

UNICORN • COLONIAL • FITZPATRICK

BERKSHIRE

THEATRE GROUP

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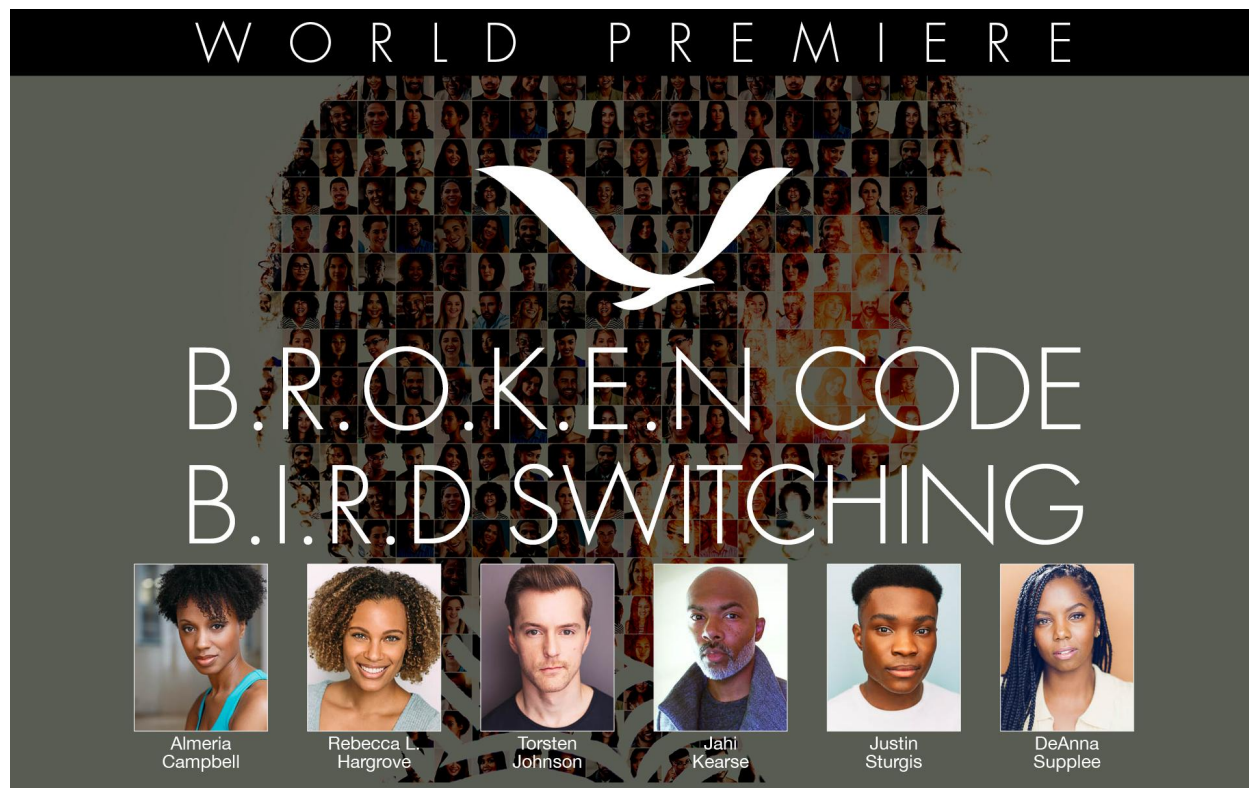
For Immediate Release, Please:

Berkshire Theatre Group Presents

The World Premiere Event

B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching

A timely story about a woman, representing a black teenager accused of murder, who is forced to face truths about her marriage, race and choices she's made.



[Click Here to Download B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching Headshots](#)

Pittsfield, MA - The world premiere of **B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching** written by **Tara L. Wilson Noth** and directed by **Kimille Howard** will take place June 23 through July 9 at The

Unicorn Theatre. This project is an award recipient of the Grants For Arts Projects from the National Endowment for the Arts.

In this timely play, a woman representing a black teenager accused of murder is forced to face truths about marriage, race and the choices she has made and the unspoken lies she told herself to conform. Wilson Noth says, "I believe in the power of words. I believe they are the greatest strength this world has... I feel very fortunate that I could use my words to craft this story. It is a story of race and identity, of promise and purpose... but perhaps more importantly, it is the story of the potency of being seen. The universal need to be seen for who we are. When we truly see each other, we can begin an honest dialogue... I hope this play can succeed in beginning that conversation."

Season Discounts & Ticket Information

BTG Bundle

For the 2022 Season, BTG is offering a BTG Bundle. With this bundle, purchase one ticket to four of the upcoming BTG produced shows for \$200 (fees included), equalling a discount of up to 66%. This offer is good for any seat to any produced performance. The discount is not retroactive and must be applied at point of purchase. This offer is available by phone or in person only.

BTGY (Young Adult)

Young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 can purchase one ticket to any BTG produced show for \$30 (fees included). This offer is available by phone or in person only. Additionally, one BTG presented show ticket may be purchased for 10% off the single ticket price (rental events not included).

EBT Card to Culture Program

EBT Card to Culture is a collaboration between the Mass Cultural Council and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services' Department of Transitional Assistance. This is available to anyone with EBT, WIC, or ConnectorCare Insurance. Offer includes: Two tickets to any BTG produced show at the rate of \$5.00 each. All additional fees are also waived. These tickets are subject to availability as seating is limited. This offer is available by phone or in person only.

Tickets for all of BTG's exciting summer season productions are on sale now. All plays, schedules, casting and prices are subject to change. To purchase tickets, visit www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org or contact the Colonial Ticket Office by calling 413-997-4444.

The ticket office is open Tuesday through Sunday 12pm-5pm or on any performance day from 12pm until curtain.

BTG's Pittsfield Campus is located at 111 South Street, (The Colonial Theatre) Pittsfield, MA.
BTG's Stockbridge Campus is located at 6 East Street, (The Unicorn Theatre) Stockbridge, MA.



Justin Sturgis in BTG's *B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching*.
Photo by Jacey Rae Russell.



Torsten Johnson & DeAnna Supplee in BTG's *B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching*. Photo by Jacey Rae Russell.

At The Unicorn Theatre

B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching

written by Tara L. Wilson Noth

directed by Kimille Howard

at The Unicorn Theatre
on the Larry Vaber Stage

Previews: Thursday, June 23 at 7pm and Friday, June 24 at 7pm

Opening/Press Night: Saturday, June 25 at 7pm

Sensory Friendly: Tuesday, July 5 at 7pm

Closing: Saturday, July 9 at 7pm

Tickets: Preview: \$45

Tickets: Sensory Friendly: \$15

Tickets: \$56

ABOUT:

After unbearable loss, a grieving attorney takes a pro bono case representing a black teenager accused of murder. When an alluring stranger steps in to help, she is left questioning who she is and what she wants. While fighting for the young man's innocence, she is forced to confront the devastating truth about marriage, race and the woman she has chosen to be.

B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching, written by **Tara L. Wilson Noth**, is a play about the choices we make and the unspoken lies we tell ourselves to make peace with those choices. This World Premiere and National Endowment for the Arts Grants For Arts Project award recipient will be directed by **Kimille Howard** (Regional: *Quamino's Map*, *Highway 1*, *USA*, *Night Trip*, *The Visit*, *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson*) and will feature **Almeria Campbell** (Off Broadway: *Night Club Cantata*; TV: *Law & Order Criminal Intent*) as Evelyn Payne; **Rebecca L. Hargrove** (Regional: *In the Parlour*, *Evita* and *Cabin in the Sky*, *Aquanetta*; National Tour: *The Mikado*; TV/Film: *House of Cards*, *Random Acts of Flyness*, *My Asian Auntie*, *The Fix*, *Single Record*) as Katherine Morgan; **Torsten Johnson** (Off Broadway: *Dying City*, *Macbeth*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Regional: *Lion in Winter*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Hay Fever*, *A Christmas Carol*) as Mark Bennett; **Jahi Kears** (Broadway: *Ain't Too Proud*, *Holler If Ya Hear Me!*, *Baby It's You!*; Off Broadway: *The Total Bent*, *The Fortress of Solitude*) as Olen Porter; **Justin Sturgis** (*The Scottsboro Boys*, *Spring Awakening*, *Into the Woods*, *Elegies For Angels*, *Punks and Raging Queens*, *Disaster!*) as DeShawn Payne; and **DeAnna Supplee** (Off

Broadway: *The Winter's Tale*, *On Strivers Row*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Trojan Women*, *Fires in the Mirror*, *Laundry & Bourbon*, *Platanos Y Collard Greens*, *Romeo & Juliet*) as Olivia Bennett.

The creative team consists of direction by **Kimille Howard**, scenic design by **Baron E. Pugh**, costume design by **Danielle Preston**, lighting design by **John D. Alexander**, composition and soundscape design by **Michael Keck**, projections design by **David Murakami**, intimacy coaching by **Marie Percy**, fight choreography by **Joseph Poulson**, stage management by **Caroline Stamm** and casting direction by **Alan Filderman**.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Almeria Campbell (Evelyn Payne) grew up in Texas where she began acting—first in high school, and then at Texas Christian University. After attending Mason Gross School of Performing Arts at Rutgers University, Almeria made her TV debut on *Law & Order Criminal Intent*. Most recently she was in *Night Club Cantata* at the cell theater and also in *New Amsterdam*.

Rebecca L. Hargrove (Katherine Morgan) is pleased to join the cast of *B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching* in her first season with Berkshire Theatre Group. Previous productions include: *In the Parlour* (National Black Theater), *Evita and Cabin in the Sky* (City Center Encores!), *Aquanetta* (Bard Summerscape) and *The Mikado* (National Tour). Rebecca has also spent the past two seasons at The Metropolitan Opera in their productions of *Die Meistersinger* (Wagner), *Fire Shut up in My Bones* (Blanchard), and the 2020 Grammy Award-Winning *Porgy and Bess* (Gershwin). She has performed in concerts at Carnegie Hall, John F. Kennedy Center, David Geffen Hall and 54 Below. Her TV/Film credits include: *House of Cards* (Netflix), *Random Acts of Flyness* (HBO), *My Asian Auntie* (Amazon Prime), *The Fix* (Short Film) and *Single Record* (Revry).

Torsten Johnson (Mark Bennett) Upcoming: *A Holiday Spectacular* for Hallmark. Off Broadway: Second Stage: *Dying City*; The Acting Company: *Macbeth*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Regional: Guthrie Theater: *Lion in Winter*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Hay Fever*, *A Christmas Carol*; Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey: *Mixed Blood*; American Players Theatre; Theater Mu; Idaho Shakespeare Festival; Great Lakes Theater Company; Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival; Montana Shakespeare in the Parks; Door Shakespeare; Interlochen Shakespeare; The Warehouse; Parallel 45; Back Room Shakespeare Project. TV: *That Damn Michael Che*. Training: University of Minnesota / Guthrie Theater.

Jahi Kearse (Olen Porter) is thrilled to be making his Berkshire Theatre debut as a part of this exciting work. Broadway credits: *Ain't Too Proud* (The Imperial), *Holler If Ya Hear Me!* (The Palace), *Baby It's You!* (The Broadhurst). Off Broadway credits: *The Total Bent*, *The Fortress of Solitude* (The Public Theater). Select Regional Credits: *A Christmas Carol* (DTC), *Lungs*; *Satchmo at the Waldorf*, *Bars & Measures* (B Street), *IndianJoe* (Goodspeed), Maurice Hines' *Yo Alice* (Radio City Music Hall), Debbie Allen's *Souls Possessed*, *Seussical* (The Alliance Theater), *Passing Strange*, *Motherf**ker with the Hat*, *Topdog/Underdog* (Studio Theater), *Gut Bucket Blues*; *Sty Of The Blind Pig*, *Two Trains Running* (True Colors). Jahi is a proud alumni of (YEA): The Freddie Hendricks Youth Ensemble of Atlanta and (TCHS): Tri-Cities High School For the Visual and Performing Arts.

Justin Sturgis (Deshawn Payne) is a recent graduate of NYU Tisch School of the Arts in the Department of Drama's New Studio on Broadway and is excited to be working with Berkshire Theatre Group this summer. Justin previously appeared in Playhouse on Park's production of *The Scottsboro Boys* (Roy Wright) and Capital Rep's Next Act! New Play Summit in *The Luckiest Trilogy* (Josh). Other past performances include: *Spring Awakening* (Georg), *Into the*

Woods (Jack), *Elegies For Angels*, *Punks and Raging Queens* (Lamar) and *Disaster!* (Scott).

DeAnna Supplee (Olivia Bennett) is a Philadelphia-born, New York City-trained actress. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, she has also studied at the British American Drama Academy at the University of Oxford and the Actors Studio Drama School (MFA, Acting). NYC Theatre credits: *The Winter's Tale* (New York Shakespeare Exchange), *On Strivers Row* (Metropolitan Playhouse), *Much Ado About Nothing* (New York Shakespeare Exchange), *The Trojan Women* (The Flea Theater), *Fires in the Mirror*, *Laundry & Bourbon*, *Platanos Y Collard Greens* and *Romeo & Juliet* (Occupy Verona). Regional Theatre: *The Niceties* (Mile Square Theatre) *Skeleton Crew* (TheatreSquared). International Theater: *Look/Alive* (Edinburgh Fringe Festival). DeAnna is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Tara L. Wilson Noth (Playwright) is a graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in NYC and furthered her studies in playwriting at UCLA Ext Writer's Program. She has several scripts in development including *Riders of the Storm*, based on the book *Requiem* and *Storyville*, based on the first American Red Light District. Tara's play *B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching* was awarded the 2022 National Endowment of the Arts grant. (www.arts.gov). It was workshopped at The Berkshire Theatre Group before it enjoyed a sold out limited run in Los Angeles. The play returns to BTG for its world premiere this summer season.

Kimille Howard (Director) is a New York based director, deviser, writer and filmmaker. She is an Assistant Stage Director at the Metropolitan Opera, Artistic Director of the Lucille Lortel Theatre's NYC Public High School Playwriting Fellowship and co-founder of the Black Classical Music Archive. Recent directing credits: *Quamino's Map* (Chicago Opera Theater), *Highway 1, USA* (IU Opera), *Night Trip* (Opera NexGen), *The Visit* (ECU), *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson* (Glimmerglass Festival), *L'Amant Anonyme* (Wolf Trap Opera), *Death By Life: a virtual opera* (White Snake Projects), *In The Open* by Mona Monsour (Western Connecticut State University), *Soil Beneath* by Chesney Snow (Primary Stages/59E59), *\$#!thole Country Clapback* by Pascale Armand (Loading Dock Theatre), *The Fellowship Plays* (Lucille Lortel Theatre Foundation), *A Light Staggering* by Jeeseun Choi (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *Tidwell: or the Plantation Play* by Rodney Witherspoon II (Samuel French OOB Short Play Festival - winner), *Low Power* by Jon Kern (EST), and *Skeleton Crew* by Dominique Morisseau (TheatreSquared). Kimille was awarded Best Director at the 2016 Thespis Festival for *It's All About Lorrie* by Joseph Krawczyk (Hudson Theater) which received a commercial run at The American Theater of Actors in 2017. Her work has also been seen at the National Black Theatre, Cherry Lane Theatre, MultiStages, The Circle in the Square Theatre Circle Series, The Queens Theatre, Juilliard, The Flea, The Lark, JAGFest, NYU, Sea Dog Theater, and Atlantic Acting School, CLASSIX/The Lewis Center, among others. Broadway: *Ain't Too Proud* (Assistant Director). She has worked with Des McAnuff, Rebecca Frecknall, Ruben Santiago Hudson, Emily Mann, Stephen Wadsworth, Lorca Peress and more. Recent Fellowships: New York Theatre Workshop 2050 Fellowship and the Manhattan Theatre Club Jonathan Alper Directing Fellowship. She has produced shows at the HERE Arts Center, FIAF, and more. She is a current member of The New Georges' Jam, a participant in New York Stage and Film's inaugural NYSAF NEXUS project, and a former Resident Director at the Flea Theater. She was the Series Producer for American Opera Project's first season of *Music as the Message*.

Baron E. Pugh (Scenic Designer) A Virginia native, Baron has designed for various New England theaters as well as others throughout the country. Select credits include: *The Bluest Eye* (associate designer, The Huntington Theatre); *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Radio Golf* (Trinity Rep); *The Comedy of Errors*, *Snug* (Shakespeare Theater of New Jersey); *How I Learned What I Learned* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival); *The Light, Breath and Imagination*, *The Wiz*

(Lyric Stage Company of Boston); *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, *School Girls* (TheatreSquared); *Passover*, *Choir Boy*, *School Girls* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); *Marie and Rosetta*, *The Three Musketeers* (Greater Boston Stage Company). Baron received his MFA in Scenic Design from Boston University and is a proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829.

Danielle Preston (Costume Designer) is a costume designer based in Washington DC. Recent theatre credits include designs for the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Studio Theatre, Hangar Theatre, Olney Theatre, Theater J, Mosaic Theater Company of DC, Florida Repertory Theatre, & Chicago Opera Theater. Preston also worked as a costume coordinator at the Washington National Opera. Professional fellowships include Kenan Costume Fellowship for the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute Fellowship in Costume Design. Preston holds an MFA in Costume Design from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Preston is a proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829. She/Her.

John D. Alexander (Lighting Designer) Off Broadway: *Migration-Reflections on Jacob Lawrence* (National Tour). DC Area: *This Bitter Earth*, *Topdog/Underdog* (Helen Hayes Nomination), *Crying on Television*, *Mary's Seacole*, *TransAM*, *Fabulation or the Re-Education of Undine*, *Marie and Rosetta*, *Airness*, *Darius and Twig*, *Black Nativity*, *Disgraced*, *HERstory*. Regional: *Quamino's Map*, *Chad Deity*, *Paradise Blue*, *Skeleton Crew*, *Royale*, *The Snowy Day* and *Other Stories*. TV: *PBS: No Child*. Upcoming: *Hoola Hoopin Queen*. He/Him/His.

Michael Keck (Composer and Soundscape Designer) Michael's music has accompanied productions at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Indiana Rep, Milwaukee Rep, Mark Taper Forum, Arena Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Syracuse Stage, Guthrie Theatre, Rep St. Louis and many others. His international credits include: the Market Theatre Johannesburg South Africa, National Theater of Croatia–Zagreb, the Barbican Theatre Center and Bristol Old Vic. His acting credits include: the McCarter Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Pacific Conservatory, Santa Maria, CA, Portland Center Stage, the Alliance Theatre and various stages in New York, where he currently resides. Excerpts from his solo performance piece *Voices in the Rain* are published by Temple University Press and Alta Mira Press. Michael received three Barrymore Award nominations for his work in Philadelphia. He is a member of AEA, SAG-AFTRA, ASCAP, PEN and the Dramatists Guild.

David Murakami (Projections Designer) is a projection designer and film director focused on the union between the cinematic and theatrical. Recent productions include: *Everest* at Dallas Opera, *Elektra* at Minnesota Opera, Luis Valdez' *Zoot Suit* and *Valley of the Heart* at the Mark Taper Forum, *Singin' in the Rain* with McCoy Rigby, *Sense and Sensibility* at South Coast Repertory, and Gordon Getty's *Scare Pair* at LA Opera Off Grand. Other design credits include: Opera Parallèle's *Dead Man Walking*, *Champion*, *Les Enfants Terribles*, *Heart of Darkness*, and *Little Prince*; Minnesota Opera's *Das Rheingold*, and *Flight*; the Sun Valley Summer Symphony's *Daphnis et Chloé*, and several musicals aboard Princess Cruises' flagship Royal-class vessels. Other companies include: Opéra de Montréal, San Jose Repertory Theater, SFJazz, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Atlanta Opera, Presidio Theatre, Arizona Opera, Skylight Theatre, and Riyadh Season. David teaches projection design at the University of California, Irvine.

Marie C. Percy (Intimacy Director) is an Intimacy Director, Laban Certified Movement Analyst, Registered Yoga Teacher, Choreographer and Movement Specialist based in Connecticut. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Residence at the University of Connecticut where she teaches movement for actors in the BFA and MFA acting programs. She is the resident Intimacy Director and Movement Coach at Connecticut Repertory Theater, and the Chief Content Officer at Intimacy Directors and Coordinators. Marie is deeply committed to empowering actors to do

their most dynamic work by teaching consent, acting as an advocate and collaborating to create compelling choreography. Recent Intimacy Direction credits include: *Seven Spots on the Sun*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Good Children*, and *If We Were Birds* at Connecticut Repertory Theater.

Joseph Poulson (Fight Choreographer) is originally from Philadelphia, PA and received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Iowa and Bennington College respectively. A rehearsal director and performer in Punchdrunk's New York Production of *Sleep No More*, between 2000 and 2015, he was a member of Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, Susan Marshall & Company, David Dorfman Dance, Bill Young/Colleen Thomas and Dancers, Creach/Co. and Aconarytorsi. He received a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" award in 2009.

Caroline Stamm (Stage Manager) Originally from central North Carolina, Caroline relocated to the beautiful Berkshires to continue pursuing her career in Stage Management with Berkshire Theatre Group. This summer at BTG, Caroline will also stage manage *B.R.O.K.E.N code B.I.R.D switching*. Recent BTG credits include: *Footloose* (SM), *Magic Tree House: Dinosaurs Before Dark* (SM), *White Christmas* (PA), *The Wizard of Oz* (SM), *Holiday Memories* (PA), *Godspell* (PA), *A Christmas Carol* (2019 SM, 2018 SM, 2017 ASM), Other favorite regional credits include: *The Barber of Seville* (ASM) at The Greensboro Opera and *Beautiful Star* (ASM) at Triad Stage. Caroline is a graduate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro ('17), where she obtained her BFA in Technical Production (with an emphasis in Stage Management) and minored in American Sign Language.

Alan Filderman (Casting Director) This is Alan's 30th season casting for Berkshire Theatre Group, where he also directed *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* and *Godspell*. Casting credits include Broadway and Off Broadway: *33 Variations*, *Grey Gardens*, *Marie Christine*, *Master Class*, *Once on This Island*, *Fiorello*, *Dessa Rose*, *Here Lies Jenny*, *A New Brain*, *A Beautiful Thing*, *Three Tall Women*, *From the Mississippi Delta*, *Song of Singapore*, *The Sum of Us*. In addition, Alan has cast for regional theatres all over the country. Films include: *Ice Age*, *Broadway Damage* and *Anastasia*.

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Safety Protocols

For safety protocols please visit BTG's COVID-19 information page:

www.berkshiretheatregroup.org/covid-19-information/

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 11,000 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.