



***Imperial Theatre***

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**For immediate release**

**Imperial Theatre presents the  
2006-2007  
*Professional Entertainment Series***

Imperial Theatre is pleased to present another first class entertainment package for the 2006-2007 season. With 21 amazing performances, this season offers tremendous variety with everything from outstanding musicals, dynamic dramas and virtuoso musicians to soul lifting singers, vibrant dancers and sidesplitting comedy. It will make you laugh, cry and fall in love with live theatre over and over again.

**Broadway Plus Series**

Electric Company Theatre

**Brilliant! - The Blinding Enlightenment of Nikola Tesla**

*Monday, October 23, 8 p.m.*

Madman? Genius? **BRILLIANT** is an electrifying theatrical exploration of genius that examines the human impulse for creation, and the tragedy that befalls a mind that dreams at a scale too large for its time. Set in turn of the century New York, this is the true-life story of Nikola Tesla, the inventor of alternating current, whose work in the field of electricity ushered in the current technological age. This stage spectacle is a visual feast complete with a song and tap-dance battle between Tesla and Thomas Edison, a silent film newsreel performed live on stage, and a central piece that is an inflated sphere five feet in diameter, which is used in an array of acrobatic stunts that symbolize Tesla's inner world.

*Theatrical magic.* – The Globe and Mail

*This is an all-out orgy of sight and sound.* – The Globe and Mail

Artist web site: [www.electriccompanytheatre.com](http://www.electriccompanytheatre.com)

## **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**

*Tuesday, March 20 & Wednesday, March 21, 8 p.m.*

Get set for a magical rainbow ride through ancient biblical Egypt on the resplendent coattails of Andrew Lloyd Webber's uplifting music and the humour and poetry of lyricist Tim Rice. Based on the biblical tale of Jacob's son Joseph and his eleven brothers, this musical spectacular has proven to be one of the most endearing and enduring shows of all time. **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** colourfully combines the talents of a remarkable cast with a palette of musical styles to create a razzle-dazzle blend of rock n' roll, rhythm and blues, and country.

*The production is an all-stops delight with brilliant lighting, colourful sets and sumptuous costumes.*

-- St. Louis Ladue News

Artist web site: [www.troika.com](http://www.troika.com)

## **Tribal Productions'**

### **The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)**

*Sunday, April 15, 8 p.m.*

Who would have thought that sitting through one of William Shakespeare's tragedies could be funnier than the *Comedy of Errors* or *Much Ado About Nothing*? Once you've seen *Hamlet* condensed, more condensed, super condensed, and then backwards, we know you'll agree! Sit through all 37 plays in 97 minutes, and you'll be rolling in the aisles with laughter! Enjoy an irreverent, fast-paced romp through the famous Bard's plays, loosen up and dress comfortably—wild audience participation may erupt.

## **Voices Series**

### **The von Trapp Children**

*Tuesday, February 27, 8 p.m.*

Sofia, Melanie, Amanda and Justin are the great-grandchildren of Captain von Trapp, father of the singing family whose story was immortalized in the Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway musical, *The Sound of Music*, and the 1965 Oscar-winning film based on it. The Children have inherited a joy and love for music, their voices meshing together as only a family's can, to create the beautiful, harmonic blend and pristine tone that is their legacy. Accompanied by a pianist, they will perform a variety of folk and classical songs from various European and American traditions, as well as pieces from *The Sound of Music*. This is the last year **The von Trapp Children** are touring, so don't miss this rare opportunity to see the world's most famous singing family.

Artist web site: [www.vontrappchildren.com](http://www.vontrappchildren.com)

**Lunch at Allen's**  
with **Murray McLachlan, Cindy Church, Ian Thomas and Marc Jordan**  
*Wednesday, February 28, 8 p.m.*

What started as a regular get together at Toronto's famed Allen's restaurant has resulted in a magical musical revue by these internationally renowned Canadian artists. Murray McLachlan's hits have covered the airwaves from coast to coast. Marc Jordan and Ian Thomas' songs have been recorded by everyone from Rod Stewart and Bette Midler to Diana Ross and Santana. And Cindy Church's sweet sound remains synonymous with the folk festival circuit and Sylvia Tyson's Quartette. Sharing vocal harmonies, laughs and a few tales in between, the rapport among these friends will leave you feeling like you've experienced something extra special.

Artist web site: [www.livetourartists.com/lunch-at-allens](http://www.livetourartists.com/lunch-at-allens)

**Ladysmith Black Mambazo**  
*Monday, March 19, 8 p.m.*

This 10-man chorus sings a version of a cappella called isicathamiya (Is-Cot-A-Me-Ya)—the music of Zulu workers taken from their homes and families to work in the mines of South Africa. Formed in the 1960's by farm boy turned factory worker Joseph Shabalala, the group took the name **Ladysmith Black Mambazo**—Ladysmith being the name of Shabalala's hometown, Black being a reference to the ox as the strongest of farm animals and Mambazo being the Zulu word for axe, symbolic of their ability to chop down singing rivals. Their voices were so tight, and their harmonies so polished, that they were eventually banned from competitions. Though the group has released more than 30 albums, it remains best known for appearing on Paul Simon's *Graceland* album and tour.

Artist web site: [www.imnworld.com/IMN/artist\\_view/24/](http://www.imnworld.com/IMN/artist_view/24/)

## Classical with a Twist Series

**International Guitar Night**  
*Friday, November 24, 8 p.m.*

A guitar fest of international proportions, **International Guitar Night** brings together the world's foremost acoustic guitar players to perform original compositions and exchange musical ideas before a live audience. A European concept that has grown to include performers from South America, Asia, the United States and Canada, founder Brian Gore invites three guitarists each year to participate in this musical pilgrimage. Gore is known for his evocative melodies and intriguing chord sequences and will be joined on stage by Italian born Peppino D'Agostino who is lauded as a giant of the acoustic guitar, and Canadians Antoine Dufour, a dynamic steel string instrumentalist from Quebec, and Andrew White, a powerful fingerstyle guitarist and singer/songwriter from Nova Scotia.

Artist web site: [www.theguitarnight.com](http://www.theguitarnight.com)

**Ensemble Vivant**  
**Featuring the Music of Leroy Anderson**  
*Saturday, January 20, 8 p.m.*

Comprised of Catherine Wilson (piano), Erica Beston, (violin), and Sharon Prater (cello), variety and eclecticism are the trademarks of this exciting ensemble. From the genius of Bach and the delicacy of Debussy, to the rhythms of Gershwin and the tangos of Piazzola, musical imagination and artistic integrity abound. Filmed on location in North America and Europe, their videos air frequently on Classic Arts Showcase and Bravo! **Ensemble Vivant's** recordings, including their most recent release, *The Music of Leroy Anderson*, have been heard on classical radio around the world. They have been performing to sold-out houses for over 15 years.

*Catherine Wilson was sensational in her performance of the Leroy Anderson Piano Concerto at Carnegie Hall... her presence and affinity for the piece are palpable.*  
—Eleanor Anderson (Mrs. Leroy Anderson)

Artist web site: [www.spyrecordings.com](http://www.spyrecordings.com)

**Blue Engine String Quartet**  
**If it be Your Will... Songs of Leonard Cohen**  
*Friday, May 11, 8 p.m.*

Frequent guests on CBC Radio and CBC Television, the **Blue Engine String Quartet** players are members of Symphony Nova Scotia and also form the core ensemble of the Nova Scotia chamber music series. Together, with actor-singer Cliffe LeJeune and jazz pianist Paul Simons, they have created an extraordinary concert of the music of Leonard Cohen, based on their latest CD, *If it be Your Will... Songs of Leonard Cohen*. The response has been overwhelming, garnering international attention, including Cohen himself who said, "Dear Colleagues, thank you for this sublime gift".

*The playing is exquisitely expressive. If ever anyone other than Leonard Cohen was meant to sing his songs it has to be Cliff LeJeune.* —The Halifax Herald

Artist web site: [www.waltmusic.com/musicians/BESQ.htm](http://www.waltmusic.com/musicians/BESQ.htm)

<b>Dance Series</b>
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**Royal Winnipeg Ballet – The Messiah**  
*Friday, November 10, 8 p.m.*

This full-length, off-pointe ballet is a piece of living sculpture, beautifully costumed in haute couture white. Choreographed by Mauricio Wainrot, lush and lyrical movement flow together to express the universal themes of hope, suffering and redemption—each segment building on the one before, adding layers of abstract understanding in refined and visually stirring solos, pas de deux, and pas de trois. The dancers display tremendous fluidity and technical excellence in lifts that seem to hang suspended. Principal dancer Tara Birtwhistle is exquisitely ethereal, moving like liquid light. Set to Handel's choral masterpiece, the music was recorded by London's pre-eminent Academy Chorus of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, winner of the coveted Queens Export Achievement award.

Artist web site: [www.rwb.org](http://www.rwb.org)

**MOTUS O dance theatre's  
VARIATIONS IN LOVE**

*Saturday, February 24, 8 p.m.*

Classical pointe work happily marries modern improvisational movement in these short works that explore the elusive emotion of love. From goofy boys ogling girls on a beach to the tingling excitement of a new romance, it's the sheer honesty and unabashed approach to humour that make these vignettes so poignant. Dance combinations from duos up to the full ensemble of seven, and the innovative use of multimedia, costumes and props, add to the allure. A compelling Canadian dance theatre company, MOTUS O's physical inventiveness, lightning quick action, grace and raw energy have earned them rave reviews.

*Within the simple theme of love, the program was rich in variation... and brought the capacity audience to its feet at the Registry Theatre.— Kitchener Waterloo Record*

Artist web site: [www.motuso.com](http://www.motuso.com)

**Decidedly Jazz Danceworks  
with Jackie Richardson**

*Saturday, April 28, 8 p.m.*

Described as "music for the eyes", this performance is a must see for dance and music lovers alike! The only professional dance company in Canada with the sole objective of creating concert jazz dance, its distinctive and eclectic style has been two decades in the making— an artful blend of African roots, rhythm, improvisation, and interplay with onstage musicians, that culminates in a single expression that is a riveting theatrical event! Actress and blues phenomenon Jackie Richardson also adds her glorious voice and vibrant presence to the synergy.

Artist web site: [www.decidedlyjazz.com](http://www.decidedlyjazz.com)

<b>Comedy &amp; Variety Series</b>
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**The Frantics**

*Thursday, February 1, 8 p.m.*

They may be a little older and a little wider than wiser, but **The Frantics** are back! This great Canadian comedy troupe is on the circuit again with many of the classic sketches and songs their fans have come to love, along with some funny new ingredients. Throughout the 70s and 80s, **The Frantics** became a household name based on the success of their national radio show *Frantic Times* on CBC, which ran for an unprecedented 120 episodes. Their CBC TV show, *4 On The Floor*, won them even more accolades and its reruns continue to build their fan base.

Artist web site: [www.thefrantics.com](http://www.thefrantics.com)

**Famous PEOPLE Players**

## A Black Light Night at the Opera

*Saturday, February 17, 8 p.m.*

What you see is sensational! What you don't see is inspirational! Discovered by Liberace, **Famous PEOPLE Players** black-light performers have dazzled fun loving grown-ups and kids for more than 30 years. With uncanny skill, these unseen performers work life-size puppets in a seamless collection of vignettes that is an iridescent onstage masterpiece. Most recently featured in an hour-long CBC television special *Black Light Dreams*, **Famous PEOPLE Players** also appeared in the Emmy Award winning CBS Movie of the Week, *Special People*. Next to the moon and the stars, this is the best thing to see in the dark!

Artist web site: [www.fpp.org](http://www.fpp.org)

## Axis Theatre Company's

### The Number 14

*Sunday, April 22, 8 p.m.*

Whether you're sitting at the front, centre or the back, this bus ride will leave you sore from laughing. Part Monty Python, part Mr. Bean, this satirical slice of urban city life stars six of Vancouver's finest performers as they strut, sing and talk their way through a series of adventures onboard the Number 14 bus. Along the way, you'll meet a bizarre cross-section of citizens—old and young, rich and poor, annoying and annoyed. Sometimes with dialogue, sometimes without, marvelous physical acting and eccentric costumes, masks and wigs combine creating a treat that's candy to the eyes.

*Delightful... dazzling, brilliant... astounding!* —New York Daily Times

*A real Vancouver success story, the "little bus that could" has traveled the world: U.S.A., Hong Kong, Israel, Ireland, France, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Scotland, Finland, Denmark and Japan.*

—The Vancouver Courier

Artist web site: [www.axis theatre.com](http://www.axis theatre.com)

## World/Jazz Series

### Tasa

*Friday, February 23, 8 p.m.*

Led by tabla player Ravi Nairmpally, **Tasa** weaves western jazz and Indian musical motifs to create a tapestry of improvised originality that is elegant and virtually unclassifiable. High intensity guitar, funky bass stylings, lyrical bansuri and sax work, and explosive percussion culminate in a sound that "evokes a sexy encounter in a dark lounge one minute and meditation in a green open field the next". Their debut release entitled *Bhakti* won the 2002 Urban Music Award for Best World Music Recording.

*It's unfailingly interesting... lush dense rhythmic overlays and haunting sounds...* —Toronto Star

Artist web site: [www.tasamusic.com](http://www.tasamusic.com)

## **Eliana Cuevas**

*Friday, March 23, 8 p.m.*

A new voice on Canada's world and jazz music scene, **Eliana Cuevas** is filling the niche for a stellar jazz singer from Latin America. Accompanied by a pianist, two percussionists and a bass player, Venezuelan born Cuevas shines not only as a remarkably mature singer, but as a songwriter and bandleader as well. Winner- Vocal Artist of the Year- Latin American Achievement Awards, 2003, and Winner- World Music Category- From the Heart Songwriting Competition, 2004, her compositions have been described as intellectually and rhythmically advanced.

*She just might be the next Norah Jones.* – Now Magazine, Toronto

Artist web site: [www.elianacuevas.com](http://www.elianacuevas.com)

## **Samarabalouf**

*Wednesday, April 4, 8 p.m.*

A delightfully crazy string trio from France, **Samarabalouf's** music has been called everything from punk Gypsy jazz to a joyful whirl and deluge of happiness. Leader François Petit plays and composes on a Selmer-type acoustic guitar, and is accompanied by a rhythmic guitar and a double bass. Known for its D-shaped "bouche" (mouth or sound hole), Django Reinhardt, a gypsy jazz star in the 1930's and 40's, made the Selmer guitar famous. His influence is heard in the rhythms and tones of **Samarabalouf's** style, whose repertoire stretches from the boogie blues to flamenco rock, and integrates themes like the waltz, the tango and the rumba.

Artist web site: [www.bernardschmidtproductions.com/bsp12s.htm](http://www.bernardschmidtproductions.com/bsp12s.htm)

## **Just Plain Fun! Series**

### **The Polyjesters**

*Saturday, September 30, 8 p.m.*

Hip in a way that transcends generations, this Canadian quartet dubs its music "Swingin' Folk Chunk", so-called for the sound of the ukulele strings chunka-chunked to sound like a train. Add to that a little something from such genres as old time jazz, Tin Pan Alley, bluegrass, gypsy and blues, and you've got a swinging new kitchen party act that is absolutely fabulous! Pull up a chair with lead vocalist Sheldon Valleau, also the only full time baritone ukulele player in Canada, along with his brother Jason on bass and vocals, Rob Vulic (percussion) and Matthew Woodward (fiddle) for an evening of fun and song. From Disney's Jungle Book song, *I Wanna Be Like You*, to an ode to the many ways to destroy an auto owned and hated, *Jeep*...everyone can relate!

Artist web site: [www.polyjesters.com](http://www.polyjesters.com)

## KLEZTORY

*Sunday, October 29, 8 p.m.*

Paradoxically, and in keeping with the spirit of Klezmer, this is tragic music turned fun in the hands of five musicians with degrees from the likes of McGill, Université de Montréal, and the Nizhnekamsk School of Music in Russia. Born of Yiddish culture, Klezmer is the traditional music of the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe. A salve for the soul, it is a musical jubilation of triumph over great misfortune, centuries in the making. **KLEZTORY** is a traditional ensemble consisting of guitar, violin, accordion, clarinet and double bass. An extraordinary change from the ordinary, it has forged a unique, yet authentic sound that's performed with emotion and virtuosity.

Artist web site: [www.kleztory.com](http://www.kleztory.com)

## The Chucky Danger Band

*Saturday, April 14, 8 p.m.*

Standing ovations, screaming fans... the **Chucky Danger Band** has been on the rise since their debut at the 2006 East Coast Music Awards where they won "Pop Recording of the Year". Extremely gifted musicians with captivating vocals, the four man pop-rock band hails from Prince Edward Island. While reminiscent of the *Beatles* in their trademark dark suits, white shirts and proper ties, on stage they are anything but buttoned down. With a hot single, *Sweet Symphony*, rapidly climbing the charts, their fresh sound and frenetic energy is contagious, catching the attention of fans and critics.

*What a find! The Chucky Danger Band's sound is squarely in the center of today's pop/rock music scene. They take a back seat to no one.* —Glenn Meisner, CBC Atlantic Airwaves

Artist web site: [www.chuckydangerband.com](http://www.chuckydangerband.com)

### **MORE GREAT NEWS!**

**Get advance pick of the seats and avoid the disappointment of sold-out shows by subscribing now!**

**Subscriptions** to the 2006-2007 **Professional Entertainment Series** are on sale **NOW**, and may be ordered by visiting Imperial Theatre Box Office or by calling 674-4100. Subscriptions can be as small as a three show Series or as big as a 21 show SUPERTICKET. As a subscriber you always pay less than the combined single ticket price, but most importantly, you get to pick your seat before single tickets go on sale to the public in September. The sooner you subscribe, the better the selection of seats—you get to see everything you want to see from just the right vantage point. Subscribers also have special benefits like the chance to buy tickets to other shows that are often potential sell-outs before they are available to the public.

**Here's something special for those with eclectic taste!** See only what you want to see from our entire palette of 21 shows by selecting a 3-PAK (3 different shows), a 5-PAK (5 different shows) or a 10-PAK (10 different shows) and save 3%, 5% or 10%, respectively. Seats are assigned September 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> in the order they are received and paid. That's still three days prior to single tickets going on sale to the general public on September 9<sup>th</sup>. The sooner we receive your order, the better!

Single tickets to all 21 performances in the Professional Entertainment Series go on sale September 9<sup>th</sup>.