



*Audiences are hooked on
Peter Pan: The Panto at the
St. Jacobs Country Playhouse!
Additional Dates Added to Meet Demand!*

Thursday, October 19, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE– Peter Pan isn't ready to grow up just yet! Thousands of people have already booked their trip to Never Never Land this holiday season, where dreams take flight and adventures never end. Drayton Entertainment's family panto tradition returns with an unforgettable take on the popular story of *Peter Pan*.

With the original 5-week run from **November 29** to **December 31** virtually sold out a month and a half before Opening Night, the production has been extended to meet the incredible demand for tickets. An additional 8 performances have been added to the schedule from **Tuesday, January 2** to **Sunday, January 7, 2024**.

"Peter Pan: The Panto is a timeless tale that appeals to everyone," says Alex Mustakas, Artistic Director of Drayton Entertainment. "Audiences of all ages will be swept away by the magic, mischief, and wonder of it all – it's the perfect family event! And now, with the extra performances, even more families will be able to make memories at the theatre this holiday season!"

You know the story, but you've never seen it like this! In the grand British tradition where audiences cheer the hero and boo the villain, *Peter Pan: The Panto* boasts a winning combination of incredible musical numbers, slapstick comedy, outrageous costumes, audience participation, and of course, a dash of theatrical magic.

Peter Pan: The Panto is helmed by Director and Choreographer **David Connolly**, who is credited with several past Drayton Entertainment hits including *Disney's Newsies*, *Annie*, and the popular pantos *Sleeping Beauty*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *Cinderella*, among other shows.

Connolly is joined by Music Director **Steve Thomas**, Set Designer **Jean Claude Olivier**, Costume Designer **Rachel Berchtold**, and Lighting Designer **Jeff JohnstonCollins**. The team also includes Stage Manager **Amber Archbell**, and Apprentice Stage Manager **Molly Mück**.

A magical cast has been assembled for this production including **Lia Luz** as Peter Pan. Luz recently appeared as Dorothy in Drayton Entertainment's popular panto *Wizard of Oz*. Elsewhere, Luz appeared as Janet in *The Rocky Horror Show* at the Stirling Festival Theatre, Puring in *Prairie Nurse* at the Lighthouse Festival Theatre, and Little Sally in *Urinetown* with Toronto Musical Concerts.

Andrew Scanlon will appear as the villainous Captain Hook. Scanlon is a veteran of the Drayton Entertainment stage, and most recently appeared in *Kinky Boots*, and as the self-absorbed but lovable Barry Glickman in *The Prom*. He has also appeared in *Man of La Mancha*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and *Les Misérables*, and on the first US National Tour of *Kinky Boots*.

Stephanie Pitsiladis is Smee, the silly sidekick of Captain Hook. Pitsiladis recently appeared in Drayton Entertainment's productions of *Kinky Boots* and *Wizard of Oz: The Panto*. Elsewhere, she has appeared in *Grease* at the Winter Garden Theatre, and was in the Original Canadian Cast of *Hairspray* at Mirvish Productions.

Zoë Brown appears as Wendy, the eldest of the Darling children. Brown appeared as Chip in Drayton Entertainment's production of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, and in the ensembles for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Aladdin: The Panto*. She has also appeared in several productions with the Stratford Festival, in *A Christmas Carol* at Souleppper, and *The Nutcracker* with the National Ballet of Canada.

August Fox and **Fae Lewis** appear as the younger Darling children, John and Michael. Fox was previously seen in the role of Kurt von Trapp in Drayton Entertainment's *The Sound of Music*, and Lewis made her Drayton Entertainment debut in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* earlier this year.

Jackie Mustakas appears as their mother, Mrs. Darling, and the Mermaid Queen. This season, Mustakas appeared as Angie Dickinson in *The Prom*, and Trish in *Kinky Boots*. She has performed in many Drayton Entertainment productions, including *Mamma Mia!*, *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto*, *Hairspray*, *The Rainmaker*, *Death of a Salesman*, and many more.

Emma Rudy takes on the role of the lovable fairy, Tinkerbell. Rudy recently appeared in this season's production of *Perfect Wedding* at the St. Jacobs Schoolhouse Theatre, and has previously appeared as Rosabella in Drayton Entertainment's *Sleeping Beauty: The Panto*. Elsewhere, she has appeared as Marty in *Grease* at the Winter Garden Theatre in Toronto, and in the role of Anne in *Anne of Green Gables* at the Charlottetown Festival.

Justin Bott is Nelly Copperbottom. Bott is well known for his over-the-top panto roles including Widow Twaddle in *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Panto*, step-sister Revolta in *Cinderella: The Panto*, evil sorcerer Abanazza in *Aladdin: The Panto*, Nurse Tickle in *Snow White: The Panto*, and most recently as Auntie Em in *Wizard of Oz: The Panto* at the Huron Country Playhouse. He also appeared as Tom in *Perfect Wedding*, and in last year's production of *On Golden Pond*.

Devin Alexander, **Will Jeffs**, **Kae Kae Lee**, **Trayvon Ward**, and **Christine Watson** round out an impressive ensemble cast.

Drayton Entertainment has also engaged 28 local youth performers who appear in the show on a rotating schedule throughout the run alongside the professional company.

This spectacular youth chorus includes:

- **Brady Wilson** and **Liam Wilson** of Ayr
- **Layla Jones** and **Maia Montanaro** of Cambridge
- **Atticus Farr** of Elmira
- **Penny Jamieson**, **Aelish Lewis**, and **Hayden Thomson** of Guelph
- **Paisley Quickfall** of Heidelberg
- **Mary Daly**, **Eliza George**, **Reese Goetz**, **Ilsa Hagerman**, **Eamon Knell**, **Eden Krawetz**, **Ava Perry**, **Gavin Raper**, and **Isabella Vujicic** of Kitchener
- **Danielle Trampleasure** of London
- **Nolan McKee** of Stratford
- **Gabriella Bedic**, **Olivia Bell**, **Hannah Crawford**, **Claire Frayne**, **Reese Lebert**, **Kira Panda**, and **Christopher Rus** of Waterloo
- **Sophia Belleth** of Woodstock

All traditional pantos include audience participation, and *Peter Pan: The Panto* is no exception. Families and young spectators are encouraged to join in the fun by cheering for Peter Pan, booing Captain Hook and singing along with familiar chart-topping songs. Written by **Caroline Smith**, this whimsical production is based on the famous play by J.M. Barrie that tells the timeless story of Peter Pan and the enchanting adventures in Never Land.

Peter Pan: The Panto is proudly sponsored by **Josslin Insurance**, **Domino's Pizza** and **RWAM Insurance**. The Design Sponsor is **Holiday Inn Express & Staybridge Suites**. Media Sponsors are **98.5 CKWR**, **The Wellington Advertiser**, **107.5 Dave Rocks**, and **96.7 CHYM FM**. The 2023 Season Media Sponsor is **CTV**.

Peter Pan: The Panto is on stage at the **St. Jacobs Country Playhouse** from **November 29, 2023** to **January 8, 2024**.

Regular performance tickets are \$55 for adults, \$34 for youth under 20 years of age. Tickets for select Discount Dates and groups of 20 or more are \$45, and small groups of 10-19 are \$50. 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 at www.draytonentertainment.com.

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