



## **Theatre Collingwood Announces New Sponsorship Partner to Assist During a Year of Pandemic Proportions**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Collingwood, ON:** 2020, which marks the 36<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for **Theatre Collingwood**, has been a year unlike any other and one that the not-for-profit, professional theatre company never could have predicted. After two successful productions in February and March, and subscription sales gaining momentum, the company had to cancel its Summer Theatre Festival as well as its annual spring gala. Their fun-raiser, *Putting For The Arts* at Blue Mountain Resort and a newly planned out-door performance series could not proceed this fall after changes to gathering limitations were amended by the provincial government to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Theatre Collingwood's popular drama education program for youth was also impacted this year. Five weeks of March Break and summer Drama Camps were cancelled along with a special family-oriented production of *Adam's Unplugged Puppet Party* that had nearly sold-out before they had to pull the plug on the show in March.

Yet despite not being able to gather in-person, throughout the pandemic Theatre Collingwood has remained active by reaching out to the community through multiple platforms including their newsletter, entitled *What's The Buzz*, where they've offered online entertainment ideas.

The company also has a strong social media presence and **Executive Director, Erica Angus** has been collaborating with the **Town of Collingwood** on an entertaining bi-weekly Facebook Live show. *The Stage Door* features local artists and well-known Canadian performers in conversations about their careers in arts and culture. The show has been viewed more than 5000 times since it launched at the beginning of July.

"We have received lots of positive feedback from people thanking us for reaching out and providing entertainment while they sheltered at home these last 8 months," says **Erica Angus**. "During this time of uncertainty and fear, community members and artists alike are still suffering from isolation and a lack of opportunities for creative engagement and artistic development," she adds.

Through government assistance programs and the generosity of its supporters, Theatre Collingwood has been able to use the hiatus from presenting shows to rethink how they will entertain audiences within the "new normal" and they've come up with some creative ideas to help inspire and heal the community.



“Without opportunities to host fundraisers and with the cancellation of our shows, community support is desperately needed at this time and we thank all our patrons and members who donated their 2020 tickets back to us,” says **Angus**. “By supporting Theatre Collingwood, individuals and businesses are helping to ensure that we stay vibrant throughout the pandemic so that we can continue to enrich the community with professional live theatre and drama education programs for many more years to come.”

For nearly forty years, **Theatre Collingwood** has persevered through other turbulent times and the company is equally thankful that it has retained support from most of its corporate sponsors this year. They have also attracted new businesses to the fold and the company is pleased to announce that **EPCOR** has made a cash donation of \$5,000 to the charitable organization and will be a major sponsor of Theatre Collingwood’s programming, now through 2021.

“The arts are a vital part of the community. They lift us up in challenging times, encourage us to explore the boundaries between the possible and the impossible, and bring us together through unique experiences,” said **Susannah Robinson, EPCOR Vice President, Ontario Operations**. “**EPCOR** is pleased to support Theatre Collingwood as it creates new opportunities for us to connect—whether two metres or two devices apart—and continues injecting drama and joy in our lives.”

**EPCOR** understands the importance of bringing joy to communities when they need it the most. For this reason, the energy and natural resources company established the *Heart + Soul Fund by EPCOR* to support organizations that deliver programming that uplifts and provides a lifeline to those who are hardest hit by COVID-19. Through the *Heart + Soul Fund*, **EPCOR** is providing support through small, medium and large grants to support arts, culture, recreation and charitable organizations in addressing the new and growing demands they face, and continuing to do what they do best: bringing the heart and soul to our community.

“We are very excited about our new partnership with **EPCOR**” says **Erica Angus**. “It’s no secret that theatre companies worldwide have been hit hard by the pandemic because the core of what we do is gather people together. With the support from **EPCOR** and our other corporate sponsors, Theatre Collingwood can bring exciting new theatre projects to life.”

**EPCOR** is an important part of Collingwood. With over 125 years of experience and a skilled and professional team right in the community, **EPCOR** is the electricity distributor to Collingwood, Stayner and Creemore, plus a portion of the Town of Blue Mountains, servicing close to 20,000 people. For more information on the services that **EPCOR** provides in the region, please visit <https://www.epcor.com/about/who-we-are/where-we-operate/Pages/ontario-collingwood.aspx>

### **Virtual Performances, Dinner Theatre and Out-door Shows Coming Soon!**

Theatre Collingwood will reunite with artists and patrons by presenting three virtual shows that will stream online before the end of the year. All shows are professionally filmed to ensure a high-quality entertainment experience.

First up in the virtual series is *The Missing Pages*, featuring Tom Allen (CBC Radio host, author and musician) along with other notable Canadian talents including Patricia O'Callaghan and Derek Boyes. *The Missing Pages* tells the incredible story of Quebec artist, Theodore Molt who was the only Canadian ever to meet Ludwig van Beethoven and their interaction spurred a remarkable tale of intrigue.

The performance will be available to watch from the comfort of your home for just \$25 (per household) beginning at 7:00pm EST Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup> until Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00am EST. Tickets are on sale now. Visit <https://theatrecollingwood.ca/the-missing-pages/> or call Theatre Collingwood's Box Office to purchase the link and you will receive instructions to watch the online performance. By purchasing a link for *The Missing Pages*, you are also supporting Canadian artists during this difficult time for them.

Please stay tuned for more event announcements from Theatre Collingwood coming soon, including the second-annual community project, *A Staged Reading of A CHRISTMAS CAROL* (December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020) and *Leisa Way in Rockin' Round The Christmas Tree* (December 19<sup>th</sup> - January 3<sup>rd</sup>). A fantastic Porchside Festival is planned for Spring 2021, as well as a new dinner theatre style of shows for summer.

For more information about upcoming events, please call our Box Office at 705-445-2200 or visit [www.theatrecollingwood.ca](http://www.theatrecollingwood.ca)

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For more information or to schedule an interview with Executive Director, Erica Angus, please contact:

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