

UNICORN · COLONIAL · FITZPATRICK

BERKSHIRE

THEATRE GROUP

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For Immediate Release, Please: June 2021

Berkshire Theatre Group Presents The Importance Of Being Earnest

**A Much Loved And Exhilarating High Comedy Masterpiece
Directed By Pulitzer Prize And Tony Award-winner David Auburn**

Pittsfield, MA – *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, Oscar Wilde's much loved, exhilarating and enduring masterpiece, begins performances on Friday, June 18 at The Unicorn Theatre (The Larry Vaber Stage, 6 East Street) in Stockbridge, MA, and runs through July 10. The production will be directed by **Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-Winner David Auburn** (*Proof; BTG: The Skin of Our Teeth, The Petrified Forest*) and features **Tony Award-Winner Harriet Harris** (Broadway: *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; TV/Film: *Frasier, Phantom Thread*; BTG: *The Skin Of Our Teeth, Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You, Arsenic and Old Lace*).

This hilarious romp tells the story of two bachelor friends, dandy Algernon Moncrieff and reliable John (Jack) Worthing, as they take on double lives to court the attentions of the desirable Gwendolyn Fairfax and the romantic Cecily Cardew. But the gallants must then grapple with the uproarious consequences of their ruse...and with the formidable Lady Bracknell. The results are a world filled with chaos, mistaken identity and uncontrollable laughter! According to Auburn, "BTG heroically and almost single handedly kept live, in-person theatre going during the pandemic with their (literally) ground-breaking outdoor productions of *Godspell* and *Holiday Memories*. This summer we are thrilled to continue this work with *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Oscar Wilde's beloved 'trivial comedy for serious people.' We hope it will be a joyous show for newly hopeful times."

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased online at www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org or by calling (413) 997-4444. Ticket office hours are every day from 12pm–5pm, or on any performance day from 12pm until curtain. BTG is offering a 10% discount on tickets for all front line workers. All plays, schedules, casting and prices are subject to change.

The Importance of Being Earnest

by Oscar Wilde

directed by David Auburn

With David Adkins, Rebecca Brooksher, Shawn Fagan, Harriet Harris, Corinna May, Claire Saunders, Matt Sullivan, Mitchell Winter

at The Unicorn Theatre, The Larry Vaber Stage
BTG's Stockbridge Campus, 6 East Street

Preview: Friday, June 18 at 7pm

Opening: Sunday, June 20 at 7pm

Closing: Saturday, July 10 at 7pm

Tickets: Preview: \$50

Tickets: \$75

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

David Auburn (Director) is a playwright, screenwriter and director. Plays include *The Adventures of Augie March* (based on the Saul Bellow novel), *Lost Lake*, *The Columnist* and *Proof* (2001 Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award, New York Drama Critics Circle Award). Film work includes *The Girl in the Park* (writer/director), *Georgetown*, and *The Lake House*. Stage directing credits include *Long Day's Journey into Night* (Court Theatre, Chicago); *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *The Petrified Forest*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Anna Christie*, *A Delicate Balance*, *Period of Adjustment*, *Sick* (all BTG) and the Off-Broadway world premiere of Michael Weller's *Side Effects* (MCC).

David Adkins (Rev. Canon Chasuble, D.D.) has performed in numerous productions at Berkshire Theatre Group over the last thirty years. He is an Artistic Associate at BTG; in 2018 appeared in *The Petrified Forest*, and in 2019 he appeared in *At Home At The Zoo (Zoo Story)*, for which he was honored with a "Berkie Award" for Outstanding Performance in a Lead Role. He has worked On and Off Broadway, in resident theatres across the country and guest-starred extensively on television, most recently in *Madame Secretary* and *Evil*. Others include *Homeland*, *Blacklist*, *The Good Wife*, *Elementary*, *The Americans* (two seasons), *Happy-ish*, *Without a Trace*, *Black Jaq*, a pilot directed by Forrest Whitaker and the Ben Franklin mini-series on PBS.

Rebecca Brooksher (Hon. Gwendolyn Fairfax) is returning for her sixth collaboration with David Auburn and BTG; favorites include Maggie in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Anna in *Anna Christie*. Nearby she's also worked at Chester Theater and Barrington Stage. New York credits

include: *Burn This* and *The Real Thing* (Broadway), *The Roads To Home* (Primary Stages), *Loot* (Red Bull), *Dying City* (Lincoln Center, Lortel nomination Best Actress), *Love's Labor's Lost* (The Public Theater), *The Scariest* (Bleeker Street) and *White People* (Atlantic Stage 2). Recent regional credits include: *Golden Age* (The Kennedy Center), *She Stoops to Conquer* and *Twelfth Night* (McCarter Theatre), *Camp David* (The Alley), and *Mr. Wolf* (Cleveland Playhouse). TV: *Blacklist*, *The Sinner*, *Elementary*, *Love Monkey*, *Ugly Betty*, *The Confession*, *Happyish*, *The Good Wife*, *Canterbury's Law*, *Cold Souls*. Juilliard graduate (Group 34).

Shawn Fagan (Algernon Moncrieff) is returning to Berkshire Theatre Group, having played Boze in *The Petrified Forest* two summers ago. Favorite roles include Elyot in *Private Lives* (Dorset Theatre Festival), Hal/Henry in *The Making of a King: Henry IV, Parts 1&2/Henry V* (Playmakers Rep), Frank/Franz in *Appropriate* (Westport Country Playhouse), Angelo in *Measure for Measure* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival), the Stage Manager in *Our Town* (Portland Center Stage) and Caleb in *The Whipping Man* (Cleveland Play House). Other regional work at the Shakespeare Theatre (DC), Arena Stage, Denver Center, Dallas Theatre Center, Arden Theatre Company, American Players Theatre, Utah Shakespeare Festival and Delaware Theatre Company. New York credits include Hotspur in *Henry IV, Part One*, Philinte in *The Misanthrope* (Pearl Theatre Co.), James Whelan in the U.S. Premiere of *Wife to James Whelan* (Mint Theatre), *Peninsula* (Soho Rep), *Freakshow*, *Dearest Eugenia Haggis* (Clubbed Thumb) and *Milk 'n' Honey* (Lightbox/3LD).

Harriet Harris (Lady Bracknell) BTG: *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You*. Broadway: *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Present Laughter*, *Cry Baby*, *Cinderella*, *It Shoulda Been You*. Off Broadway: *Judgement Day*, *The Low Road*, *The Roads to Home*, *Rude Entertainment*. Regional: *Conscience*, *The Royal Family of Broadway*, *Hollywood*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Tartuffe*. Film: *Baby*, *Phantom Thread*, *Love is Strange*, *Memento*, *Addams Family Values*. TV: *Atlantic Crossing*, *Ratched*, *Hollywood*, *Frasier*, *Desperate Housewives*. Awards: Tony and Drama Desk.

Corinna May (Miss Prism) BTF/BTG: *Holiday Memories*, *Benefactors*, *Same Time Next Year*, *Homestead Crossing*, *Two-headed*. WAM/BTG: *The Bakelite Masterpiece*. Shakespeare & Company: 30+ productions, (selected): *Morning After Grace*, *Fullness of Life*, *Roman Fever*, *The Unexpected Man*, *The Memory of Water*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Enchanted April*, *Jack and Jill*, *Betrayal*, *Fortune and Misfortune*, *House of Mirth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet*. Wharton Salon: *The Long Run*, *Autre Temps*, *Xingu*. Pythagoras: *Roman Fever*. Broadway National Tour: *The Graduate* with Jerry Hall/ Linda Gray/Lorraine Bracco/Kelly McGillis/Morgan Fairchild. Regional (selected): Portland Stage Co., Merrimack Rep., Syracuse Stage, Rep. Theater of St. Louis, Capital Rep. Film: *Split Ends* (starring); *Speck's Last*. TV: *House of Cards*, *Unforgettable*, *Law & Order*, PBS: *Evening at the Pops*. Playwright: *Dancing With the Czar*.

Claire Saunders (Cecily Cardew) was last seen in BTG's *The Skin of Our Teeth*. Her Off-Broadway credits include *Marry Harry* (York Theatre), *Errol and Fidel* (NYMF), *Taming of the Shrew* (NY Classical Theatre). Regional credits: *School Girls; Or the African Mean Girls Play*

(Round House Theatre, Ericka), *Cyrano* (Goodspeed, Orange Girl), *The Wolves* (TheatreWorks, #8), *In the Heights* (Gallery Players, Vanessa), *Pirates of Penzance* (Barrington Stage Co, Daughter). TV/Film: *Modern Love* (Amazon), *Law & Order: SVU* (NBC), *Tell Me a Story* (CBS), *The Good Cop* (Netflix), *The Intern* (Warner Bros), *18 1/2* (Waterbug Eater Films), Citibank Commercial. Carnegie Mellon Graduate.

Matt Sullivan (Lane/Merriman) Berkshire Theatre Group: Jonathan Brewster in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You*. Primary Stages: *The Roads to Home* by Horton Foote at Cherry Lane Theatre. Minetta Lane Theatre: *Standing on Ceremony*. New York Shakespeare Festival: *Macbeth* and *Coriolanus*. The Guthrie Theater: *Hay Fever*. Sullivan has also worked at Hartford Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington D.C., Baltimore Center Stage and The Olney Theatre Center. Four seasons with The Acting Company.

Mitchell Winter (Jack Worthing, J.P.) is making his Berkshire Theatre Group debut. Theatre credits include: *Frontieres Sans Frontieres* (dir. Dustin Wills, Bushwick Starr), *A Winter's Tale* (dir. Liz Diamond), *A Doctor In Spite of Himself* (dir. Christopher Bayes), *American Night: The Ballad of Juan Jose* (dir. Shana Cooper) (Yale Rep), *Sleep No More* (Punchdrunk), Cameron Mackintosh's *Miss Saigon* (dir. Laurence Connor, Australian National Tour), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (dir. Roger Hodgman, The Production Company), *Miss Julie*, *Tartuffe* and *Drunk Enough To Say I Love You* (Yale Summer Cabaret), *Normativity* (dir. Mia Walker, NYMF), *Die Fledermaus* (dir. John Milson, Australian Opera Studio) and *Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (dir. Stephen Pimlott, Really Useful). Film/TV credits include: *Mr. Robot* (USA Network), *Oh Jerome No* (FX), *If Not Love* (official Sundance selection). MFA: Yale School of Drama.

Safety Measures

BTG will continue to update procedures and protocols to reflect current state and local mandated health and safety guidelines. All patrons will be required to wear masks for this production. No-contact scanning stations for tickets will be at point of entry. Free-standing hand sanitizer stations will be placed at various locations throughout the space. Patrons who are not feeling well should contact BTG's box office to discuss rescheduling options. A doctor/nurse will be on duty for all performances. The Unicorn Theatre has upgraded HVAC filters, added ozone-free NPB ionization and otherwise complies with all the requirements of MA and AE for safety.

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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. In 2010, under the leadership of Artistic Director and CEO Kate Maguire, the two organizations merged to form Berkshire Theatre Group (BTG). Berkshire Theatre Group's mission is to support wide ranging artistic exploration and acclaimed performances in theatre, dance, music and entertainment. Every

year, BTG produces and presents performances to over 68,000 attendees and, through our Educational Program, serves over 13,000 Berkshire County school children annually. In July 2020, Berkshire Theatre was the first company in the United States to earn approval from Actors' Equity Association to produce a musical (*Godspell*) in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic.