

THE CANADIAN STAGE COMPANY

ARTISTIC & GENERAL DIRECTOR MATTHEW JOCELYN

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7 STORIES

20th anniversary production of home-grown international hit reunites Morris Panych, Peter Anderson and Ken MacDonald from the original award-winning team, November 9 to December 5

"Hilarious leap into laughter" – *Calgary Herald* (October 2009)

"sweet and funny...with a wry incongruity " - *The New York Times* (2008)

"Panych mixes Magritte, Sartre, Woody Allen, and the Book of Job with Buster Keaton and Magic Realism. It's special chemistry with special results" - *CBC Radio Vancouver* (1989)

Toronto, ON (October 27, 2009) — The Canadian Stage Company continues its 2009.2010 Season with the 20th anniversary production of **7 Stories**, the first bona fide international hit play by two-time Governor General's Award-winner Morris Panych. **7 Stories**, a touchingly funny surrealist comedy, tells the life-affirming story of a man searching for meaning. The 20th anniversary production of the iconic Canadian play, directed by **Dean Paul Gibson**, reunites the original trio of playwright **Morris Panych**, actor **Peter Anderson** and designer **Ken MacDonald**. **A Canadian Stage Company co-production with Theatre Calgary, 7 Stories** runs **November 9 to December 5, 2009** (media night: November 12) at **Toronto's Bluma Appel Theatre** (27 Front Street East) immediately following a three-week run in Calgary. For tickets and information, contact **416-368-3110** or **canstage.com**.

7 Stories is a home-grown success story. Panych wrote the play because he was interested in exploring "the grotesquely wonderful and relentlessly fantastic aspects of human behaviour." Originally produced in 1989 by Vancouver's Arts Club Theatre, it became Panych's "break-through" play and established him as a major voice in Canadian theatre. The play has been produced across Canada, in New York, London, Sydney, Budapest, Tokyo and Seoul, and has been translated into three other languages including Japanese, Korean and Hungarian. It won six Jessie Richardson Awards (1990) including Outstanding Original Play, Outstanding Production and Outstanding Set Design; four Dora Mavor Moore Awards (1991); and was a finalist for the Governor General's Award.

To jump or not to jump? That is the question one man faces on the seventh-story ledge of an apartment building in this quick-paced, absurdist comedy. Before he can make a decision, he encounters the building's eccentric tenants through nearby windows. As he desperately tries to get on with minding his own business, he becomes a reluctant participant in the dilemmas of those around him. He comes to realize that everyone one of them has a reason to jump - and that he may be the most rational of them all.

"The dark humour, existential themes and exploration of the fine line between fantasy and reality that would go on to become Panych's trademarks are very much on display in this early work," states The Canadian Stage Company's Artistic & General Director Matthew Jocelyn. "This play is a delightfully absurd look at the trivialities of everyday life and the ways in which we strive to imbue that life with meaning. While skewering the mundane preoccupations of modern society and exposing the self-centeredness and hypocrisy of its citizens, Panych manages to express a very loving and hopeful perspective on the human condition."

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The Canadian Stage Company: *7 Stories* cont'd

Morris Panych is one of Canada's most significant contemporary playwrights; he has written more than 25 works for the stage and adapted more than a half dozen others. He has also directed as many as 100 productions and appeared in over fifty stage plays and in numerous television and film productions. The Canadian Stage Company has produced four of his plays: *What Lies Before Us*, *Vigil*, *The Overcoat* and presently *7 Stories*. He has also directed a number of productions for the Company including *The Overcoat*, *Habeas Corpus*, *Take Me Out*, *Amadeus*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Hysteria*. Panych has garnered two Governor General's Literary Awards for Drama (the country's most prestigious literary honour); one in 1994 for his play *The Ends of The Earth* and another in 2004 for *The Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*. He has won 14 Jessie Richardson Awards (Vancouver), three Sidney Riske Writing Awards (Vancouver), and five Dora Mavor Moore Awards (Toronto). He was also nominated for the Chalmers Award for *The Cost of Living*, *Vigil* and *Lawrence and Holloman*. His plays *7 Stories*, *Vigil* and *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl* have been produced in over a dozen languages and mounted throughout Canada, the U.S., Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. His groundbreaking work *The Overcoat*, which he co-created and directed, toured worldwide to great acclaim, and its film version, directed by Panych, won an honourable mention at the Prix Italia. In 2008 Panych made his Stratford Shakespeare Festival directorial debut with his highly successful adaptation of *Moby Dick*. In the same year he directed *A Little Night Music* for the Shaw Festival and premiered two new works, *Benevolence* at Tarragon Theatre in Toronto and *The Amorous Adventures of Anatol* at Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company. In 2009 he returned to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival to direct the premiere of his latest work, *The Trespassers*. Upcoming: Panych will be directing *Parfumerie* for Soulepepper Theatre Company, 'Art' by Yasmina Reza for The Canadian Stage Company and *Vigil* for ACT in San Francisco.

7 Stories stars **Peter Anderson** in the Jessie-nominated role that he created 20 years ago. Anderson is best known to Canadian Stage audiences for his touching portrayal of The Man in Morris Panych and Wendy Gorling's acclaimed *The Overcoat*, which was presented by Canadian Stage in 2000, toured internationally and then returned to the Bluma stage in 2007. Joining Anderson are four versatile actors, each playing several different roles, including **Damian Atkins** (*Frost/Nixon*, *Amadeus*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Into the Woods* as actor; *Lucy* as playwright) **Christopher Hunt** (*Tartuffe*, *Glorious!*), **Melody A. Johnson** (*Habeas Corpus*) and **Rebecca Northan** (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

The creative team includes director **Dean Paul Gibson** last seen at Canadian Stage performing in *The Overcoat*, set designer **Ken MacDonald** (*The Overcoat*, *What Lies Before Us*, *Habeas Corpus*, *Take Me Out*, *Vigil*, *Amadeus*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Hysteria*) who created the original Magritte-inspired set for the premiere production, costume designer **William Schmuck** (*Suits*), lighting designer **Alan Brodie** (*Frost/Nixon*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Glorious!*, *The Overcoat*, *Vigil*), original music & sound designer **Peter Moller**, vocal coach **Jane MacFarlane**, stage manager **Darragh J. Parsons**, assistant stage manager **Kelsey ter Kuile** and assistant director **Alexandra Prichard**.

The Canadian Stage Company is nationally and internationally acclaimed and Canada's leading not-for-profit contemporary theatre company. Founded in 1987 with the merger of CentreStage and Toronto Free Theatre, the Company is dedicated to programming international contemporary theatre and to developing and producing landmark Canadian works which have been awarded some of the country's most prestigious literary and performing arts honours, including the Governor General's, Chalmers and Dora Mavor Moore Awards. The Company presents the richest variety of Canadian and international plays and musicals – from edgy and provocative work at the Berkeley Street Theatre to productions with popular appeal at the Bluma Appel Theatre and a summer of Shakespeare at the TD Dream in High Park. Canadian Stage has a long-standing commitment to education and enhancement programs for the public, nurturing theatre professionals, and developing new Canadian plays, while producing thought-provoking theatre and high quality entertainment in Toronto, one of North America's largest theatre centres. For more information, refer to canstage.com.

The Canadian Stage Company: 7 Stories cont'd

Upcoming in The Canadian Stage Company's 2009.2010 season is *That Face* by Polly Stenham, produced by Nightwood Theatre in co-production with Canadian Stage (Oct. 26 – Nov. 21 at Berkeley); *Intimate Apparel* by Lynn Nottage, an Obsidian Theatre production (Feb. 8 – Mar. 6 at Bluma); *The Overwhelming* by J.T. Rogers, a Studio 180 Theatre production in association with Canadian Stage (Mar. 8 – Apr. 3 at Berkeley); 'Art' by Yasmina Reza (Mar. 15 – Apr. 10), *This is What Happens Next* by Daniel MacIvor and Daniel Brooks, a Necessary Angel production (April 12 – May 8 at Berkeley) and Catalyst Theatre's *Frankenstein* (April 29 – May 29 at Bluma).

7 Stories Production Sponsor: BMO Harris Private Banking
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7 Stories

A Canadian Stage Company and Theatre Calgary co-production

TORONTO DATES:

Previews: November 9 – 11
Opening Night: November 12
Closing Night: December 5

SCHEDULE: Monday-Saturday at 8 p.m.; matinees Wednesday 1:30 p.m. and Saturday 2 p.m.

LOCATION: Canadian Stage – Bluma Appel Theatre, 27 Front Street E., Toronto

TICKETS: From \$20. Available online at canstage.com, by phone via Canadian Stage 416.368.3110, or in person at Customer Service Centres: Berkeley Street Theatre, 26 Berkeley Street; or Bluma Appel Theatre, 27 Front St. E., Toronto.

RUSH SEATS: Available for any performance at 50% off the regular ticket price. Tickets are subject to availability and must be purchased in person at the box office one hour prior to show time.

PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN: For Monday-night performances only. Subject to availability. Must be purchased in person at the box office beginning at 10 a.m. on the day of performance.

C-STAGE: For individuals under 30 years with valid ID, tickets are \$12.50 and not subject to tax or service charges. May be purchased in advance or on day of performance. Subject to availability. Purchase online at c-stage.ca, by phone or in person. For more info, go to c-stage.ca.

GROUPS OF 10+ PEOPLE SAVE: Contact Christina Hotz, Group Sales & Business Development Manager at 416.367.8243 x266 or chotz@canstage.com

TALK BACKS: Free. Informal question-and-answer periods provide a chance to meet the artists following a performance in the theatre. After every Tuesday evening and Wednesday matinee show, excluding previews. No registration required.

THEATRE CLUB: Free. Structured like a book club with an opportunity to discuss the play and the Canadian Stage Reads book selection. Saturday, December 5 at 10:30 a.m. at Nicolas Hoare Books, 45 Front St. E. Registration required theatreclub@canstage.com.

FOR MORE INFO: CANSTAGE.COM

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