



**Stratford Shakespeare Festival
MEDIA RELEASE**

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**C. David Johnson returns for major roles in *Pirates, 42nd Street*
*Jennifer Rider-Shaw to play Peggy Sawyer in 42nd Street***

January 23, 2012... The Stratford Shakespeare Festival is pleased to announce that **C. David Johnson**, currently starring on Broadway in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, will return to the Festival for the 60th season.

Mr. Johnson was last seen at Stratford in 2001, when he played Captain von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* opposite **Cynthia Dale's** Maria. The two, who also starred as lovers on the popular CBC TV series *Street Legal* from 1987 to 1994, will be reunited in *42nd Street*, as Pat Denning and Dorothy Brock.

Mr. Johnson will also play Major-General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance*.

In his 30-year career, which began at Theatre New Brunswick, Mr. Johnson has appeared in numerous television series and on stages throughout Canada, including as Patrick Flanagan in *Jitters*, and Davison in *Mary Stuart* at Soulpepper; George Love in *Tryst* at the Segal Centre; and Helmut Schmidt in *Democracy* at Tarragon. He first appeared at Stratford in 1984, playing Speed in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and Poin in *Henry IV, Part I*. He is currently playing Bob in the Broadway production of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*.

Mr. Johnson will be joined in *42nd Street* by **Jennifer Rider-Shaw**, who will play Peggy Sawyer. Ms Rider-Shaw made her Stratford debut in 2010, appearing in *Kiss Me, Kate* and *Evita*, followed by *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Camelot* last season. A graduate of Sheridan's music theatre performance program, Ms Rider-Shaw was a contestant on CBC's *Triple Sensation*, for which Cynthia Dale was a judge. She has also appeared in Ross Petty's *Robin Hood*, Drayton Entertainment's *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* at Theatre Aquarius.

As previously announced, *42nd Street* – directed by **Gary Griffin** – will also feature **Sean Arbuckle** as Julian Marsh and **Kyle Blair** as Billy Lawlor, with **Naomi Costain** as Anytime Annie, **Kyle Golemba** as Andy Lee, **Gabrielle Jones** as Maggie, and **Geoffrey Tyler** as Bert Barry.

The Pirates of Penzance – directed by **Ethan McSweeney** – will also feature **Sean Arbuckle** as the Pirate King, **Kyle Blair** as Frederic and **Amy Wallis** as Mabel Stanley, with **Gabrielle Jones** as Ruth and **Steve Ross** as the Sergeant of Police, as previously announced.

Production co-sponsors for *42nd Street* are The Dominion of Canada General Insurance Company and Union Gas.

Production co-sponsor for *The Pirates of Penzance* is RBC. Production support is generously provided by Dr. Dennis and Dorothea Hacker.

Support for the 2012 season has been provided by the Canada Council, the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund and the Ontario Arts Council.

Tickets are now on sale for the Stratford Shakespeare Festival's 2012 season, which features 14 productions presented from April 12 to October 28: *Much Ado About Nothing*; *42nd Street*; *The Matchmaker*; *Henry V*; *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; *The Pirates of Penzance*; *A Word or Two*; *Cymbeline*; *Wanderlust*; *Elektra*; *MacHomer*; *The Best Brothers*; *Hirsch*; and *The War of 1812*. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit stratfordshakespearefestival.com or call 1.800.567.1600.

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