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## ***WE BUILT THIS CITY ...***

# **CANADA'S LEADING MUSICAL TALENT TO STAR IN THE CANADIAN PREMIERE OF BROADWAY'S SMASH HIT ROCKIN' MUSICAL**



**CAST INCLUDES ELICIA MACKENZIE, YVAN PEDNEAULT,  
AARON WALPOLE, DAVID W. KEELEY, PETER DEIWICK  
& VICTOR A. YOUNG**

**PERFORMANCES BEGIN APRIL 20, 2010  
AT TORONTO'S ROYAL ALEXANDRA THEATRE**

The Canadian premiere of Broadway's rockin' goodtime musical ***ROCK OF AGES*** will feature some of the country's hottest musical theatre talent when it begins performances at the Royal Alexandra Theatre on April 20, 2010.

After many months of auditions across Canada and in major centres in the U.S., lead producers **Matthew Weaver** and **Carl Levin** and director **Kristin Hanggi** have cast six of the musical's lead roles with performers who have made their marks on stages in Toronto, New York and other cities.

"We are thrilled with the level of extraordinary talent that we found here in Toronto and know that audiences are going to fall in love with the cast," notes Levin.

**“ROCK OF AGES** is at its core a love story and it was important to the creative team to find the right mix of actors who can be funny, dance and sing their faces off. It’s no easy task,” Weaver added.

In the show’s two romantic leads are a pair of relatively new discoveries who hail from opposite sides of Canada but who have both already earned enviable reputations from their starring roles in hit Toronto musicals.

**Elicia MacKenzie**, originally from Vancouver, shot to fame on the top-rated hit CBC TV series *How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?* and subsequently went on to win rave reviews from critics and audiences in the 15-month run of *The Sound of Music* at the Princess of Wales Theatre. In **ROCK OF AGES** she will star as Sherrie, the impressionable young woman who comes to Los Angeles from small-town Kansas to become an actress.

**Yvan Pedneault**, from Sept-Îles, Quebec, starred in a number of big musical productions in Montreal and Quebec City before joining an open call audition for the Canadian premiere of *We Will Rock You*. Cast in the male lead in the Queen musical, he built a large fan base during the show’s two-year Toronto run. Currently he is one of the stars of the annual popular pantomime *Robin Hood*. For **ROCK OF AGES**, he will star opposite Elicia in the role of Drew, the raw, young rock ‘n’ roll talent with a set of pipes from the gods.

Another young discovery, **Aaron Walpole**, will star as Lonny, the quick-witted sound guy in the Sunset Strip’s Bourbon Room who also acts as narrator for the story of **ROCK OF AGES**. A finalist in the third season of CTV’s popular *Canadian Idol*, Aaron is from London, Ontario, where he has been working as a professional actor/singer for a number of years, including gigs at the Grand Theatre and the Stratford Festival.

Three well-known veterans of Canadian musical theatre will play three very different leading characters:

As Dennis, the owner of the Bourbon Room, one of the Sunset Strip’s legendary music clubs, will be **David W. Keeley**. From starring roles at the Stratford Festival to opening in the Broadway premiere of *Mamma Mia!*, David is one of Canada’s most charismatic and talented actors.

**Peter Deiwick**, who got his big break as *Sky* in *Mamma Mia!* at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, was one of the original Toronto Company members of the Canadian premiere of *We Will Rock You*, appearing in a range of roles including Galileo, Khashoggi and Madonna over the two and half year run. He originated the role of *Gilbert* in the popular musical *Anne and Gilbert* in P.E.I. and has starred in a variety of other shows including *Forever Plaid*. In **ROCK OF AGES**, Peter stars as *Stacee Jaxx*, the bad ass, always "cocked and loaded" lead singer of the band *Arsenal*. Ladies love him and guys want to be him. His band hates his guts but he's a star!!

**Victor A. Young** is an award-winning musical theatre actor with a long resume of leading roles in popular musicals, everything from *The Desert Song* to *Crazy For You* and *Dirty Dancing*. In **ROCK OF AGES** he will star as Hertz, the story’s seemingly evil businessman who wants to strip all the fun from the Sunset Strip and bring in a lifeless corporate culture.

The remaining cast will be announced in the New Year. And speaking of the New Year, members of the Toronto **ROCK OF AGES** cast will be the special guests of the annual **New Year's Eve festivities at Nathan Phillips Square**. Just as the clock strikes midnight and we say goodbye to 2009 and welcome 2010, the stars of **ROCK OF AGES** will perform three songs from the show. If you can't be in the square on December 31st, tune in and watch them belt out the '80s hits on City TV.

### ABOUT THE SHOW

In 1987 on the Sunset Strip, a small town girl meets a big city rocker and in LA's most famous rock club, they fall in love to the greatest songs of the '80s. It's **ROCK OF AGES**, an arena-rock love story told through the mind-blowing, face-melting hits of **Journey, Foreigner, Styx, Reo Speedwagon, Pat Benatar, Twisted Sister, Poison, Asia, Whitesnake** and many more.

The songs include "*Sister Christian*," "*We Built This City*," "*I Wanna Rock*," "*We're Not Gonna Take It*," "*Waiting For A Girl Like You*," "*Wanted Dead or Alive*," "*I Want To Know What Love Is*," "*Hit Me With Your Best Shot*," "*Renegade*," and, of course, "*Don't Stop Believin*"

It's an awesomely good time, a musical joyride about dreaming big, playing loud and partying on.

Nominated for five Tony Awards, including Best Musical, **ROCK OF AGES** took Broadway by storm when it opened at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre in April 2009. "Absurdly enjoyable" raved *New York Times* critic Charles Isherwood. "About as guilty as pleasure gets! The siren call of those screaming guitars and singalong choruses are impossible to resist." *Spin Magazine* declared the show "Pure Broadway Gold!" *Entertainment Weekly* gushed that **ROCK OF AGES** was "more fun than it has any right to be."

"**ROCK OF AGES** is a nonstop party laden with sexy choreography, energetic performances and an on stage band that totally rocks the house" proclaimed *The Associated Press*. And *The New York Post* said, "**ROCK OF AGES** does for '80s rock what *Mamma Mia!* did for ABBA."

### THE CREATIVE TEAM

The show is written by **Chris D'Arienzo** (writer and director of the upcoming film *Barry Munday*), directed by Tony Nominee **Kristin Hanggi** (*Bare, Pussycat Dolls on the Sunset Strip*) and choreographed by **Kelly Devine** (*Jersey Boys* – Associate Choreographer).

Scenic design is by **Beowulf Boritt** (*Spelling Bee, LoveMusik*), costume design is by Tony Nominee **Gregory Gale** (*Cyrano, The Wedding Singer*), lighting design is by **Jason Lyons** (*The Threepenny Opera*), sound design is by Tony Nominee **Peter Hylenski** (*Shrek*), and projection design is by **Zachary Borovay** (*A Catered Affair*). The Music Supervision, Arrangements & Orchestrations are by **Ethan Popp** (*Tarzan*) with original arrangements by **David Gibbs** (Film: *That Thing You Do*).

The Canadian production of **ROCK OF AGES** will be produced by **Matthew Weaver, Carl Levin, Jeff Davis, Barry Habib, Scott Prisand, Janet Billig Rich, Hillary Weaver and David Mirvish.**

### **BACKGROUND**

**ROCK OF AGES** had its world premiere in January 2006 at the Vanguard in Los Angeles for a limited four-week run that was extended to seven weeks by popular demand. The off-Broadway engagement began October 2008 at New World Stages and played for three months before work began on the Broadway debut. New Line Cinema recently bought the film rights to the musical. The Toronto engagement will be the show's first international production.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for **ROCK OF AGES** are now on sale. Prices are \$28 to \$99.  
Call Ticketing at 416-872-1212 or 1-800-461-3333. Online sales at [www.mirvish.com](http://www.mirvish.com)

**ROCK OF AGES** will begin performances **April 20, 2010** at the **Royal Alexandra Theatre**, 260 King Street West, Toronto

The weekly performance schedule will be: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8 PM; matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 2 PM; and Sunday evenings at 7 PM.

**ROCK OF AGES** in Toronto is sponsored by **Air Canada**.  
The production's official hotels are the **Sheraton Centre Toronto** and the **Westin Harbour Castle**.

More information about **ROCK OF AGES** [www.rockofagesmusical.com](http://www.rockofagesmusical.com)

Media information and photographs available at [www.mirvish.com](http://www.mirvish.com)

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