

HENNEPIN THEATRE TRUST

ORPHEUM ★ STATE ★ PANTAGES ★ NEW CENTURY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 20, 2011

PRESS CONTACT:

Karen R. Nelson

612.455.9526

karen.nelson@hennepintheatretrust.org

Sarah Johnson

612.455.9527

sarah.johnson@hennepintheatretrust.org



Hennepin Theatre Trust Announces Fall 2011 *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program* Honors

MINNEAPOLIS—Hennepin Theatre Trust today announced the new Fall 2011 honorees from Minnesota high schools recognizing theatre accomplishments by school and category for the 2011-12 *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program*. Now in its seventh successful year, *SpotLight* is Hennepin Theatre Trust's flagship educational initiative which honors, supports and advocates for Minnesota high school musical theatre students and programs. This year, a **record 56 schools**, including 13 new schools and nine from greater Minnesota, are presenting musicals made possible by the collaboration of almost 5,000 students and are annually seen by an estimated 105,000 audience members.

Current honorees from high schools who presented musicals in fall 2011 are from **Apple Valley, Bemidji, Cambridge-Isanti, Chaska, Chisago Lakes, Circle Pines, Eagan, Edina, Forest Lake, Fridley, Glencoe-Silver Lake, Lakeville, Maple Grove, Moorhead, Mound, New Brighton, Shakopee, St. Louis Park, Wayzata, Winona, White Bear Lake and Woodbury**. A comprehensive list of school participants is included at the end of this press release and a list of the fall 2011 honorees by school and category is available online at HennepinTheatreTrust.org.

The *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program* honors high school musicals and students by recognizing their extraordinary achievements and working to develop young talent in Minnesota's high school musical theatre programs. This year, highlights include the first high school performances in the nation of *Caroline, or Change* (St. Paul Conservatory for the Performing Arts), *Legally Blonde* (Minnetonka High School) and the musical version of *A Christmas Carol* (Eagan High School).

Schools and participating musical theatre students will also be honored at *SpotLight's* culminating event, the seventh annual *SpotLight Showcase*, scheduled this year at **7 p.m., Monday, June 11, 2012 at the Orpheum Theatre**. This gala evening celebrates and honors high school musical theatre by featuring dynamic student performances mixed with award presentations. Last year's event sold out and featured nearly 1,000 Minnesota students performing on the Orpheum stage. Tickets will go on sale at a later date.

- more -

Hennepin Theatre Trust, non-profit owner of the historic Orpheum, State, Pantages and the newly developed New Century Theatres, is devoted to enriching the vibrant cultural atmosphere of the Twin Cities.

615 HENNEPIN AVENUE, SUITE 140 ★ MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55403 ★ Phone 612.455.9500 ★ HennepinTheatreTrust.org



Hennepin Theatre Trust Announces Fall 2011 *SpotLight* Honorees, p. 2

Linda Eder, *SpotLight* spokesperson, Broadway actress and Drama Desk-nominated vocalist, commented, "At a time when arts education budgets are being cut, giving young people opportunities to work together on school musicals is so important. Performing opens up a new world for some kids that didn't even know they have the ability until they're involved."

Hennepin Theatre Trust, non-profit owner of the historic Orpheum, State, Pantages and the newly developed New Century Theatres, is an independent organization dedicated to enriching the vibrant cultural atmosphere of the Twin Cities and to arts-inspired community cultural development. The Trust established the ***SpotLight Musical Theatre Program*** after recognizing that none existed in Minnesota to honor excellence in high school musical theatre. The Trust supports participating schools by providing high-quality learning, performing and creative experiences for students to develop and empower the next generation of innovative leaders.

SpotLight's benefits include the opportunity to work with local and national theatre educators and musical theatre professionals who offer training, insight through critical feedback and on-site school workshops. A group of evaluators is retained by the Trust to assess each production with constructive written commentary and nominate honorees. Categories include outstanding performance in leading, supporting and featured roles, outstanding performance by a chorus, dance ensemble and student orchestra, outstanding overall performance of a musical and outstanding overall production of a musical. Shows are not compared or ranked against each other, so categories may have multiple honorees. Schools annually apply to participate and pay a nominal administration fee. *SpotLight* advocates for the importance of high school musical theatre education to support the statewide community of theatre artists, teachers and families who participate in this art form.

School Participants in the 2011-12 *SpotLight* Program

Andover High School: *Annie Get Your Gun*
Anoka High School: *The Pirates of Penzance*
Bemidji High School: *White Christmas*
Benilde-St. Margaret's (St. Louis Park): *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*
Blaine High School: *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*
The Blake School (Minneapolis): *Grease*
Breck School (Minneapolis): *My Fair Lady*
Cambridge-Isanti High School: *Grease*
Centennial High School (Circle Pines): *Little Shop of Horrors*
Central High School (Saint Paul): *Bye Bye Birdie*
Chanhassen High School: *Curtains*
Chaska High School: *Once Upon a Mattress*
Chisago Lakes High School: *Hello, Dolly!*
Columbia Heights High School: *Guys and Dolls*
Concordia Academy (Roseville): *Peter Pan*
Cretin-Derham Hall (Saint Paul): *Sweet Charity*
DeLaSalle High School (Minneapolis): *Into the Woods*
Eagan High School: *A Christmas Carol Musical*
East Ridge High School (Woodbury): *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*
Eastview High School (Apple Valley): *Beauty and the Beast*
Edina High School: *Urinetown*
FAIR Downtown School (Minneapolis): TBA
Forest Lake High School: *Guys and Dolls*
Fridley Senior High School: *Footloose*
Glencoe-Silver Lake High School: *Seussical*
Hill-Murray School (Maplewood): *Bye Bye Birdie*
Irondale High School (New Brighton): *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*
Jefferson Senior High School (Alexandria): TBA
Lakeville North High School: *The Secret Garden*
Lakeville South High School: *The Wizard of Oz*
Main Street School of Performing Arts (Hopkins): *The Producers*
Maple Grove Senior High School: *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Minnehaha Academy (Minneapolis): *Honk!*

- more -

Hennepin Theatre Trust Announces Fall 2011 *SpotLight* Honorees, p. 3

Minnetonka High School: *Legally Blonde*
Monticello High School: *Singing in the Rain*
Moorhead High School: *Children of Eden*
Mound Westonka High School: *The Drowsy Chaperone*
New Life Academy (Woodbury): *Beauty and the Beast*
Norwood Young America High School: *Little Shop of Horrors*
Park High School (Cottage Grove): *Blood Brothers*
Richfield Senior High School: *Little Shop of Horrors*
Rogers High School: TBA
Roseville Area High School: *Urinetown*
Shakopee High School: *Grease*
Southwest High School (Minneapolis): *Hairspray*
South St. Paul Secondary School: *Fiddler on the Roof*
St. Francis High School: *Curtains*
St. Louis Park High School: *Little Shop of Horrors*
Saint Paul Conservatory for the Performing Arts: *Caroline, or Change*
Tartan Senior High School (Oakdale): *Once on This Island*
Thomas Jefferson High School (Bloomington): *All Shook Up*
Totino-Grace High School (Fridley): *Anything Goes*
Washburn High School (Minneapolis): *Fame*
Wayzata High School: *Brigadoon*
White Bear Lake Area High School: *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*
Winona Senior High School: *The Secret Garden*

Educators who wish to participate in the 2012-13 *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program* should contact Melissa Koch, Director of Education and Community Engagement, at 612.455.9530 or through email at melissa.koch@hennepintheatretrust.org. The application deadline will be in October 2012. *SpotLight* is made possible by private donations and corporate contributions. If you wish to support this program, additional information about it and sponsorship opportunities is available at www.HennepinTheatreTrust.org/SpotLight.

HENNEPIN THEATRE TRUST, non-profit owner of the historic Orpheum, State, Pantages and the newly developed New Century Theatres, is an independent organization dedicated to enriching the vibrant cultural atmosphere of the Twin Cities and to arts-inspired community cultural development. We achieve our mission by presenting a rich array of live performances, creating inspiring arts education experiences and advancing a thriving Hennepin Avenue cultural corridor in downtown Minneapolis. Our activities include Broadway touring productions, the *Broadway Confidential* series, our *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program* for high schools, the *Critical View* student reviewer program, our free ticket Access Program and Kids' Night.



This activity is funded, in part, by the Minnesota State Arts Board through the arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the Legacy Amendment vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

###