



HOME ABOUT RADIO STUFF SLOTKIN LETTER CONTACT LINKS ARCHIVE

## More Fringe Reviews: Almost Ever After, Silence, Thunderor

by LYNN on JULY 8, 2025  
in THE PASSIONATE PLAYGOER

### *Thunderor*

At the Deanne Taylor Theatre, VideoCabaret, 10 Busy St. Toronto, Ont.

Playing: July 11, 12, 2025.

[www.fringetoronto.com](http://www.fringetoronto.com)

These hard rocking, hard living best-friend-rockers roar off to Atlantic City for a concert adventure because their 'leader' Bowen, (JJ Tartaglia) a hard-rocking drummer suggested it. They meet the swaggering and confident Silverman (Tristan Hernandez strong-voiced giving a dandy performance) who prevents them from passing on. After much staring-down, they all go off together with Kenzie, the wonderful Georgia Grant, giving Silverman the same attitude. Sparks fly. She gets on the back of his motorcycle, first gripping his jacket to stay on, then slowly her arms hug around him. There is trouble. There is some kind of revolution. The friends must escape but one of them, Sheenah, can't be found. Kenzie won't leave without her.

The troupe begins the show with a set of full-throated rock. Four stand microphones are around the room with each singer looking into the space. Bowen's huge, impressive drum kit is at one end of the room. It's clear who is in charge here. Bowen. But Bowen knows a secret and doesn't keep his friends in the loop. Truths are revealed. Friendships are cemented. Love flourishes. While the ideas of loyalty, friendship and budding love between rival bikers is intriguing, I think the script needs fleshing out: what revolution; why; who; context.

Director Liam Eric Dawson negotiates the cast around the space efficiently so that the audience is included in every scene. Occasionally one is looking at a back of a singer, but the cast does move around so one's view is not always blocked. I loved that subtle maneuver of Kenzie first holding on to Silverman's jacket and then slowly putting her arms around his waist. If this is an idea of Liam Eric Dawson or Georgia Grant as Kenzie, bravo for such a subtle, telling bit of business. The singing is strong. Except for a few lyrics like "Fire It Up," "How We Roll," I have no idea what the lyrics are because I could not "hear" them.

I can appreciate that *Thunderor* is "An epic full-scale Rock Opera musical hearkening back to the glory days of arena rock." Truly I can. I can imagine all those huge arenas of 50,000 seats, the volume ramped up to fill the space and tingle the ears of the rock lover at the farthest reaches of the arena. Uh, ahem, but, uh, well, the Deanne Taylor Theatre is small, seating about 100 if you pack them in. I believe this small space used to be a smallish garage. You see where I'm going with this.... Doing an 'epic full-scale Rock Opera Musical hearkening back to the glory days of arena rock' is great for an **ARENA** but not so good for all that sound bombarding the folks in a small theatre-that-used-to-be-a-small-garage.

The cast and all the musicians are dandy. They are committed, compelling, and fully invested in the work. And it was fascinating and even exhausting watching JJ Tartaglia effortlessly, creatively coax every riff out of his drum-kit and then some.

SEARCH

To search, type and hit enter

NEWSLETTER

## *Thunderor*

The premise: .We're in a "tumultuous alternate universe" in the year 1992. "Has-been musician/biker" Bowen (JJ Tartaglia) gathers together a band of merry men and women – including friends Kenzie (an absolutely ass-kicking Georgia Grant) and Sheenah (Jamie Elliott), a rival bike gang leader (Tristan Hernandez), and for some unexplained reason, a local friar (Stephen Flett) – for a journey through danger to Atlantic City, on the eve of a mysterious and dangerous revolution.

The experience: *Thunderor* is rock opera performed in the round at VideoCabaret's Deanne Taylor Theatre. The show is loud, large, unapologetically silly fun whose true star is the driving music of band Thunderor. Tartaglia is the band's lead singer and drummer, and during the show, he and bandmates Jonny Nesta, Anthony Pannozzo, Oscar Rangel – with vocal support from the actors – perform several original earworm bangers like "How We Roll", "Get 'Em Counted" and "Dangerous Times". The music is a crowd-pleasing confection of 80s metal bands like Judas Priest, Ozzy and "Runaway" era early Bon Jovi – and the audience of all ages was digging it. The story threads and postapocalyptic vibe hang on the loom of songs like Meatloaf's iconic "Bat out of Hell" and stylized films like *Streets of Fire* or *Mad Max* ... if they were made on a shoestring budget and needed to enlist audience imagination to turn handlebars and a drumkit into motorcycles, and an empty stage into the post apocalyptic landscape. (In fact, given the mysterious friar, no-frills futuristic cartoon *Rocket Robin Hood* is another show progenitor). Tartaglia plays much of his role from behind the kit, singing and speaking lines of dialogue into the mike – it's incongruous, so when he emerges late in the show to interact physically with the other cast members, it's a surprise. But just go with it! Director Liam Eric Dawson has squeezed the absolute maximum out of his materials: placing the band members smartly around the set, showcasing the band's great songs (though the sound mix won't allow you to make out most of the lyrics), maximizing movement, and unleashing the performers to make the absolute most of their roles.



Image courtesy of Thunderor

Why see it: Not for the plot, which barely hangs together and arrives at a strange (non-) end point. Not for the uneven acting performances, wooden dialogue or thin script – which exists mostly to string together the songs. No, come because this band can *rock*, and the cast is 110 percent committed to the gig. *Thunderor* is infectious, hard-rocking comic book fun that blows the roof off the place – just make sure you leave your pretensions at the door. I smiled my way through the whole show – I bet you will, too. – SS

Tickets are available on [fringetoronto.com](http://fringetoronto.com).

© Sesaya Arts Magazine 2025



THEATRE

## Fringe Review: Thunderor

BY [ROBYN GRANT-MORAN](#)

JULY 4, 2025

Like a vintage hard rock music video, Thunderor's narrative doesn't have to make perfect sense for you to rock out

Venue: Videocabaret – Deanne Taylor Theatre, 10 Busy St.

Showtimes: July 3, 5, 7, 11, 12 (various times, [see Fringe site](#) for more info)

It's the early nineties, and Kenzie (Georgia Grant) wants to rock unencumbered by constraints like curfews. Kenzie's dream is the setup for a rock opera paying homage to hard rock and the epic, convoluted storytelling of its music videos in the '80s and '90s.

With her bestie, Sheenah (Jamie Elliott), they sneak out and go on a voyage to Atlantic City with bad boy and love interest Silverman (Tristan Hernandez), scheming drummer Bowen (JJ Tartaglia), and a random man in monastic robes named Brother Nuckett (Stephen Flett).

The plot is delightfully silly, filled with charming rock cliches like babes in leather and lace, motorcycles, revolution, and a bit of the occult. It could use a bit more dramaturgy, and the plot left me with more questions than answers.

Tartaglia's soundtrack, however, filled with catchy anthems, flawlessly performed by powerhouse musicians including Jonny Nesta, Anthony Panno, and Oscar Rangel, made up for a lot.

*Thunderor* is raucous fun with shredding guitars and driving drums, so bring earplugs!

tagged: [Fringe](#), [Fringe Festival](#), [JJ Tartaglia](#), [rock opera](#), [Thunderor](#), [Toronto](#)

LATEST ISSUE



VOL. 3, ISSUE 4,  
SUMMER 2025

ADVERTISEMENT

**Literary Review of Canada**  
A JOURNAL OF IDEAS

LIMITED-TIME OFFER

## Spring Sale

Get a year of unlimited access plus 10 print issues—ALL FOR JUST \$48!

**SUBSCRIBE TODAY**

& SAVE \$10!





## STAFF PICKS

BraveWords.com  
Listen On Spotify  
Save on Spotify

Preview

1	Loose Screwz E Infamous Stiffs	03:20
2	Hot Under The Collar The Lazys	03:37
3	Divided by Zero E Forbidden	05:06

## VISIT BRAVEWORDS RECORDS



## TOP POSTS

Today In Metal History 🙌 July 6th, 2025 🙌 BW&BK, DEF LEPPARD, QUIET RIOT, SAXON, HEART, RATT, GREAT WHITE

JULY 6, 2025

DIRKSCHNEIDER & THE OLD GANG Featuring Former ACCEPT Members Release Official Video For New Single "Strangers In Paradise"

JULY 6, 2025

TIME TO ROCK FESTIVAL 2025 – Warm-Up: BULLET & HEAVY PETTIN'

JULY 5, 2025

Back To The Beginning – Pro-Shot Video Of OZZY OSBOURNE And BLACK SABBATH Sets Streaming

## THUNDEROR To Debut Rock Opera Musical At Toronto Fringe Festival

0

BY EDITORIAL TEAM ON MAY 21, 2025

HARD ROCK, HEAVY METAL, NEWS

From 2x JUNO-nominated musician/writer JJ Tartaglia comes "Thunderor", an epic rock opera musical (in the vein of Bat Out Of Hell, Rock Of Ages) but with a fresh soundtrack of original anthems. Featuring the actual live band and a star-studded cast, Thunderor tells a tale of adventure and romance in the face of mortality, hearkening back to the glory days of arena rock, wild and restless, as a young group of would-be rockers head out on an impromptu adventure in a time of danger and hope.

HARE The Round' for an intimate and exclusive experience.

"I guess I'm giving my heavy metal dreams a makeover," says JJ Tartaglia. "It's been a crazy undertaking, but I'm absolutely stoked about the show we've created. I'm truly blessed to have such an amazing cast and team. Expect an unconventional take on musical theatre! In my mind, it combines the best of both worlds, and I hope that it'll be enjoyed by all."

The musical score will debut unreleased material from Thunderor's upcoming concept album Bleed For It to be released this fall. Besides the live band of JJ Tartaglia (vocals/drums), Jonny Nesta (guitar) and Anthony Pannozzo (keys), the production is directed by Liam Eric Dawson (director shadow Come From Away), assistant directed by metal concert photographer Rae Chatten, choreographed by Kristen Pepper (Kinky Boots, Cabaret), and features a veteran cast comprising of Georgia Grant (A Streetcar Named Desire), Jamie Elliott (Shrek The Musical), Tristan Hernandez (Rock Of Ages, Peter Pan), and Stephen Flett (Miracle On 34th Street, Hamlet).

NEWS

INTERVIEWS

REVIEWS

METAL HISTORY

MEDIA

BRAVEWORDS RECORDS

METALSHOP

ROCK GAMES

CONTACT US



## THUNDEROR Debut Self-Titled Rock Opera Musical At TORONTO FRINGE FESTIVAL (July 3-12)

🕒 June 1, 2025 👤 EvlG 📁 Heavy Metal

ADVERTISE HERE  
720 X 90 - ASK FOR PRICING



Spread the metal:



From 2x JUNO-nominated musician/writer JJ Tartaglia comes 'THUNDEROR', an epic rock opera musical (in the vein of *Bat Out Of Hell*, *Rock Of Ages*) but with a fresh soundtrack of original anthems. Featuring the actual live band and a star-studded cast, *THUNDEROR* tells a tale of adventure and romance in the face of mortality, hearkening back to the glory days of arena rock, wild and restless, as a young group of would-be rockers head out on an impromptu adventure in a time of danger and hope.

Presented as part of the **2025 Toronto Fringe Festival**, the 75-minute show will see a run of 5 dates at VideoCabaret's Deanne Taylor Theatre in Toronto, performed in the unconventional format of 'In The Round' for an intimate and exclusive experience.

*"I guess I'm giving my heavy metal dreams a makeover,"* says JJ Tartaglia. *"It's been a crazy undertaking, but I'm absolutely stoked about the show we've created. I'm truly blessed to have such an amazing cast and team. Expect an unconventional take on musical theatre! In my mind, it combines the best of both worlds, and I hope that it'll be enjoyed by all."*

The musical score will debut unreleased material from **Thunderor's** upcoming concept album *'Bleed For It'* to be released this fall. Besides the live band of JJ Tartaglia (vocals/drums), Jonny Nesta (guitar) and Anthony Pannozzo (keys), the production is directed by Liam Eric Dawson (director shadow *Come From Away*), assistant directed by metal concert photographer Rae Chatten, choreographed by Kristen Pepper (*Kinky Boots*, *Cabaret*), and features a veteran cast comprising of Georgia Grant (*A Streetcar Named Desire*), Jamie Elliott (*Shrek The Musical*), Tristan Hernandez (*Rock Of Ages*, *Peter Pan*), and Stephen Flett (*Miracle On 34th Street*, *Hamlet*).

**Boonsdale Records** presents: **THUNDEROR**

5 shows as part of the **2025 Toronto Fringe Festival**

Thu 3rd July - 9:45 pm  
Sat 5th July - 7:45 pm  
Mon 7th July - 4:00 pm  
Fri 11th July - 4:00 pm  
Sat 12th July - 5:45 pm



### DONATE

It costs us money to keep **Metal-Rules.com** up and running. If you appreciate us and our ongoing commitment to heavy metal, please consider helping with a donation to help pay for server, hosting and development bills.

Donate

### FEATURED VIDEO



### ARCHIVES

Select Month ▾

## Thunderor Debut Their Self-Titled Rock Opera Musical At TORONTO FRINGE FESTIVAL

Published on Sunday, 25 May, 2025 - 06:29



From 2x JUNO-nominated musician/writer JJ Tartaglia comes *THUNDEROR*, an epic rock opera musical (in the vein of *Bat Out Of Hell*, *Rock Of Ages*) but with a fresh soundtrack of original anthems. Featuring the actual live band and a star-studded cast, *THUNDEROR* tells a tale of adventure and romance in the face of mortality, hearkening back to the glory days of arena rock, wild and restless, as a young group of would-be rockers head out on an impromptu adventure in a time of danger and hope.

Presented as part of the 2025 Toronto Fringe Festival, the 75-minute show will see a run of 5 dates at VideoCabaret's Deanne Taylor Theatre in Toronto, performed in the unconventional format of 'In The Round' for an intimate and exclusive experience.

"I guess I'm giving my heavy metal dreams a makeover," says JJ Tartaglia. "It's been a crazy undertaking, but I'm absolutely stoked about the show we've created. I'm truly blessed to have such an amazing cast and team. Expect an unconventional take on musical theatre! In my mind, it combines the best of both worlds, and I hope that it'll be enjoyed by all."

The musical score will debut unreleased material from Thunderor's upcoming concept album *'Bleed For It'* to be released this fall. Besides the live band of JJ Tartaglia (vocals/drums), Jonny Nesta (guitar) and Anthony Panno (keys), the production is directed by Liam Eric Dawson (director shadow *Come From Away*), assistant directed by metal concert photographer Rae Chatten, choreographed by Kristen Pepper (*Kinky Boots*, *Cabaret*), and features a veteran cast comprising of Georgia Grant (*A Streetcar Named Desire*), Jamie Elliott (*Shrek The Musical*), Tristan Hernandez (*Rock Of Ages*, *Peter Pan*), and Stephen Flett (*Miracle On 34th Street*, *Hamlet*).

Boonsdale Records presents: THUNDEROR

5 shows as part of the 2025 Toronto Fringe Festival

Thu 3rd July - 9:45 pm

Sat 5th July - 7:45 pm

Mon 7th July - 4:00 pm

Fri 11th July - 4:00 pm

Sat 12th July - 5:45 pm

- Music Video - Get 'Em Counted starring pro wrestling champ Clash Kincade - <https://youtu.be/AYYeShnY4xz0>
- Music Video - How We Roll - [https://youtu.be/\\_U-EiWkLNq0](https://youtu.be/_U-EiWkLNq0)
- Music Video - Fire It Up - [https://youtu.be/6t\\_KqTq700E](https://youtu.be/6t_KqTq700E)

### More about

- ★ Thunderor