



Acclaimed Canadian Crooner Michael Vanhevel Stars in Brand-New Show at the St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre

Upbeat production The Crooner runs all summer in St. Jacobs Village

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Kick off the summer theatre season with a salute to the greats from Bing to Bubl  in the nostalgic musical journey *The Crooner*, starring acclaimed Canadian vocalist **Michael Vanhevel**. This upbeat production is on stage at the historic **St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre** situated in the heart of St. Jacobs Village from **June 29 to September 4**.

The Crooner celebrates iconic voices throughout the decades with that distinct smooth and snappy style. This charming production is packed with well-loved songs made famous by legendary singers like Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Nat King Cole, and Bing Crosby, mid-century stalwarts like Tony Bennett, Andy Williams, Perry Como, Paul Anka, and Bobby Darin, and modern-day superstars like Michael Bubl .

“Michael Vanhevel is one of the best modern crooners in Canada,” says **Alex Mustakas**, Artistic Director of Drayton Entertainment, who also conceived and directed the production. “There are so many unforgettable songs in this show, and Michael does a fantastic job of making audiences feel like the songs are being sung right to them. People are going to be singing and dancing their way out of the theatre. Audiences are in for a real treat!”

Originally from Grand Bend, Vanhevel was discovered on YouTube at 20 years old by Mustakas after he posted videos of himself singing various Sinatra tunes. He was then chosen to appear as a featured vocalist in the successful production of *Big Band Legends*, conducted by legendary composer Howard Cable in 2013. Vanhevel went on to do many concerts with the music icon including a full-length symphony show that toured across Canada before Cable passed away in 2016. Since then, Vanhevel has appeared in numerous productions and concerts including *Come Fly With Me*, *The Songs of Sinatra*, and *Hollywood Sings* with Drayton Entertainment. Vanhevel’s other stage credits include Elvis Presley in *Million Dollar Quartet* with various theatres across the country (Magnus Theatre, Thousand Islands Playhouse, Sudbury Theatre Centre, Theatre Calgary), and Will Vanhorne in Norm Foster’s *Outlaw* and *Starbright Christmas* and *Songs We Love*

with Victoria Playhouse Petrolia. Vanhevel is also a recording artist, and has released three albums including "Michael Vanhevel with the Jimmy Stahl Big Band" (2020), "Swinging on a Star" (2020), and "On The Rocks" (2014).

As previously mentioned, Mustakas, who was recently honoured with a Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada, helms this memorable production alongside Musical Arranger **Mark Payne**, Music Director **Jim Hodgkinson**, Set Designer **Dayton Taylor**, Costume Designer **Jenine Kroeplin**, and Lighting Designer **Jeff JohnstonCollins**. The Stage Manager is **Nadene Riehl** with Apprentice Stage Manager **Molly Mück**.

Vanhevel is backed by a stellar three-piece band including Music Director **Jim Hodgkinson** on piano, **Junior Riggan** on bass, and **Kevin Dempsey** on drums.

The Crooner is proudly sponsored by **96.7 CHYM FM** and **Home Hardware**. The Media Sponsors are **CityNews 570**, **Zoomer Radio AM740**, and **The Waterloo Region Record**. The 2022 Season Media Sponsor is **CTV**.

The Crooner is on stage at the **St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre** from **June 29 to September 4**. 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. Patrons should choose the performance that best suits their comfort level.

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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For more information, please contact:
Samareh Jones, Marketing and Development Associate
(519) 621-5511 ext. 256
samareh@draytonentertainment.com