



Online Broadway Bootcamp for Youth in Demand

Drayton Entertainment announces added session during April Break

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Calling all theatre fans ages 9 to 19! Drayton Entertainment’s online Broadway Bootcamp for youth is so popular that the first spring break session sold out in 48 hours. Due to high demand, the not-for-profit charitable arts organization has added another two-day session during spring break on **Wednesday, April 14** and **Thursday, April 15**. Parents and youth are encouraged to book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. As the program is online, it is open to participants across Canada.

Be in the Zoom where it happens for a fun-filled online Broadway Bootcamp featuring classes in singing, dancing, improv, and monologues. Young performers will receive insight into how professional theatre productions are rehearsed and performed, while they meet new friends, and develop their performance skills.

“We know parents, kids, and teens are always looking for fun things to do during the break, and with so many extracurricular activities cancelled during the pandemic, students are missing the arts more than ever” says **Alex Mustakas**, Artistic Director of Drayton Entertainment. “Our online Broadway Bootcamp is uniquely designed to cultivate young talent, connect young performers, and give them the chance to hone their skills for future success. Plus, they have such a great time together, and that connection is so important, now more than ever.”

Classes are taught by industry professionals including Associate Artistic Director **David Connolly**, who oversees Drayton Entertainment’s acclaimed Youth Musical Theatre Program. Connolly’s impressive resume includes work on major musicals like the pre-Broadway production of *First Wives Club* in Chicago and numerous Drayton Entertainment productions including *Kinky Boots*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, Disney’s *Newsies*, *Mamma Mia!*, and many of the organization’s popular panto productions.

In addition to classes, participants also have the unique opportunity to learn about the professional performing arts world at Q&A sessions with two incredible Broadway performers. For this session, the guest artists are Canadians **Jewelle Blackman** and **Paul Alexander Nolan**. Blackman is currently on pause from Broadway as part of the Original Tony and Grammy Award-winning Best Musical *Hadestown*, where she originated the role of Fate; the production is on hiatus due to the pandemic. Nolan has led seven Broadway productions including playing Jesus in the revival of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Guy in the Tony Award-winning musical *Once*, Pasha/Strelnikov in *Doctor Zhivago*, Jervis in *Daddy Long Legs*, Jimmy Ray in *Bright Star*, Billy Flynn in *Chicago*, Tully in *Escape to Margaritaville*, and Jim in *Slave Play*. He played the role of Huck Finn in the Drayton Entertainment production of *Big River* in 2003 early in his career.

“We are proud of the way our Broadway Bootcamp program has translated to the online learning environment. With no geographic barriers, kids who don’t have access to arts training programs like this in their hometowns suddenly have the chance to participate,” says Connolly. “ It’s wonderful and exciting to see so many young aspiring theatre performers from all over come together to learn and connect. Fostering that important sense of belonging is a hallmark of our youth training programs.”

This initiative expands on Drayton Entertainment’s Youth Musical Theatre Programs and youth engagement offerings, which include the Children’s Chorus Program (enabling young performers to audition for child ensemble roles in the company’s family panto productions and select musicals) and the Youth Usher Program (offering young people the opportunity to gain work experience as theatre ushers). These in-person programs are currently on hiatus along with Drayton Entertainment’s professional theatre season due to ongoing concerns regarding COVID-19.

Drayton Entertainment’s youth training programs are designed to cultivate community and collaboration, ignite imagination, and boost confidence while providing youth interested in theatre with the opportunity to hone their skills and develop a deeper appreciation for live performance. The Broadway Bootcamp program is limited to 16 participants per age bracket in order to guarantee personal faculty-student attention. Auditions are not required.

Visit www.draytonentertainment.com/online/article/broadway-bootcamp-spring for additional information about the Spring Break Broadway Bootcamp.

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For more information, please contact:
Amanda Kind, Director of Marketing
Phone: (519) 621-5511 ext. 235
amanda@draytonentertainment.com