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Pop-Rock Idol, Rick Springfield, Brings Stripped Down Tour to The Colonial Theatre

Pittsfield, MA – Pop-Rock Idol, Rick Springfield brings his Stripped Down Tour to The Colonial Theatre on March 26 at 7:30pm. Rick Springfield fans will get to witness the pop-rock idol as they've never seen him before in his first-ever solo acoustic tour! In addition to playing unplugged versions of many of his memorable tunes, Springfield will share stories about the songs and his life during the performances and do a Q&A session with fans after the performance.

Tickets to *Rick Springfield: Stripped Down* on Wednesday, March 26 at 7:30pm are on sale now for \$37.50-\$75. Contact the Colonial Ticket Office at 111 South Street, Pittsfield by calling 413-997-4444. Tickets can also be bought online at www.berkshiretheatregroup.org. The Ticket Office is open Monday-Friday 10am-5pm, Saturdays 10am-2pm or on any performance day from 10am until curtain.

Springfield is known for one of his most famed hits, the Grammy Award-winning #1 single "Jessie's Girl," a landmark of '80s pop-rock that helped establish the emerging music video age. His 1983 album went platinum on the strength of hits "Human Touch," "Souls," and "Affair of the Heart." That same year Springfield won the American Music Award for "Favorite Pop/Rock Male Artist." Springfield is also known for his role as Dr. Noah Drake on the daytime drama *General Hospital*.

For all of his accomplishments as an actor, best-selling author and documentary subject, Rick Springfield has always insisted his first love is music, a passion he's harbored since first picking up the guitar at the age of 12 in his native Australia.

"That's why I put a lot of thought and energy into making records," Springfield says. "I'd like to continue changing people's minds about me. And I have to write about what I know about, and what's important to me. I'm still hungry."

Collaborating on the songs with his bass player Matt Bissonette, Springfield sets his sights on the possibilities of escaping the current, apocalyptic world situation in our closest relationships, employing the kind of self-effacement and ability to poke fun at himself as he demonstrated when putting his dog Lethal Ron on the cover of *Working Class Dog* or spoofing his image by playing a sleazy, drug-and-sex-crazed version of himself on Showtime's dark comedy *Californication*.

On songs like the vintage three-chord rock of "I Hate Myself" and the anthemic "Our Ship's Sinking" (with backup vocals by John Waite and Mr. Mister's Richard Page), Springfield finds the parallels in society's discontent and the heartache of domestic strife. As demonstrated in "Wide Awake," he declares: "I am free to be a kid again," and in "Joshua" he tries to provide guidance to his college graduate son nervous about the future, while "A Sign of Life" and "Gabriel" look heavenward for inspiration; the former searching for either God, space invaders or a soulmate, the latter, a guardian angel's direction. Springfield's wicked sense of humor

rears its head in the tongue-in-cheek “Love Screws Me Up,” with his original ’80s touring band guitarist Tim Pierce contributing a searing solo opposite Springfield’s slide part.

“There’s real feeling it, but you can’t write about that stuff too seriously,” he explains about the album’s mix of moods. “It’s about the world being in flames, but from a very personal viewpoint. I take what’s happening to me and place it in a universal perspective...which is what I’ve always tried to do with my songwriting.”

Indeed, before emigrating to the U.S. in the early ’70s, Springfield was an established musical performer in his native Australia. He only took up acting—leading to the role of Dr. Noah Drake on TV’s *General Hospital*—as a way of making money to support his musical career. His early albums, like 1981’s *Working Class Dog* and the following year’s *Success Hasn’t Spoiled Me Yet*, placed him firmly in that era’s jangly pop, New Wave tradition, leading to comparisons with singer-songwriters like Elvis Costello and near-namesake Bruce Springsteen— influences that can be heard on the new album’s punk-rock “Depravity” and the working-class angst of “One Way Street.”

“My template for *Working Class Dog* was ‘My Aim is True’ meets ‘Ziggy Stardust,’” explains Springfield.

Still playing nearly 100 live shows a year, Springfield’s current musical career renaissance can be traced back to 2004’s *Shock/Denial/Anger/Acceptance* and 2008’s *Venus in Overdrive*, which entered the Billboard sales charts at No. 28, his highest debut in 20 years, with Sony Legacy’s 2005 retrospective *Written in Rock: The Rick Springfield Anthology* sandwiched in between. *An Affair of the Heart*, a documentary which captured the close ties between Springfield and his fans, came out earlier this year, winning special jury awards at both the Nashville and Florida Film Festivals. He also recently wrote and recorded a new song with Dave Grohl (Foo Fighters / Nirvana) along with being a featured guest in Grohl’s new documentary about “Sound City,” the fabled San Fernando Valley recording studio.

In addition, Springfield’s 2010 autobiography, *Late, Late at Night: A Memoir*, for Simon & Schuster’s Touchstone imprint, entered *The New York Times* best-seller list at No. 13, hitting the *Los Angeles Times* and *Publishers Weekly* lists as well, with *Rolling Stone* recently naming it one of the top-25 rock autobiographies of all time. In the book, Springfield revealed the lifelong depression he’s battled throughout his career, a theme he returns to in such songs as “I Hate Myself” and “Love Screws Me Up.”

“I’m not the shiny, happy guy people think I am from my role in *General Hospital*,” insists Springfield. “I have a way of beating myself up over things I’ve done. I tend to put that angst into my music. In fact, if I’d gotten laid, ‘Jessie’s Girl’ would never have been written. But I can’t just write about that. There are plenty of 18-year-olds who can do that a lot better than I can.”

With *Songs for the End of the World*, Rick Springfield continues to do what he does best—applying his sardonic view to life as we live it today, offering a ray of hope in the midst of all the turmoil.

“The darker side of my nature creeps in and out, but so does a degree of optimism,” he says. “In the end, I believe that solace and healing can be found in the presence of someone who understands, loves and accepts you for who you are, even while these looming threats remain.”

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About Berkshire Theatre Group

The Colonial Theatre, founded in 1903, and Berkshire Theatre Festival, founded in 1928, are two of the oldest cultural organizations in the Berkshires. Having united in November of 2010 under the leadership of Artistic Director and CEO Kate Maguire, these two institutions are providing the Berkshires and beyond with the finest in live theatre, music, dance and the visual arts on five stages in Stockbridge, MA and Pittsfield, MA. The Fitzpatrick Main Stage (400 seats), cataloged by the National Register of Historic Places, was originally designed and built by Stanford White as the Stockbridge Casino in 1888. The intimate Unicorn Theatre (122 seats) is a home for emerging artists and new theatrical ideas. The Colonial in Pittsfield (780 seats) re-opened in August of 2006, following a \$21 million restoration, and boasts pristine acoustics, classic gilded age architecture and state-of-the-art technical systems. BTG also performs at the outdoor Neil Ellenoff stage,

located on the grounds of BTF in Stockbridge, and at The Garage, a music venue located in the lobby of The Colonial. BTG serves over 100,000 patrons per year and reaches over 17,000 students through its educational and outreach programs. For more information on BTG call (413) 448-8084. To purchase tickets, call (413) 997-4444 or go online to www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org.