets quickly to avoid disappointment. Regular performance tickets are \$53 for adults, \$32 for youth under 20 years of age and \$43 for groups of 20 or more and select Discount Dates. HST is applicable to all ticket prices. Tickets may be purchased by calling the Box Office at **519-747-7788** or toll free at **1-855-drayton (372-9866)**, or online instantly at www.draytonentertainment.com.

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