

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – JULY 21, 2022**

**Korda Announces 20th Anniversary Season**

***Mix of New Shows & ‘From the Vault’ Offerings***

**(WINDSOR, ON) – Korda Artistic Productions** will celebrate the theatre company’s milestone 20th Anniversary with a thrilling season that mixes remounts of three fan-favourite productions with exciting new offerings… all coming to the stage at the intimate **KordaZone Theatre** on Seminole Street in Windsor.

**THE BEST MAN**

**March 24, 25, 26, 30, 31 and April 1, 6, 7 & 8, 2023**

*Written by Christopher Lawrence Menard*

*Directed by Joey Wright and Christopher Lawrence Menard*

The first of the ‘*From the Vault’* offerings is Christopher Lawrence Menard’s original comedy/drama hit ***The Best Man***(2007). On the eve of her wedding, a young bride learns that her groom was once very much in love with his best man. Despite this, she goes through with the wedding. But the trip to the altar sees vows rewritten, beds revisited, and the bonds of matrimony turned upside down, as they all learn it is never as easy as saying, “I do.” Menard is the writer of the stage plays *The View From Here* (2010), the *DRAG Trilogy* (2010-2012)*,* the short film *Gary Blaze: The Devil Wears Product* (2008), feature film *Whatever it Was* (2009), and the poetry collection *at the end, beginnings: A Memoir in Poems* (2022 from Black Moss Press). When *The Best Man* premiered at Korda in 2007, opening night included a special ceremony to wed two same-sex American couples on stage to celebrate the two-year anniversary of the Civil Marriage Act legalizing same-sex marriage in Canada. These two symbolic unions took place nearly ten years before the US struck down all state bans on same-sex marriage. Wright, who co-directs this production, was inspired when he attended the show and the opening night weddings in 2007. In 2009, in response to bullying at his high school, Wright led a coalition that lobbied the Greater Essex County District School Board to create the area’s first ever Gay-Straight Alliance. Now, Menard and Wright are teaming up to bring *The Best Man*, updated slightly from its 2007 premiere, back to Korda’s stage and Windsor audiences.

***“A creative treat… The boy-has-girl-wants-boy story is compelling in a Three’s Company meets One Life To Live way.” – The Windsor Star***

**ROMEO & JULIET**

**May 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27 and June 1, 2 & 3, 2023**

*Written by William Shakespeare*

*Directed by Jeremy Burke*

In William Shakespeare’s timeless tragedy, the inspired playwright creates a violent world in which two young people fall in love. Their families do not merely disapprove; the Montagues and the Capulets are engaged in a blood feud that makes this union treacherous. The pair of star-crossed lovers are doomed from their love-at-first-sight meeting, to their final devastating union. Despite the death-filled setting, this tale of woe has become one of the greatest love stories of all time. Its exquisite language, enduring themes, compelling characters and raw emotion make it easy for audiences to fall into the world of these young lovers even as they meet their untimely fate. It is the play that gave us the lines, ***“Parting is such sweet sorrow,”*** and ***“My only love sprung from my only hate!”*** Young performing artist and Korda player Jeremy Burke directs the tale, fresh off a season of compelling performances that included his *Spring Awakening* haunting portrayal of another youth caught in a web of inner turmoil and at odds with the world around him. Of ***Romeo & Juliet***, Burke says, “In Shakespeare’s most (in)famous tale of star crossed lovers, young love blooms through the cracks of a generational feud. It is not Romeo or Juliet’s war to fight. They were forced into the feud by an older generation. Now their own young love and recklessness is their only hope against it.”

**EXTENSION-KORDA SUMMER SESSIONS**

**August 2023**

*Produced by the Extension-Korda Youth Players*

Korda’s summer tradition continues in 2023 with the Extension-Korda Summer Sessions program to include summer camps, musical performances, productions, cabaret nights and special events. Over the years this innovative program has become a popular experience for youth artists to work alongside mentors and peers to learn the ins and outs of operating, programming and performing in a true community theatre setting. Stay tuned for more information, including participation opportunities, as it becomes available.

**SHE KILLS MONSTERS**

**September 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22 & 23, 2023**

*Written by Qui Nguyen  
Directed by David Burrows*

***She Kills Monsters*** is a dark comedy-adventure play by Qui Nguyen that debuted in 2011. It tells the story of Agnes Evans, an average young woman who loses her parents and younger sister in a car accident. Struggling to come to terms with her profound loss, Agnes embarks on an adventure to get to know her sister better by playing a *Dungeons and Dragons* module that her sister wrote, and discovers things she’d never imagined. Moving through the real world, and the imaginary world her sister created before her death, Agnes uncovers secrets and experiences the deep struggles her sister faced during her tumultuous life. Along the way, she encounters a high school-aged Dungeon Master, a murderous fairy, maniacal cheerleaders, and a malevolent 5-headed dragon. Since its 2011 New York City premiere, the play has wowed audiences of all ages, including millennials and Gen Zers, while being applauded for its nuanced portrayals of LGBTQ2S+ characters. The play makes its Windsor premiere with actor and director David Burrows at the helm. Burrows’ past Korda directing credits include *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (2017), *Company* (2018) and *Fun Home* (2018). Burrows is currently directing *5 Lesbians Eating A Quiche*, coming to The KordaZone stage in September 2022.

***“This is a story about kids who make up stories. This is a story in which girls wield swords, queer kids are cool and nerds rule the earth... Openness, tolerance and resilience are more than the show’s subjects: They are baked into its DNA.” – The New York Times***

**THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW**

**October 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 & 28, 2023**

*Music, Lyrics & Book by Richard O’Brien*

*Directed by Jeff Marontate*

The second of the ‘*From the Vault’* offerings for the anniversary season is a restaging of the cult classic musical ***The Rocky Horror Show***, which was Korda’s first big Broadway musical production when the company launched back in 2003. O’Brien’s musical masterpiece is a humorous tribute to the science fiction and horror B movies of the late 1940s through to the early 1970s. The smash-hit musical extravaganza tells the story of a newly engaged couple getting caught in a storm and coming to the home of a mad transvestite scientist who is about to unveil his new creation – a muscle man named Rocky Horror. 2023 marks the 50th Anniversary of the show, which premiered in 1973 in London, at a tiny theatre in Chelsea and went on to gross well over $200 million and become one of the most successful shows ever to hit the stage. “I bought the *Rocky Horror Show* album when I was 16, I saw the movie for the 1st of 25 times when I was 17, and I had to wait until I was 39 to direct it onstage,” says Korda Resident Director Jeff Marontate. “Now I get to revisit this funny, kinky, still kinda shocking show again, and I could not be more excited. *Rocky Horror* is a cult classic full of sex, sci fi and good ol’ rock’n’roll!”

***“The Rocky Horror Show was a success, offering a new, creative perspective of the classic, while, at the same time, maintaining its nostalgic, transsexual charm.” – The Saint***

***“Oh, horror… Rocky’s still a riot!... [the show] opened over the weekend to howls of laughter.” – The Windsor Star***

**PANTO: THE PANTO (A MULTIVERSE OF PANTOS)**

**December 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 & 17, 2023**

Korda’s traditional December family offering will be an original holiday panto that gives a fresh take on a familiar tale. Expect silliness for the kids, naughty jokes for the grown-ups, bad drag, great music, magic, mayhem, and loads of audience participation for everyone in a goofy, delightful, all-ages musical production to close out the 20th Anniversary season in style. Expect this original story to pull in elements from all of Korda’s previous original pantos, including *Cinderella: The Shoe Must Go On*, *Robin Hood*, *Hansel Und Gretel: Behind the Gingerbread*, *King Midas and the Golden Arches*, *Aladdin*, *The ‘Obbit: An H’Original ‘Oliday Panto*, *Peter Pan(to)*, *STAR WAR(ped): May The Farce Be With You*, *Annie of Green Gables, Get Your Gun!!!*, *Pinocchio*, and *The Pantolorian*. Korda will seek a director for the 2023 panto production.

***“... the wink-winking and nudge-nudging will be family-friendly. Adults can enjoy the double entendres, but the slapstick and sight gags are fun for all ages.” – The Windsor Star***

***BUT THAT’S NOT ALL...***

In addition to the shows produced by Korda Artistic Productions, the season will include three offerings from Cardinal Music Productions. The two companies have a long history of co-productions dating back to 2012. Since 2022, Korda and Cardinal have shared the space, resources, and expenses at The KordaZone Theatre. Though this year’s Cardinal shows are not co-productions, two are exciting ‘*From the Vault’* titles from Korda and Cardinal’s shared past. The third show has not yet been selected. Cardinal Music Productions’ 2023 offerings include:

**LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS**

**July 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22 & 23, 2023**

*Book & Lyrics by Howard Ashman; Music by Alan Menken*

*Directed by Joe Cardinal & Produced by Cardinal Music Productions*

***Little Shop of Horrors***is the award-winning comedy horror rock musical about a hapless florist shop worker who raises a plant that feeds on human blood and flesh. The musical is based on the low-budget 1960 black comedy film of the same name, directed by Roger Corman. In 1986, Frank Oz directed another film adaptation, this one based on the musical itself. Menken composed the music, in the style of early 1960s rock and roll, doo-wop and early Motown. Show hits include the title song, ‘Skid Row (Downtown)’, ‘Somewhere That’s Green’, and ‘Suddenly, Seymour’. The musical premiered Off-Off-Broadway in 1982, moved to the Orpheum Theatre Off-Broadway for a five-year run, and later enjoyed a Broadway production. This popular show was the winner of three Best Musical awards (Drama Critics Circle Award, Drama Desk Award, and Evening Standard Award), as well as capturing the Outer Critics Circle Award. The 2016 production at The KordaZone Theatre wowed local audiences.

***“The confident direction by Joseph Anthony Cardinal ensures most, if not every piece of the production comes together snuggly.... this is a production which centers itself on having tons of fun... every performer leaves it all on the stage to provide an entertaining show.” – The Lance: UofW Students’ Newspaper***

**AVENUE Q**

**November 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25 & 26, 2023**

*Music & Lyrics by Robert Lopez and Jeff Marx; Book by Jeff Whitty*

*Directed by Joe Cardinal & Produced by Cardinal Music Productions*

Winner of the Tony ‘Triple Crown’ for Best Musical, Best Score and Best Book, ***Avenue Q***is part flesh, part felt and packed with heart. This is the laugh-out-loud musical that tells the timeless story of a recent college grad named Princeton who moves into a shabby New York apartment all the way out on Avenue Q. He soon discovers that although the residents seem nice, it’s clear that this is not your ordinary neighbourhood. Together, Princeton and his newfound friends struggle to find jobs, dates, and their ever-elusive purpose in life. This audience-favourite production first hit the KordaZone stage in 2012 as a co-production between Korda and Cardinal, before Cardinal remounted the show in 2014 at the Chrysler Theatre. “It’s the most fun I’ve had at the theatre in years,” Cardinal said. “You can’t watch this show for five minutes without laughing.

***“The musical looks at the Sesame Street generation as it moves into adulthood. Kids who were treated to a hunkydory universe of happiness and harmony find out the real world is one of frustration and failure. Issues like drug abuse, sexual perversion and racism rear their ugly heads on Avenue Q, located in a fictional NYC borough. The first number asks the age-old question, What Do You Do With a BA in English?, while others address such things as sexuality (If You Were Gay), lack of confidence (It Sucks To Be Me), and obsession (The Internet is For Porn).” – The Windsor Star***

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| Tracey Atin, Founder and Producer Korda Artistic Productions 519-562-3394  [traceyatin@hotmail.com](mailto:traceyatin@hotmail.com)  [www.kordazone.com](http://www.kordazone.com) | Joe Cardinal, Founder and Producer  Cardinal Music Productions 519-944-5800 [cardinalmusic@hotmail.com](mailto:cardinalmusic@hotmail.com) [www.cardinalmusicproductions.com](http://www.cardinalmusicproductions.com) |

**MEDIA CONTACT DETAILS + ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

All performances of all shows in the 2023 20th Anniversary Season will take place at The KordaZone Theatre, 2520 Seminole Street, Windsor, Ontario.

**Korda Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/groups/15726790159/>.

**KordaZone Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/kordazone/>.

**Kordazone Flickr Albums:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/127347470@N04/albums>.

**Musical Tickets:** $30 General Admission.

**Show Tickets:** $25 General Admission; Pay-What-You-Can nights *once* per production.

**\*TICKET PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE; PARTICULARLY FOR MUSICALS\***

**Purchasing Tickets Online:** Eventbrite links will be available online; One price point only.

**Purchasing Tickets In Person:** ½ hour before showtime; cash only at the door.

**Purchasing From Ticket Outlets:** Visit our website for list of outlets (as available).

**Auditions/Directing:** Opportunities posted to Korda’s website and socials (as available).