

STRATFORD

Shakespeare
FESTIVAL

MAY
EDITION
ISSUE 1

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S HAPPENING IN AND AROUND THE STRATFORD SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2010



SPRING FEVER? THE STRATFORD SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL HAS YOUR CURE!

Celebrate spring with a mini-getaway to Canada's favourite theatre town.

If spring is, as comedian Robin Williams once claimed, nature's way of saying "Let's party!" then Stratford is the place to be this spring. Home of the largest theatre festival in North America, Stratford is the ideal spot for shaking off the winter blahs and enjoying some quality time with your friends and family. Here you can take in the best in live theatre, dine in dozens of fabulous restaurants, browse in fascinating shops and stay overnight in cosy B&Bs, inns and hotels.

Follow the Festival on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the latest news on hot deals.



Savvy theatregoers flock to Stratford in the spring, nabbing great seats and saving big bucks with spring preview discounts.

Twelve different shows? Now that's a festival!

The Stratford Shakespeare Festival is a six-month-long theatrical feast that takes place in four different theatres, all within walking distance of one another. There is something for everyone on the famously varied playbill, which includes Shakespeare and Broadway musicals, as well as hip new work from the best Canadian playwrights.

Some productions don't open until later in the summer, but right now you can score big savings on six popular shows, including the hilarious Broadway spoof *Kiss Me, Kate*, Shakespeare's great romantic comedy *As You Like It* and J. M. Barrie's original *Peter Pan*, a multi-layered drama that's very different from the musical or the Disney cartoon.

See inside for sneak peeks at the six shows you can see this month.



One of Canada's top tourist destinations.

Stratford is the perfect place to relax and reconnect with friends and family, making it one of Canada's top tourist destinations.

Only a two-hour drive from Toronto, this friendly town seems a world away with its lush rural beauty, old-world charm and thriving artistic community.

Foodies will also find much to savour here. A vast array of restaurants offers everything from gourmet goat-cheese poutine to exquisitely prepared local pork dishes, while hand-crafted chocolates and artisanal cheeses are just some of the goodies you can take home as souvenirs.

The Festival also offers plenty to enhance your visit, although many of its stageside chats, concerts and lectures don't get rolling until early summer. Still, during May you can tour the 50,000-piece Costume Warehouse – a stunning treasure-trove of props, costumes and memorabilia covering the Festival's nearly 60-year history. (Bring your camera – you'll want to snag a pic of your kid/husband/best friend decked out in Shakespearean finery!)

STRATFORD SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2010 SEASON

FESTIVAL THEATRE

- *As You Like It*
April 30 to October 31
- *Kiss Me, Kate*
April 10 to October 30
- *The Tempest*
June 11 to September 12
- *Dangerous Liaisons*
August 3 to October 30

AVON THEATRE

- *Evita*
May 28 to October 30
- *Peter Pan*
April 16 to October 31

TOM PATTERSON THEATRE

- *The Winter's Tale*
May 27 to September 25
- *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*
May 14 to September 25
- *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*
July 27 to September 26

STUDIO THEATRE

- *Do Not Go Gentle*
July 2 to September 11
- *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*
July 30 to September 19
- *King of Thieves*
July 18 to September 18



SPRING IS THE TIME TO BEAT THE RUSH TO STRATFORD'S OPENING SHOWS!

Six fabulous shows start previews this month, at great discount prices.

■ As You Like It

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Des McNuff
Festival Theatre; previews April 30 to June 5
Runs to October 31

Sometimes referred to as "Shakespeare's musical," *As You Like It* features five gorgeous songs by composer Justin Ellington (yes, Justin is related to the late great Duke). A deceptively wise comedy about love, it offers everything you'd want on a date night or girls' evening out.

Rosalind, our heroine, flees the court of her tyrannical uncle, Duke Frederick, who has seized control of the realm from her father. Disguised for protection as a young man, Rosalind seeks refuge in the Forest of Arden, where her banished father is leading a Robin Hood style existence with his loyal followers – including the "melancholy Jaques" (whose "all the world's a stage" speech is one of the most famous in all of Shakespeare).

Along the way, Rosalind uses her male disguise to test the sincerity of her lover, Orlando – who has no idea the youth he has befriended is really his girlfriend – and manages to sort out various other romantic complications as well.

The dynamite cast lined up for this production includes the multi-talented Brent Carver, who returns to Stratford for the first time since 2002 to play Jaques. Andrea Runge (Cecily in last year's smash hit *The Importance of Being Earnest*) is Rosalind to the Orlando of Paul Nolan (Tony in last year's equally fabulous *West Side Story*), while Ben Carlson (one of the best Hamlets anyone's ever seen) takes on Touchstone, the lovable clown who accompanies Rosalind and her cousin Celia on their journey.

Directed by the Festival's Artistic Director, Des McNuff, this is a production to see now, before the rest of the world catches on.

■ Kiss Me, Kate

Music and lyrics by Cole Porter
Book by Sam and Bella Spewack
Directed by John Doyle
Festival Theatre; previews April 10 to June 5
Runs to October 30

Kiss Me, Kate is a sublime synthesis of everything special about the Stratford Shakespeare Festival: great music, spectacular dancing, side-splitting comedy, plus the best of Shakespeare's and Cole Porter's wit, all wrapped up in one superbly entertaining show.

The plot concerns the antics of a second-rate theatre company performing a musical version of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. The parts of Kate and Petruchio are played by the company's egotistical actor/manager and his fading movie-star ex-wife – who, you guessed it, are actually still in love with each other.



From left: Brent Carver as Jaques, Ben Carlson as Touchstone, Cara Ricketts as Celia, Paul Nolan as Orlando and Andrea Runge as Rosalind.

Stratford's new production of
As You Like It
has "HIT" written all over it.
See it now before the rest of the
world beats you to it!

All of this is further complicated by the arrival of a couple of gangsters intent on collecting a questionable gambling debt, and much hilarity ensues before the inevitable happy ending.

With a delicious score by Porter, the deft directorial hand of Tony Award winner John Doyle and the collective star power of Juan Chioran as Fred/Petruchio, Monique Lund as Lilli/Kate and the rest of the Festival's outstanding acting company, this Broadway gem is sure to be the talk of the summer.



Monique Lund as Lilli Vanessi and Juan Chioran as Fred Graham.

■ Peter Pan

By J. M. Barrie
Directed by Tim Carroll
Avon Theatre; previews April 16 to June 11
Runs to October 31

Long before Peter Pan inspired Walt Disney's animators, he made his stage debut in J. M. Barrie's original 1904 play – a spectacular drama about childhood that's as moving for adults as it is enthralling for kids.

The Stratford Shakespeare Festival, blessed with some of the country's most talented actors, directors, designers and artisans, is uniquely equipped to present what is sure to be one of the most inspired *Peter Pans* ever performed. Children will be captivated by an unending parade of magical effects, while adults will find themselves deeply moved by Barrie's poignant meditation on the fleeting nature of childhood and the challenges of growing up.

The stellar cast includes Michael Theriault, making his eagerly awaited return to Stratford, as Peter; Tom McCamus (who played Peter two decades ago in a celebrated production at the Shaw Festival) as Captain James Hook; and the hilarious Seán Cullen as Hook's sidekick, Smee.

A spring visit to this, the original Never Land, is the perfect tonic for children, grownups and everyone in between. Thanks to the Festival's Family Experience program, kids' tickets are just \$36. Now that's an easy way for the young people in your life to discover live theatre!



From left: Tom McCamus as Captain Hook, Michael Theriault as Peter Pan and Seán Cullen as Smee.



Juan Chioran as Juan Perón and Chilina Kennedy as Eva Perón.

■ Evita

Lyrics by Tim Rice
Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber
Directed by Gary Griffin
Avon Theatre; previews May 28 to June 9
Runs to October 30

Long before there was Princess Diana, there was Eva Perón – a woman who, through sheer personal charisma, became the beloved spiritual leader of an entire nation.

In the early 1970s, Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber made history by creating a new kind of musical theatre. Based on the life of a woman who moved from poverty to power through her "star quality," *Evita* featured a thrillingly innovative score, closer to rock opera than to traditional Broadway fare. The world went crazy, especially for the breakout hit "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina," later covered by every diva worth her operatic salt.

This lush, exotic musical pulses with latin, rock and jazz rhythms as it plots the rise and fall of Eva Perón, crystallizing an important piece of Argentinean history along the way. And in the title role? Chilina Kennedy, who wowed the theatre-going world last year with her portrayal of Maria in the Festival's smash-hit production of *West Side Story*.

■ Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris

Production conception, English lyrics and additional material by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman
Based on Jacques Brel's lyrics and commentary
Music by Jacques Brel
Directed by Stafford Arima
Tom Patterson Theatre; previews May 14 to June 10
Runs to September 25

The incomparable Brent Carver is one of four performers in this cabaret-style production built around the songbook of Jacques Brel – the Belgian troubadour some have called Europe's answer to Bob Dylan. And the rest of the cast is fabulous too: Jewelle Blackman, a Toronto-based rock/soul/jazz goddess; Nathalie Nadon, a charismatic chanteuse who is one of Toronto's top cabaret performers; and Mike Nadajewski, an explosively talented singer and actor who made his Festival debut last year as the hilariously lovesick Hero in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.

Under the direction of Festival newcomer Stafford Arima, and with a completely re-orchestrated score, this production is must-see entertainment for theatre buffs and music lovers alike.



Members of the cast.

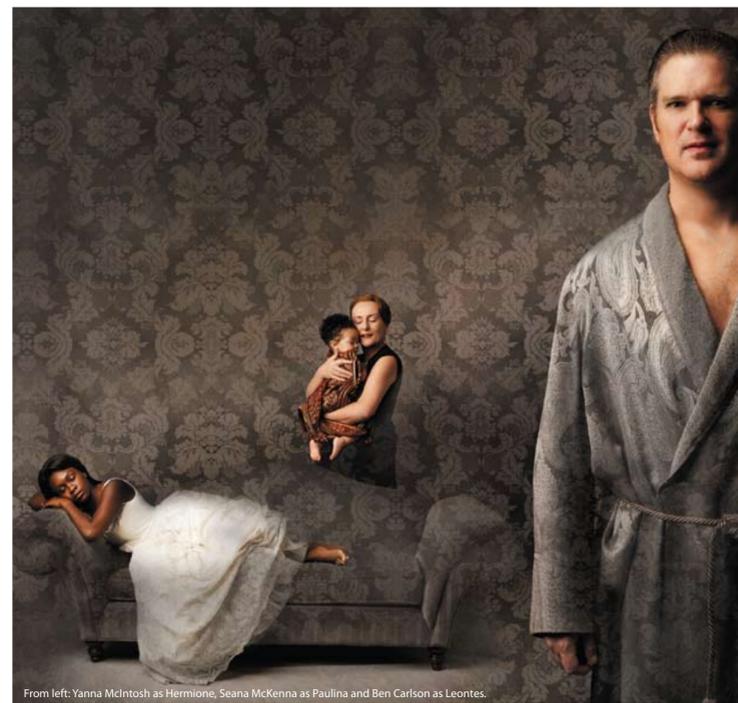
■ The Winter's Tale

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Marti Maraden
Tom Patterson Theatre;
previews May 27 to June 8
Runs to September 25

If you live in any reasonably large city, you stand a good chance of seeing your share of productions of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* or *King Lear*. But only in Stratford are you likely to experience such an exquisitely constructed but less frequently performed gem as *The Winter's Tale*.

That's a pity, because this is one play guaranteed to tug at your heartstrings. The story concerns King Leontes, who falls prey to a fit of unreasonable jealousy, eventually losing his wife, his family and most of his friends. Everything points toward tragedy – but time proves a great healer, and the play's finale involves one of the most moving reconciliation scenes in all of western drama. There are lots of theatrically thrilling moments along the way, including a tense courtroom scene, a colourful rustic festival, a lost princess who thinks she's a shepherd's daughter and a vivid realization of what is perhaps Shakespeare's most famous stage direction: "Exit, pursued by a bear."

Directed by Marti Maraden, the production features such outstanding actors as Ben Carlson, Yanna McIntosh (who gave us an electrifying *Lady Macbeth* last year) and long-time Festival favourite Seana McKenna. The combination of such a superbly talented ensemble with such a moving story is sure to make *The Winter's Tale* a highlight of the Festival's 2010 season – so don't miss your chance to be among the first to see it.



From left: Yanna McIntosh as Hermione, Seana McKenna as Paulina and Ben Carlson as Leontes.

HOW TO GET YOUR TICKETS

Tickets for spring preview performances offer a hefty discount over peak season pricing, and seat selection is often better than what you'll find during the high summer.

Tickets for most shows start at \$50, with special pricing for seniors and families. A discount program called "Play On," for those between the ages of 16 and 29, offers \$25 tickets for selected performances.

In most cases you can choose from matinée (2 p.m.) or evening (8 p.m.) performances.

Visit stratfordshakespearefestival.com or call 1-800-567-1600 to get your tickets today. But don't wait too long.

Preview pricing evaporates for most of these shows in early June!

Attend before July 1 and beat the HST.

