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TO THE BOLD, THE CURIOUS AND THE ADVENTUROUS

CANADIAN STAGE ANNOUNCES ITS 20.21 SEASON

Toronto, ON – January 28, 2020 – Canadian Stage today announced its 20.21 season. Featuring 13 works – nine Canadian productions, three international hits and a perennial outdoor summer favourite – from some of the most exciting Canadian and international artists working today, this season of breathtaking stories will entertain, move, and surprise.

“Our upcoming season speaks to the values that define us: empathy, curiosity, inventiveness and hope,” says Artistic Director Brendan Healy. “The artists in our 20.21 season are doing just that with heart, imagination, and even humour.”

The 20.21 season brings together the wide range of talent and forms of expression that have come to define contemporary theatre, dance and performance. A collision of disciplines and perspectives that reflect the dynamic spirit of Toronto, this season casts a focus on exceptional Canadian talent. From *Paradise Lost*, playwright **Erin Shields’s** contemporary adaptation of John Milton’s epic poem starring **Louise Pitre** and **Eric Peterson** and directed by award-winner **Tanja Jacobs**, the English-language premiere of *Public Enemy* by Siminovitch Prize-winner **Olivier Choinière** featuring **Rosemary Dunsmore**, **Ben Carlson**, **Evan Buliung** and **Jenny Young**, the return of *Revisor* by the genius creative duo of **Crystal Pite** and **Jonathon Young**, the internationally celebrated Indigenous contemporary dance company **Red Sky Performance**, puppet master extraordinaire **Ronnie Burkett**, and a new series dedicated to the most innovative and provocative creators in Canada featuring **Ame Henderson**, **Dana Michel**, **Christian Lapointe** and **Nadia Ross**, Canadian Stage is thrilled to provide a platform for contemporary Canadian artists.

In addition to the home-grown Canadian talent on our stages, this season also brings some of the world’s acclaimed creators to Toronto. Canadian Stage is proud to be partnering with Obsidian Theatre to co-produce the first Canadian production of **Jackie Sibblies Drury’s** 2019 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama *Fairview*, directed by **Kimberley Rampersad**. Additionally, Canadian Stage will be presenting the U.S./Canadian production of **Khaled Hosseini’s** bestselling novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and the Toronto premiere of Japan’s legendary Butoh dance company **Dairakudakan**.

The 20.21 season also reinforces the company’s commitment of collaborating with the local community. This season includes co-productions with The Musical Stage Company, Obsidian Theatre, Red Sky Performance, L’ACTIVITÉ and our Dance Series partnership with TO Live.

“We have produced a season that is connected to Toronto and one that supports great Canadian talent,” says Canadian Stage Executive Director Monica Esteves. “What audiences will see and experience on our stages are world leading theatre makers and choreographers from Canada and around the world and this could not have been achieved without our incredible community partners.”

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: **BRENDAN HEALY**, Artistic Director **MONICA ESTEVES**, Executive Director
ALEXANDRA BAILLIE Board Chair

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Another major focus for the company is the development of new work. Led by Canadian Stage's Associate Artistic Director, Mel Hague (Obsidian Theatre, *Buddies in Bad Times*), Canadian Stage is dedicated to providing an opportunity for Canadian creators to make work for the large stage and initiate international collaborations for Canadian artists. By investing in long-term development plans, Canadian Stage will offer artists the focus and support to develop work at both the physical and intellectual scale needed to make sustained impact on the Canadian and International performance landscape. Canadian Stage will continue to be a unique and vital development space for innovative artistic development. We will invest in long-term relationships with artists and projects and create collaborations with arts institutions.

"We have an important role to fulfill in the Canadian performance arts sector," says Associate Artistic Director, Mel Hague. "Canadian artists deserve a space to dream big and realize ambitious visions. At Canadian Stage, we will continue to cultivate intricate works, we will create spaces that are as challenging as they are open and we will fight the barriers that exist within forms to bring together unique and distinctive creations."

Also new this season is **Art Explored**. Inspired by the artists and themes of this season, audiences will have the opportunity to engage with the art in new and exciting ways through a series of exclusive events. Highlights of the **Art Explored** offerings are an intimate Cabaret with Louise Pitre and Friends, a Shakespeare Family Feast during Shakespeare in High Park, Brickworks to Gasworks Creative Walk, two Brunches with Brendan, Ornament Making in our historic Prop Shop, a Spirits & Spaces Sake Tasting and Music Performance, Arts Talks and more.

20.21 SEASON

SHAKESPEARE IN HIGH PARK (UK/Canada) – July 4-Sept 6, High Park Amphitheatre

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Peter Pasyk

Cast: Bola Aiyoola, John Beale, Matthew G. Brown, Joella Crichton, Mazin Elsadig, John Koensgen, Davinder Malhi, Ron Pederson, Zorana Sadiq, Tyrone Savage, Anoja Vigneswaran, Tim Walker

One of the city's most magical outdoor experiences returns for its 38th year. Experience Shakespeare under the stars with *The Comedy of Errors*. Considered one of Shakespeare's most enduring and beloved comedies, this play about two displaced twins, Antipholus and Dromio, who journey to find their respective brothers, is teeming with mischievous wordplay and complex mix-ups. The ultimate story of mistaken identity.

FAIRVIEW (USA) – September 12-October 4, Berkeley Street Theatre

By Jackie Sibblies Drury

Directed by Kimberley Rampersad

Cast: Peter N. Bailey, Sascha Cole, Jennifer Dzialoszynski, Jeff Lillico, Alex McCooe, Chelsea Russell, Ordena Stephens-Thompson, Sophia Walker

A Canadian Stage and Obsidian Theatre Co-Production

FOR CANADIAN STAGE: BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director
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After its stunning sold-out NYC debut, this Canadian premiere of Jackie Sibblies Jury's electrifying 2019 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama confronts notions of both theatre and race. *Fairview* is a radical examination of power, an interrogation of our subtly destructive preconceptions and asks questions that challenge modern white liberalism.

A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS (Canada/USA) – October 18-31, Bluma Appel Theatre

By Ursula Rani Sarma

Based on the book by Khaled Hosseini

Directed by Haysam Kadri

Cast Anita Majumdar and more

A Canadian Stage Production in Association with The Citadel Theatre

Based on the bestselling novel by Khaled Hosseini (*The Kite Runner*) comes a powerful story of two wives who form an unlikely and dangerous friendship on their journey to freedom. Two generations of women, forced together by circumstance, face a violent war and a new reality of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Filled with peril, sacrifice and, ultimately hope, this riveting story captures a time and place few have experienced.

LITTLE DICKENS (Canada) – November 25-December 20, Berkeley Street Theatre

A Production of Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes

A Canadian Stage Presentation

Have yourself a naughty little Christmas! The Charles Dickens holidays classic, *A Christmas Carol*, gets a raunchy reimagining by Toronto puppet master, Ronnie Burkett, and his Theatre of Marionettes. His motely crew of lovely characters, including the diva Esmé Massengill as Emsé Scrooge, encounters with the Spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come to lead her on a journey of redemption.

PUBLIC ENEMY (Canada) – January 9-31, Berkeley Street Theatre

By Olivier Choinière

Trans-adaptation by Bobby Theodore

Directed by Brendan Healy

Cast: Evan Buliung, Ben Carlson, Rosemary Dunsmore, Jenny Young and more

A Canadian Stage Production in Association with L'ACTIVITÉ

Elizabeth, the frail but stubborn matriarch is hosting dinner for her three children and two grandchildren. In this blistering take on a family dinner, the always subversive Siminovitch Prize-winner, Olivier Choinière invites you to a dinner unlike any you've attended before. Rapid-fire dialogue is painstakingly choreographed, as we chart through moments that are both eerily recognizable and piercingly insightful.

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MIIGIS (Canada) – February 14-21, Berkeley Street Theatre

Direction and Concept by Sandra Laronde

Choreographed by Jera Wolfe

A Red Sky Performance Production Presented by Canadian Stage

A Berkeley Street Company-in-Residence

At the forefront of Indigenous performance in Canada and around the world, Red Sky Performance delivers an explosive original work that expands and elevates the ecology of contemporary Indigenous arts and culture. Revealing the power of nature and Indigenous prophecy by fusing contemporary Indigenous dance with athleticism, *Miigis* explores that catalysts for movement, memory, water trade routes, ancestral forces and the cycle of life.

CRAZY CAMEL (Japan) – March 5 & 6, Bluma Appel Theatre

Choreography and Artistic Direction by Akaji Maro and Dairakudakan

Cast: Akaji Maro and Dairakudakan

A Dairakudakan Production

A Canadian Stage and TO Live Co-Presentation

In this exhilarating Butoh-style dance performance, the brilliant Dairakudakan ensemble make their Toronto debut. The defiant Butoh dance style (meaning dance of darkness) emerged in post-World War II Japan in response to the country's overtly Western-inspired dance scene. Founded in 1972 by ground-breaking Japanese choreographer, Akaji Maro, this is a show that is not to be missed!

REVISOR (Canada) – March 25-28, Bluma Appel Theatre

Kidd Pivot

Created by Crystal Pite and Jonathon Young

A Kidd Pivot Production

A Canadian Stage and TO Live Presentation

After a sold-out run in our 19.20 season, *Revisor* returns. Choreographer Crystal Pite and writer-actor Jonathon Young, the creative team behind the acclaimed and heartbreaking *Betroffenheit*, have struck gold again with *Revisor*! Inspired by Nikolai Gogol's 1836 play *The Inspector General*, *Revisor* is part risky satire, part choreographed lip-synch and all urgent warning of unchecked power.

PARADISE LOST (Canada) – April 9-18, Bluma Appel Theatre

By Erin Shields

Directed by Tanja Jacobs

Cast: Louise Pitre as Satan, Eric Peterson and more

A Canadian Stage Production

In the depths of Hell, the recently, embarrassingly defeated Satan, played by Canadian theatrical great Louise Pitre, is plotting her revenge on the cocky God, the father. The plan: to defile his precious new creations – the naïve, idealistic, perhaps dimwitted – Adam and Eve, while disguised as a serpent. The classic story of the battle between Heaven and Hell gets an irreverent retelling in Erin Shield's witty and contemporary adaptation of John Milton's epic 17th century poem.

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BLACKOUT (Canada) – May 14-June 6, Berkeley Street Theatre

Book by Steven Gallagher

Music & Lyrics by Anton Lipovetsky

Directed by Ann Hodges

Music Supervision by Wayne Gwillim

A Musical Stage Company Production in Association with Canadian Stage

Blackout is the latest project of our ongoing partnership with The Musical Stage Company to support the creation of new Canadian musicals. On August 14, 2003, Toronto was sent into chaos when the largest blackout in Canadian history left millions in the dark unable to reach or connect with their loved ones. Inspired by real events, *Blackout* depicts three stories of connection that unfolded when the city was dark, and strangers banded together to find the light. Created by two of Canada's most exciting voices, this new Canadian musical is a story of hope, resilience and community.

CS PLATFORM: A Vanguard Performance Series, Berkeley Street Upstairs Theatre

Over three weekends in November, four of Canada's most provocative creators present new works that redefine the boundaries of performance. This special series invites audiences to explore the future of performance.

AME HENDERSON, HARBINGER (Canada) – Nov 5-7

Choreographer Ame Henderson's *harbinger* conjures unapologetic feminine splendour, with a startling exploration of intimacy and physical interdependence.

DANA MICHEL, MERCURIAL GEORGE (Canada) – Nov 12-14

Mercurial George, choreographer Dana Michel's (first Canadian winner of the Venice Biennale Silver Lion Award) destabilizing solo show, sifts through the heaps of dusty clues left over in the wake of initializing a cultural excavation.

CHRISTIAN LAPOINTE & NADIA ROSS, P.O.R.N. (Canada) – Nov 19-21

In Siminovitch Prize-winner Nadia Ross and Christian Lapointe's *P.O.R.N.* (Portrait of Restless Narcissism), the internet connects two people attempting to escape the loneliness of our time.

20.21 subscriptions are on sale now with four-show packages starting at \$100, six-show packages starting at \$132, a dance package starting at \$109, a theatre package starting at \$132 and a full season package starting at \$208. Subscriptions can be purchased online at canadianstage.com, by phone at 416-368-3110 or in person at the Berkeley Street Box Office, located at 26 Berkeley Street.

At Canadian Stage we are committed to making our productions accessible and have a wide range of ticket access programs available: C-Stage \$20 or \$30 tickets for patrons under 30, Pay-What-You-Can Tuesdays, \$20 or \$30 Rush tickets, \$29 tickers for Arts Workers and Group Discounts for groups of six or more. Single tickets go on sale on April 28, with tickets starting at \$29 for most shows.

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Performances take place at the company's three historic venues: The Bluma Appel Theatre at the St. Lawrence Centre; The Berkeley Street Theatre (which houses the Marilyn and Charles Baillie Theatre and the Berkeley Upstairs Theatre); and the High Park Amphitheatre.

Follow us on Facebook / Twitter / Instagram @canadianstage

**To receive further information, please contact CATHY PAINE
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ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage's mission is to be the leading contemporary performing arts organization in the country. A collision of disciplines and cultures, Canadian Stage reflects the dynamism and complexity of Canada and is a vital artistic force locally, nationally, and internationally. In its over thirty-year history, Canadian Stage has employed thousands of artists and developed and produced hundreds of new productions. Many of the plays developed by Canadian Stage have been awarded and nominated for Canada's most prestigious literary and performing arts honours, including Governor General's, Chalmers and Dora Mavor Moore Awards. Throughout the theatre season, nearly 100,000 patrons attend performances and workshops in our three Toronto venues. Throughout our history, Canadian Stage has provided outstanding education and outreach programs cultivating a diverse audience demographic.