



***Casting Announced For Fabulous Feel-Good Musical
at the
Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge***

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – "Step into a dream where glamour is extreme" with the international smash-hit musical *Kinky Boots*! Winner of six Tony Awards®, London's Olivier Award, and a Grammy Award®, this huge-hearted, high-heeled hit will kick-off the 2020 Season at the **Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge** from **March 11 to April 5**. Featuring a sensational score by pop icon Cyndi Lauper, *Kinky Boots* is already over 70% sold, so audiences are advised to get tickets as soon as possible.

Based on true events, this uplifting mega-musical chronicles the story of Charlie Price, who is struggling to save a men's shoe factory he inherited from his father in Northampton, England. When all seems lost, a chance encounter with the dazzling drag queen Lola spurs an outrageous idea for creating "women's boots for women who are men." With a little compassion and a lot of understanding, this unexpected pair eventually embrace their differences and outfit themselves for success by creating a sparkling line of sturdy stilettos unlike any the world has ever seen.

"With its unwavering message of self-acceptance and inclusion, *Kinky Boots* has captured the hearts of audiences worldwide," says **Alex Mustakas**, Artistic Director of Drayton Entertainment. "It's energetic, fun, and packed with great music that will appeal to everyone. Plus, the cast is fantastic. After the overwhelming success of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* last season, we know audiences will love *Kinky Boots*."

Director and Choreographer **David Connolly** is at the helm of this blockbuster Broadway musical. Connolly has directed several other hits for Drayton Entertainment including last season's popular productions of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, and Disney's *Newsies*, as well as *Annie*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Hairspray*, and many of the family pantos including *Sleeping Beauty*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and others.

Connolly is joined by Music Director **Konrad Pluta**, Set Designer **Brian Dudkiewicz**, Costume Designer **Ivan Brozic**, Lighting Designer **Kaileigh Krysztofiak**, Stage Manager **Dustyn Wales**, Assistant Stage Manager **Jasmyne Leisemer**, Assistant Stage Manager **Nadene Riehl**, and Assistant Choreographer **Christine Watson**.

A fabulous cast has been assembled for this glittering musical extravaganza. **Jos N. Banks** makes his Drayton Entertainment debut as Lola, a vivacious drag queen who helps Charlie try to reinvent the factory while battling his own demons. Banks previously performed the role of Lola on the International Tour of *Kinky Boots*, and also appeared in the touring productions of *HAIR* and *The Color Purple*, among other major credits.

Sayer Roberts takes on the role of Charlie Price, a young man caught between the life he envisioned for himself in London and his devotion to his late father's fledgling factory in Northampton. Roberts recently played Brad in the Stratford Festival production of *The Rocky Horror Show*, and Marius in *Les Misérables* at both the Vancouver Arts Club and Chemainus Theatre Festival. He previously appeared in *Red Rock Diner* for Drayton Entertainment.

AJ Bridel will play Lauren, a feisty factory employee at Price & Son's Shoes who finds herself falling for Charlie despite best efforts to avoid it. Originally from Kitchener, Bridel played this role in the 2016 Toronto production of *Kinky Boots* and was nominated for a Dora Award for her performance. Bridel recently played the title role in *Anne of Green Gables* at the Charlottetown Festival. She previously appeared in the Drayton Entertainment productions of *You'll Get Used To It! ... The War Show*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Peter Pan: The Panto*, and *Oliver!*.

Jayne Armstrong is Charlie's ambitious fiancée, Nicola, who is unimpressed with his time spent trying to revive the factory. Armstrong has appeared in a variety of Drayton Entertainment productions including *Rocky: The Musical*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Holiday Inn*, *Rock of Ages*, *Legally Blonde*, and *Chicago*, among many others. She also directed Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and Disney's *The Little Mermaid*.

Fresh from his role as Buddy in *Elf: The Musical*, **Tim Porter** will play a very different type of character when he takes on the role of Charlie's cool and confident friend Harry, who is a successful discount shoe salesman. In addition to *Elf*, Porter has appeared in many Drayton Entertainment productions including several family pantos, as well as *Man of La Mancha* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*.

Paul Jerry Schwarz is Don, the close-minded factory foreman who struggles to accept Lola and the new direction that the factory is taking. Schwarz is a graduate of the Vocal Performance Program at the Eastman School of Music, and the Acting Program at the Lee Strasberg Institute, both in New York City. He appeared in the Drayton Entertainment production of *Good Ol' Country Gospel* last season.

Veteran actor **Patrick R. Brown** is George, the factory's reserved manager who wants to help Charlie adjust to his new role. Brown recently played the villain Jafar in the Broadway production of Disney's *Aladdin*. He previously appeared as Bernadette in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, and Cogsworth in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, among other roles for Drayton Entertainment.

Joining Schwarz and Brown on the factory floor are **Blythe Wilson** as Pat and **Sara-Jeanne Hosie** as Trish. Wilson's notable career has taken her from Vancouver to Stratford and beyond,

including a Broadway debut as Mrs. Banks in Disney's *Mary Poppins* in 2011. She previously appeared as Donna in the Drayton Entertainment production of *Mamma Mia!*. Hosie has directed and performed in theatres across Canada, and recently appeared as Tanya in *Mamma Mia!* and Miss Stacey in *Anne of Green Gables – The Musical™* at the Charlottetown Festival Theatre. She previously appeared in *All Shook Up* for Drayton Entertainment.

George Absi, Michael Derworiz, David Houle, Billy Lake, Reece Rowat, and Noah Tremblay are The Angels, Lola's fellow drag queens, and back up dancers at The Blue Angel Nightclub.

Absi previously appeared in *Sleeping Beauty: The Panto*, Disney's *Newsies*, and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* for Drayton Entertainment. Derworiz recently appeared in *Anne of Green Gables* for Thousand Islands Playhouse. Houle previously appeared in the Royal Caribbean International Cruise production of *We Will Rock You*, and in *Sonore* and *Viaggio* for Cirque du Soleil, among other credits. Derworiz and Houle make their Drayton Entertainment debuts in *Kinky Boots*.

Lake appeared as Felicia in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, Jimmy in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and Lumiere in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* for Drayton Entertainment, while Rowat recently appeared in *ELF: The Musical*, and Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, among other roles, for Drayton Entertainment. Tremblay recently appeared in Lower Ossington Theatre's production of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, and will make his Drayton Entertainment debut in this production.

Justin Bott, Stacey Kay, Michael-Lamont Lytle, Erica Peck, Stephanie Pitsiladis, Andrew Scanlon, and Sandy Winsby round out the glamorous cast.

Kinky Boots features songs by award-winning pop icon **Cyndi Lauper**, with a book by Tony Award® winner **Harvey Fierstein** (*La Cage Aux Folles, Casa Valentina, A Catered Affair*).

The original production of *Kinky Boots* premiered in Chicago in October 2012. It made its Broadway debut at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre in April 2013 and ran for over six years and 2,500 performances until April 2019, making it the 25th longest-running production in Broadway history. *Kinky Boots* won six Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Actor for Billy Porter (Lola) and Best Score for Cyndi Lauper, who became the first woman to win alone in the category. The production made its West End debut in 2015, and won three Laurence Olivier Awards, including Best New Musical.

Kinky Boots is proudly sponsored by **Equitable Life of Canada** and **Graham Mathew Chartered Accountants**. The Media Sponsors are **99.5 KFUN, 105.3 Virgin Radio** and **The Waterloo Region Record**. The Design Sponsor are **The McIntyre Real Estate Team** and **Tiny Cakes**. The Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge is proudly sponsored by **John & Terry Hamilton**. The Auditorium Naming Sponsor is **Mattamy Homes**. The 2020 Season Media Sponsor is **CTV**.

Kinky Boots is on stage from **March 11 to April 5** at the **Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge**. The production will then transfer to the Huron Country Playhouse in Grand Bend this summer for three weeks from August 19 to September 5.

Regular performance tickets are \$49.50 for adults, \$29 for youth under 20 years of age and \$40 for groups of 20 or more and select Discount Dates. HST is applicable to all ticket prices. Tickets may

be purchased in person at any Drayton Entertainment Box Office, by calling the Box Office at **519-621-8000** or toll free at **1-855-drayton (372-9866)**, or online instantly at www.draytonentertainment.com.

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