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BERKSHIRE
THEATRE GROUP

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For Immediate Release, Please:

**Berkshire Theatre Group Presents Live & In-Person
Hershey Felder's Beethoven: A Play with Music**

A captivating and immersive theatrical experience that takes audiences
on a journey through the life and work of Ludwig van Beethoven.

Pittsfield, MA – Berkshire Theatre Group (BTG) and Kate Maguire (Artistic Director, CEO) are excited to present **Hershey Felder live and in-person** at The Colonial Theatre for the first time in four years in the immersive theatrical experience, **Hershey Felder's Beethoven: A Play with Music**, from September 8 through September 10. Following his triumph as the American composer George Gershwin and his international musical films, including *Tchaikovsky in Florence, Dante & Beatrice, Mozart and Figaro* and *Violetta di Verdi*, produced under his brand "Live from Florence," Hershey Felder will bring Ludwig van Beethoven to life through the eyes of a Viennese doctor who spent his boyhood by the Maestro's side.

At The Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield

**Hershey Felder's Beethoven: A Play with Music
The Music of Ludwig van Beethoven**

at The Colonial Theatre

Performance Dates: Friday, September 8 at 7pm; Saturday, September 9 at 2pm & 7pm;
Sunday, September 10 at 2pm

Tickets: \$50

Moonlight Sonata Gala: Sunday, September 10

Tickets: \$185 & \$500



Described by *American Theatre Magazine* as “a seductive portraitist, compelling storyteller, and superb concert pianist,” Hershey Felder returns to the stage as Beethoven and Dr. Gerhard von Breuning, who as a young boy cared for him in the last years of his life. *American Theatre* continued, “in a category all his own, ‘musical biographies’ does not come close to suggesting what he does.” Felder commands a profound musical understanding to bring this legend to life, offering an enthralling performance that can satisfy musical experts, as well as captivate audience members who may have little background in classical music.” *The Chicago Tribune* also praised his prior performance as Beethoven as “the most emotionally charged, the most powerfully played and the most interesting,” while *Chicago Critic* commended the show as “a fantastic, mesmerizing and completely engaging theatrical experience.”

This production is based on the original *Aus dem Schwarzspanierhaus* by Dr. Gerhard von Breuning, with text by Felder that brings to life some of Beethoven’s greatest compositions. The highly acclaimed Felder has illuminated Beethoven and his 5th and 9th symphonies, “Moonlight Sonata,” “Pathetique Sonata,” “Emperor Concerto,” “Für Elise,” and more, in a deep and revealing light. *Hershey Felder’s Beethoven* is an intense and unforgettable journey through time that immerses audiences in the astounding life of the Maestro.

Hershey Felder’s Beethoven is directed by **Joel Zwick** and features scenic design by **Hershey Felder**, costume design by **Theatr’ Hall, Paris**, lighting and projection design by **Erik S. Barry**, sound design and production management by **Erik Carstensen** and associate direction by **Trevor Hay**.

Hershey Felder's Beethoven is more than just a musical performance, it is a celebration of art, passion and the human spirit. With its powerful music and captivating storytelling, this show is a must-see for anyone who loves classical music, history or the arts.

Moonlight Sonata Gala

On Sunday, September 10, BTG will hold **The Moonlight Sonata Gala**, which includes the 2pm performance of *Hershey Felder's Beethoven* plus appetizers and drinks backstage following the concert. The Colonial Theatre will become an ode to Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" with guests asked to wear festive attire honoring the moonlight.

The Moonlight Sonata Gala begins at 1pm with a pre-show cocktail reception honoring Wende and David Carver and dedicating *The Wende and David Carver Production Center*. The Carvers generously supported rehabilitating an unused warehouse at The Colonial Theatre into a multi-purpose production space. Tribute will also be paid to David And Susie Auerbach with a dedication of *The David and Susie Auerbach Rehearsal Space* for their ongoing support of our work.

At 2pm, attendees will enjoy a performance by Hershey Felder of *Hershey Felder's Beethoven* in the historic Colonial Theatre and a post-show celebration on stage. *Hershey Felder's Beethoven* is a captivating theatrical experience that takes audiences on a journey through the life and work of one of the greatest composers of all time. Audiences will be enthralled by the virtuosic piano playing of Hershey Felder, who brings Beethoven's music to life in a way that is both moving and unforgettable. After the show, all Gala attendees are invited on stage for a celebration with cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres.

The Moonlight Sonata Gala promises to be an unforgettable day and an opportunity to support BTG's future. In 2028, BTG will celebrate the 100th birthday of our work on our Stockbridge Campus and our 125th anniversary of The Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield. This Gala ensures our continued efforts to create great work on three historic stages.

Full Moon Gala Ticket: \$500 (\$380 tax-deductible) *This Celebration begins at 1pm*

- Includes premium performance ticket and post-show party
- Intimate pre-show cocktail reception
- Reserved parking at The Colonial Theatre
- Full Moon recognition in Gala program

Stardust Gala Ticket: \$185 (\$85 tax-deductible) *This Celebration begins at 2pm*

- Includes best available performance ticket and post-show party
- Reserved parking at The Colonial Theatre
- Stardust recognition in Gala program

Tickets for Hershey Felder's Beethoven, the Moonlight Sonata Gala and all of BTG's exciting productions are on sale now. All plays, schedules, casting and prices are subject to change. To purchase tickets, visit www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org or contact our box office by calling

413-997-4444.

The box 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.

ABOUT HERSHEY FELDER

American Theatre Magazine has said, "Hershey Felder, actor, Steinway Concert Artist and theatrical creator is in a category all his own." Following 28 years of continuous stage productions and over 6,000 live performances throughout the U.S. and abroad, Hershey Felder created *Live from Florence*, *An Arts Broadcasting Company*, which has produced more than eighteen theatrical films to date. They include the recently-released *The Assembly*; *Chopin and Liszt in Paris*; *Violetta*, the story of Verdi's *Traviata*; *Dante and Beatrice*; *Mozart and Figaro in Vienna*; the world premiere musicals *Nicholas, Anna & Sergei*; the story of Sergei Rachmaninoff; *Puccini*, the story of famed opera composer Giacomo Puccini; *Before Fiddler*, a musical story about writer Sholem Aleichem; *Great American Songs and the Stories Behind Them*, *Leonard Bernstein and the Israel Philharmonic*, a documentary, and the popular *Musical Tales in the Venetian Jewish Ghetto*. Two seasons of programming are currently available at www.hersheyfelder.net Hershey has given performances of his solo productions at some of the world's most prestigious theatres and has consistently broken box office records. His shows include *George Gershwin Alone* (Broadway's Helen Hayes Theatre, West End's Duchess Theatre); *Monsieur Chopin*; *Beethoven*; *Maestro (Leonard Bernstein)*; *Franz Liszt in Musik*, *Lincoln: An American Story*, *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, *Our Great Tchaikovsky*, and *A Paris Love Story* and *Chopin in Paris*. His compositions and recordings include *Aliyah*, *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*; *Fairytale*, a musical; *Les Anges de Paris, Suite for Violin and Piano*; *Song Settings*; *Saltimbanques for Piano and Orchestra*; *Etudes Thematiques for Piano*; and *An American Story for Actor and Orchestra*, and the opera *Il Quarto Uomo* that premiered in Fiesole in the summer of 2023. Hershey is the adaptor, director and designer for the internationally performed play-with-music *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical *Louis and Keely: 'Live' at the Sahara*, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director for *Flying Solo*, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Hershey has operated a full-service production company since 2001. He has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University's Department of Music and is married to Rt. Hn. Kim Campbell.

ABOUT JOEL ZWICK (Director)

Joel Zwick directed *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the highest-grossing romantic comedy of all time. Recent films include *Fat Albert* and *Elvis Has Left the Building*. Mr. Zwick directed the Broadway production of *George Gershwin Alone* at the Helen Hayes Theatre. Mr. Zwick began his theatrical career at La Mama E.T.C., as director of the La Mama Plexus. He has directed on Broadway, Off-Broadway and Broadway touring companies. He and Hershey Felder have collaborated on *Monsieur Chopin*, *Beethoven As I Knew Him* and *Maestro*. Currently, Mr. Zwick is recognized as one of Hollywood's most prolific directors of episodic television, having the direction of over 650 episodes to his credit. New York productions have included *Dance With*

Me (Tony nomination), *Shenandoah* (Broadway national tour), *Oklahoma* (national tour) and *Cold Storage* (American Place Theater). He acted in the original New York production of *MacBird*. He directed *Esther* (Promenade Theater, NY), *Merry-Go-Round* (Chicago and Las Vegas), *Last Chance Saloon* and *Woycek* (West End). Mr. Zwick has taught drama at Yale University, Brooklyn College, Queens College, Wheaton College, and the University of Southern California. He is a graduate (B.A., M.A.) of Brooklyn College.

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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 10,000 school children annually in Berkshire County and beyond. 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.