

## Oh, What a Ride!

*Dancer (A Musical In Ten Furlongs)*, the exciting new show about Northern Dancer, is at the gate, ready to take its next step toward a full stage production. And we're looking for investors to be part of the ride. Recently named winner of the 2023 Adams Prize For Musical Theatre, *Dancer* will have a featured spot in the 2023 Toronto Fringe Festival, with performances July 5-16.

*Dancer* is the story of Northern Dancer, the "horse nobody wanted" - the too-small, too-ungainly, too-willful thoroughbred who overcame doubt, injury and history to become the first Canadian-bred horse to win the Kentucky Derby, in 1964. And he didn't just win it, he ran it in record time, capturing the imagination and excitement of Canadians across the country. The Dancer then went on to become the most successful sire in thoroughbred racing history.

This joyfully original show is written by Jim Betts, the Dora and Chalmers Award winning playwright and lyricist, with music by multi-award-winning composer Marek Norman, and choreography by Emmy-Award Nominee Stacey Tookey. This dynamic Canadian choreographer is known for her innovative work on *So You Think You Can Dance*, dance companies around the world, and stars such as Celine Dion, Michael Bublé, Bette Midler and Justin Timberlake.

How do you tell the story of a racehorse in a musical? That's one of most exciting and theatrical aspects of *Dancer*. Taking inspiration from his name, Northern Dancer, and all the other horses in his story, are played by dancers, communicating only through dance and movement. Bringing together the thrill and beauty of galloping horses with the grace and athleticism of dance makes *Dancer* a natural winner.

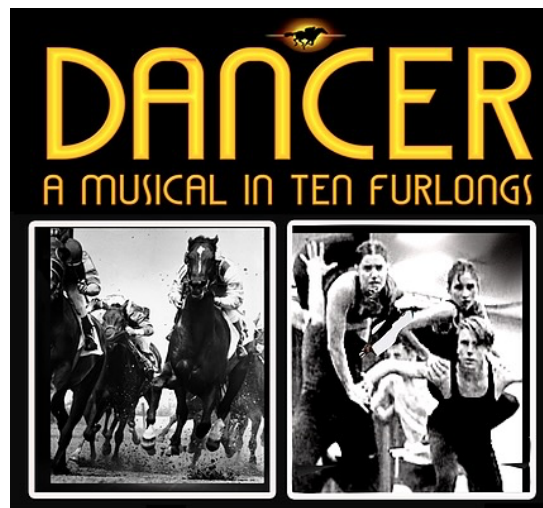
*Dancer* has the potential to be a major artistic and commercial success, and we are inviting investment in the show's future. With three workshops under its belt, this summer's production will act as a significant showcase, providing an opportunity for theatres across the country to recognize that potential, and to become partners in the show's long-term success.

The show itself is part ballet, part musical, part rock concert. It's a musical where the lead character never speaks or sings, a ballet with dialogue, and a rock concert featuring songs that icons like The Beatles and Gordon Lightfoot never got around to writing in the '60's.

The real-life humans of the story are played by actor/singers, and those characters include the legendary Canadian businessman E. P. Taylor, Winnie Taylor (who saw Dancer's potential long before her husband), Willie Shoemaker (the world's most successful jockey at the time), Horatio Luro (the flamboyant if controversial Argentinian horse trainer), and the very enthusiastic Canadian Prime Minister, Lester B. Pearson, who at one point considered putting Northern Dancer on his new Canadian flag.

The character who best speaks for Dancer, however, is his quiet, enigmatic African Canadian groom, Bill Brevard. Brevard and Dancer have a lot in common, both of them largely dismissed, ignored and discriminated against, until – together – they make history.

*Dancer (A Musical in Ten Furlongs)*. Until you see it, you can't imagine what a thrill it is. And you have the opportunity to help back a winner. As one of the songs in the show says, Oh, What a Ride!



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