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BERKSHIRE
THEATRE GROUP

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**Berkshire Theatre Group Presents *A Week Long Festival of Opera in Workshop* at the Unicorn Theatre:
A Lover's Tale, A Staged Presentation of *La Traviata*, and *The Paris Salon: Age of Romantic Virtuoso***

Stockbridge, MA – Berkshire Theatre Group presents, for the first time in Berkshire Theatre Group history, *A Week Long Festival of Opera in Workshop* at the Unicorn Theatre. Performances begin August 23 and run through August 31.

Tickets to all performances featuring: *A Lover's Tale*, A Staged Presentation of *La Traviata*, and *The Paris Salon: Age of Romantic Virtuoso* are \$30. Tickets may be purchased in person at the Colonial Ticket Office at 111 South Street, Pittsfield; at the Fitzpatrick Main Stage Ticket Office at 83 East Main Street, Stockbridge; by calling (413) 997-4444 or online at www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org. All plays, schedules, casting and prices are subject to change.

For one week at The Unicorn Theatre, opera's rising stars are featured in a staged presentation of *La Traviata*; *A Lover's Tale*; and songs from the *Romantics in The Paris Salon*.

"This year, for the first time, we're bringing a little opera back to the Berkshires," Artistic Director/CEO Kate Maguire explains. "We have a week long workshop featuring *A Lover's Tale*, an extraordinary compilation of Dumas' original story about the Lady of the Camellias, Charles's Ludlam's *Camille*, and *La Traviata* all rolled into one. Also that week, we will present a staged performance of *La Traviata* and a wonderful compilation of songs from the Romantics featuring the lovely soprano Megan Weston."

Experience one of opera's most mesmerizing and timeless tale of love's second chances with Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata*. Set in 18th century Paris, famed courtesan Violetta Valéry celebrates her renewed health with an extravagant party where she meets a young man of notoriety, Alfredo, who quickly becomes the center of her affection. However, Alfredo's father insists the two young lovers break all ties least Violetta's rather licentious past taints the honored family name. Now, presented with the question of pursuing true love or family nobility, the two embark upon the profoundly moving and emotional tale of Verdi's *La Traviata*.

A Lover's Tale is a wild evening of scenes from Alexandre Dumas' novel *The Lady of the Camellias*, Giuseppe Verdi's opera *La Traviata*, which was adapted by Dumas' novel, and Charles Ludlam's (playwright of this summer's comedy hit *The Mystery of Irma Vep*) parody of the novel, *Camille*. It will be an evening of spoof, laughter, and theatre.

The Paris Salon: Age of the Romantic Virtuoso is a step back into a 19th century Paris salon concert. Accompanied on piano, Megan Weston will sing Verdi and Liszt songs, and virtuosic Bel Canto and lyric Romantic arias. The evening also includes stories about Liszt, Chopin, Dumas, and Paris, France.

A Week Long Festival of Opera in Workshop

at The Unicorn Theatre, Stockbridge

The Larry Vaber Stage

Sponsored by Crowne Plaza, Pittsfield; Furlano & Arace PC; and Haddad Dealerships

August 23 thru August 31

Tickets: \$30

Performance Dates

A Lover's Tale: A wild evening with scenes from

The Lady of the Camellias by Alexandre Dumas

Camille by Charles Ludlam

La Traviata by Giuseppe Verdi

directed by Dustin Wills

Saturday, August 23 at 8pm

Sunday, August 24 at 2pm

Tuesday, August 26 at 8pm

Wednesday, August 27 at 7pm

Thursday, August 28 at 8pm

A Staged Presentation of *La Traviata*

Friday, August 29 at 8pm

Sunday, August 31 at 2pm

The Paris Salon: Age of the Romantic Virtuoso

Saturday, August 30 at 8pm

Songs from the Romantics Featuring Megan Weston and Guests

Artistic Bios:

A Lover's Tale

Dustin Wills (Director) is the 2013 recipient of the Princess Grace Foundation Lynn Wyatt Theatre Award and recent graduate of Yale School of Drama's Directing program. There he directed *Thunderbodies* by Kate Tarker as part of the 2014 Carlotta Festival of New Plays, *The Maids*, an adaptation of *Peter Pan*, *King Richard II*, *Blueberry Toast* by Mary Laws, and *reWilding* by Martyna Majok. He served as Artistic Director for the 2013 Yale Summer Cabaret, where he directed *Tartuffe*, *The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife*, and *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You*. After graduating from the University of Texas in 2006, Dustin split his time between Austin, Texas, and Rome, Italy, directing for the English Theatre of Rome, Salvage Vanguard Theater, Texas Performing Arts, and Tutto Theatre Company. While in Rome, he worked as a tour guide for the Vatican Museums. In Austin, he founded the company Paper Chairs for which he directed the original musicals *Murder Ballad*, *Murder Mystery* and *Hillcountry Underbelly*. This October, he will stage his original adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Fatal Eggs* in New York City at the American Theatre of Actors. www.dustinwills.com

Daniel Schlosberg (Musical Director) Works by composer and pianist Daniel Schlosberg have been played by the Dover Quartet, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Yale Philharmonia, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Yale Baroque Ensemble, Lorelei Ensemble, and David Shifrin. Daniel was awarded a 2014 Charles Ives Scholarship by the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a 2014 Morton Gould Young Composer Award from ASCAP. Recent theatrical work includes his chamber opera *Frau Trude*, arrangement/music direction of Weill's *The Seven Deadly Sins* (Heartbeat Opera), re-orchestration/conducting of Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park With George* (Yale School of Drama), and performance of a staged version of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* (Yale Cabaret). Daniel has appeared at Chamber Music Northwest and the Phoenix Winter Chamber Music Festival, where he has performed with such artists as Fred Sherry, Ani Kavafian, Alan Vogel, and Tara Helen O'Connor. Daniel received his MM and MMA degrees from the Yale School of Music, studying with Martin Bresnick, David Lang, Aaron Kernis, and Chris Theofanidis.

Monique Barbee (Prudence/Annina) She's originally from Southern Oregon and recent graduate of the Yale School of Drama, '13. Credits include understudying at The Metropolitan Opera, Dot & Marie in Sunday in the Park with George (Yale School of Drama), The Music Man and Servant of Two Masters (Oregon Shakespeare Festival). Barbee made her BTG debut this season in *A Little Night Music* as Petra.

Jamilyn Manning-White (Violetta) 2013-14 season includes Euridice in Charpentier's *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers* with Gotham Chamber Opera (NYC); soloist in "Incidental Music from A Midsummer Night's Dream" with Hartford Symphony Orchestra; *My Fair Lady* in concert with Yale "Musical Theatre on the Air" series; Opera Singer in *The Architecture of Becoming* with The Women's Project at NYC Center Stage; and title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Heartbeat Opera (NYC). In summer of 2014 she sings Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* and Mlle. Goldentrill in *The Impresario* with the Wendy Taucher Dance Opera Theatre (Martha's Vineyard). In 2012-13, she was featured soloist in an evening of opera arias and duets with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, sang Flavia Gemmira in Cavalli's *Eliogabalo* with Gotham Chamber Opera, and *Messiah* with the New Haven Symphony. In 2014-15 she sings "Incidental Music from A Midsummer Night's Dream" with Waterbury Symphony Orchestra. Manning-White made her BTG debut this season in *A Little Night Music* as Mrs. Nordstrom.

Zenzi Williams (Saint Gaudens) is making her Berkshire Theater Group debut. She is currently a third-year MFA Candidate at the Yale School of Drama, where she has been seen in *Measure for Measure*, *Platonov* and *Wintertime*. She was also in the cast of *All of what you love and none of what you hate* (Yale Cabaret). She has studied at the British American Dramatic Academy and holds a BA in Theater from Temple University.

La Traviata

JJ Hudson (Director) is pleased to be making his debut with the Berkshire Theatre Group. In 2014, JJ directed *Turn of the Screw* for Stony Brook University and *Little Women* for Opera Breve in Texas. Upcoming engagements include *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Columbus State University in Georgia. In 2013, JJ served on the directing staff of the Aspen Opera Theater. In December 2012, JJ directed Schubert's *Winterreise* in the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens for the Make Music New York Winter Festival. Recent directing credits include work with Rochester Lyric Opera, Oswego Opera Theater, Mercury Opera Rochester, Eastman Opera Theater, Opera North, Syracuse Opera Tacoma Opera, Mercury Opera Rochester, Empire State Lyric Theater, Buffalo Opera Unlimited, Concord University, and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Hudson holds a Master's degree in Stage Direction from the Eastman School of Music.

Michael Fennelly (Music Director) Praised as a pianist with "flair and energy" (The New York Times), Michael Fennelly's recordings include *The Legend of Faust: Part One* and *Debut*. He is currently recording *Encore* featuring *Rhapsody in Blue* in New York City. This season, Michael Fennelly performs at the Kosciuszko Foundation, Avery Fischer Hall, and Carnegie's Zankel Hall in New York City, and offers recitals in Florida, New Jersey, Philadelphia, California, and Venice, Italy. Michael Fennelly has the distinction of being named a Bösendorfer Artist, and recently represented the US on a tour of Japan for the State Department. He has performed in many of the world's great concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Munich's Prinzregenten Theatre, Berlin's Komische Oper, and Brazil's Manaus Opera House, deep in the Amazonian rain forest. His recitals have been broadcast on WQXR (New York City) and NDR Radio (Germany). On film, he appeared as the young Harry Truman (who initially trained to become a concert pianist) for PBS' *American Experience*.

Cody Austin (Alfredo Germont) American tenor Cody Austin is quickly becoming one of the most promising singing actors of his age. His voice has been described as "a warm, rich quality... produced with an evenness that's rare." His professional debut was with the Opera Company of Philadelphia as Roderigo in *Otello*, where he returned the following season to perform Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut*. Recent engagements include Lyric Opera of Virginia as Gounod's Romeo and as Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Don Jose in *Le Tragedy de Carmen* for Shreveport Opera, and his debut as Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* with Des Moines Metro Opera. Mr. Austin was featured as tenor soloist with Peter Nero and the Philly Pops in a program entitled 'The Great American Tenor' in 2010. He began 2014 as Alfredo in *La Traviata* with Utah Opera, followed by Belmonte in *Abduction from the Seraglio* with Opera Grand Rapids. This fall, he will make his debut as the Duke in *Rigoletto* with Opera Santa Barbara. Mr. Austin is a graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia.

Lawrence Craig (Giorgio Germont) Internationally acclaimed baritone, Lawrence Craig, is known for his "Fine baritone" (New York Times) and "virtuosic talent" (Zürich Tages-Anzeiger) in opera, concert and recital. A student of the late internationally acclaimed bass-baritone, William Warfield, Mr. Craig is a graduate of the Florida Grand Opera and Chautauqua Opera *Young Artist Programs*. As winner of the Monastero Bel Canto International Opera Competition, he studied and performed in Italy under the tutelage and direction of Maestro Walter Baracchi, former principal coach and conductor at Teatro alla Scala di Milano. Mr. Craig has appeared in a number of roles, but most notably as Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Ford in *Falstaff*, Dapertutto in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, and Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*. Companies with whom he has appeared include the Albanian National Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Opera Colorado, Florentine Opera, Fresno Grand Opera, Latvian National Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Munich Biennale Opera Festival, New York City Opera, Opera Festival of New Jersey, Opera Roanoke, Opera Tampa, Opéra de Toulon, Savonlinna International Opera Festival, Virginia Opera, and the Spoleto Opera Festival USA.

Manon Evrard (Violetta Valery) French soprano Manon Strauss Evrard is one of the most promising young artists today. Her professional operatic debut was as Violetta at the Prague State Opera in their 2006 new production of *La Traviata*. Miss Strauss Evrard made her Asian debut as Juliette in Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* with the Hong Kong Opera in 2007. In the 2010-2011 season she debuted the role of Rossini's *Semiramide* with De Vlaamse Oper and she made her Rossini Opera Festival debut as Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* and the role of Teti in *Le nozze di Teti et di Peleo*. A native of Nancy, Miss Strauss Evrard was the Fourth Prize recipient from the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation in 2010 and First Prize recipient in 2008, First Place Regional Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions of 2009, First Prize Grant recipient of the Gerda Lissner Competition of 2008, and the Great Promise Award recipient for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition in 2006. In addition, she was the Second Place winner of the Giargiari Bel Canto Competition in 2005, a First Prize winner of the Competizione Internazionale di Canto Lirico di Rocca della Macie (Italy) in 2004, a recipient of the Opera Norske Oslo Award from the International Belvedere Competition 2005, the Encouragement Award from the Marian Anderson Competition in 2004, an Opera Index Grant Award winner, the French awards of the Gold Medal at the Conservatoire National de Region de Nancy and the Adami's Prize of the Golden Voice Competition in 2002.

The Paris Salon

Megan Weston (Annina in *La Traviata* / *The Paris Salon* Soprano) Soprano Megan Weston is recognized as "an interpreter of great quality" (Sud-ouest, France) and as an artist of "remarkable virtuosity and charm" (Financial Times). She excels in the standard repertoire of Mozart, Donizetti and Verdi, and is equally successful in the modern works of Barber, Hindemith, and Britten. Megan Weston's performances this season include Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* with Opera de Tijuana / Opera en la Calle Festival, Mexico, concerts with the Cape Cod Symphony conducted by Jung-Ho Pak, and the multimedia event *November 21, 1963: The Day Before* at Symphony Space, NYC with performers Olympia Dukakis and BD Wong featuring premieres by Nico Muhly, Craig Lucas, Arthur Kopit and other artists from the prestigious Hermitage Artist Retreat in Florida. She sings the Vivaldi *Gloria* conducted by Jason Tramm with the Hudson Valley Chorale, *Opera's Greatest Moments* at the California Center for the Performing Arts in Escondido, and her first Nedda in *I Pagliacci* with Madison Lyric Stage, CT.

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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.