

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **SHIP OF FIRE CASTING ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Prince Edward County, ON, (April 23, 2009):** Audiences are in for a great treat with the return of County favourites Natasha Pasternak and Michael O'Hara. Some audience members may have seen them in the workshop stage of this show last year at the Black River Chapel as part of the Kerosene Lamp Concert Series. They will be reprising their roles in this professionally staged World Premiere of *Ship of Fire*. Natasha and Michael are seasoned Festival Players veterans who have been part of the musical since its inception and through several draft versions. In fact, the roles of Patience and Canaan were written expressly for them.

The play is a collaboration between singer/songwriter Suzanne Pasternak, writer/director Marion de Vries, composer and music director Tom Leighton and writer Bernie Gaw. This artistic team, who've worked together on shows in the past, is bringing to life a moment in Prince Edward County's marine history for audiences to enjoy.

"It's a little bit 'Titanic', a little bit 'Heritage Minute', and full of great music. We are tickled to have Natasha and Michael joining us for a third season. It will be exciting to see them in *Ship of Fire* in its full glory, fully staged." says Festival Players Artistic Director Sarah Phillips. "Lots has happened since the presentation in December – new story bits, new songs, some new structural elements. It's always so exciting to see how these things evolve."

Director Marion de Vries has assembled an accomplished supporting cast, each of whom has been nominated for a Dora award. Martin Julien, featured on such Canadian mainstays as *Due South* and *Street Legal*, will play Mr. Oliver. Eliza-Jane Scott, seen recently in Toronto productions of *The Producers* and *The Full Monty*, will play the role of Katie. Stephen Sparks, who has played stages across Canada and has been seen locally at Stirling Festival Theatre, is cast as Captain Wright.

Also returning for a third season is Lighting and Set Designer, Glenn Davidson, well known in the theatre community for his inventive and engaging environments. Another Festival veteran, Jennifer Triemstra, will be designing the period costumes for *Ship of Fire*.

The 2009 Season continues with *Schoolhouse* by Leanna Brodie and *Colours in the Storm* by Jim Betts. Casting announcements for these productions will be forthcoming.

High resolution photos of cast members available.

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