



**Stratford Shakespeare Festival
MEDIA RELEASE**

Ann Swerdfager
Publicity Director
1.800.561.1233 x2297 / 519.271.4040 x2297
aswerdfager@stratfordshakespearefestival.com

40/11

Broadway beckons: *Jesus Christ Superstar* to open at the Neil Simon Theater on March 22, 2012

October 4, 2011... The Stratford Shakespeare Festival is thrilled to announce that its production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, directed by Artistic Director **Des McAnuff**, will commence a Broadway run this spring.

The New York production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* will open at the Neil Simon Theatre on Thursday, March 22, 2012, with previews beginning Thursday, March 1.

Dodger Properties and the Really Useful Group will present the Stratford Shakespeare Festival production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

“I have wanted to do *Jesus Christ Superstar* for quite a long time,” says Artistic Director **Des McAnuff**. “I’m extremely pleased to be able to stage the piece with the company of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. I am even more pleased to be able to go with them back to La Jolla Playhouse, which I still consider an important home. We will all be very excited to go from there on to New York.”

“This is a wonderful opportunity for the Festival,” says General Director **Antoni Cimolino**. “Des’s production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* has delighted audiences here all season long. Now, as it heads for Broadway by way of La Jolla, it will raise our international profile and entice new audiences to come and experience more of our work in Stratford.”

The Festival's production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* opened in Stratford on June 3 and will run through November 6. Following that, it will play La Jolla Playhouse from November 18 to December 31.

The *Toronto Star* called *Jesus Christ Superstar* "the best show you'll see this year," while *The Globe and Mail* said, "This production is an absolute miracle."

"A sparkly production literally pulsing with life," wrote the *Toronto Sun*; and *Variety* enthused, "McAnuff has managed to come up with a vision that is faithful to the original but manages to make it seem fresh to an audience in 2011."

A number of Stratford productions have gone on to New York over the years, including 2002's *King Lear*, with **Christopher Plummer** in the title role; 1998's *The Miser* and *Much Ado About Nothing*; 1996's *Barrymore*; 1994's *The Molière Comedies*; 1983's *The Mikado*; and 1956's *Tamburlaine the Great*. The 2009 production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, directed by and featuring **Brian Bedford**, inspired a Broadway run this year, as did the 1994 production of *Timon of Athens*, directed by **Michael Langham** with Mr. Bedford in the title role.

The Stratford Shakespeare Festival's 2011 season continues until November 6, featuring *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Camelot*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Misanthrope*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *The Homecoming*.

-30-

Photography: www.stratfordfestival.ca/imagegallery

***Jesus Christ Superstar* production photos:**

<http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/imagegallery/imagegallery.aspx?id=5477>