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For Immediate Release

Contact: Mike Clary

MrMikeClary1@gmail.com

518-267-0683

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Great Barrington Public Theater plans a ten-week season of four new solo plays and two ensemble plays.

Lineup includes a daring, new work by Alison Larkin; a versatile mix of verse, monologue and music by Will LeBow; a brand-new comedy by Mark St. Germain; and a riveting, contemporary drama by Andrew Bovell of an American family coming to terms with unspoken truths.

In summer 2022—from early June to mid-August—Great Barrington Public Theater is expanding its season to introduce a new Solo Festival with four premiere, full-length, single-actor plays, followed by two new ensemble plays on the mainstage. The Solo Festival lineup includes premiere works featuring Berkshire resident, and internationally celebrated writer/comedienne Alison Larkin, multiple Emmy-nominated actress Sharon Lawrence, as well as new works by actor/writers Will LeBow and James Morrison. The ensemble plays will include a brand-new comedy by Berkshire favorite Mark St Germain, as well as a penetrating new drama of a family coming to terms with unspoken truths.

Great Barrington Public Theater will bring this exciting run of new plays to the Liebowitz Black Box Theater and the McConnell Theater in the Daniel Arts Center at Bard College at Simon's Rock, Great Barrington. Keeping with the Public's core mission, the 2022 program features original works and acclaimed new voices, featuring some of the best of Berkshire talent. Tickets will be affordable to all and priced between \$20 and \$50.

"After last season's ringing success, we decided to widen our lens celebrating the concept of new work," Artistic Director Jim Frangione said. "We're very excited about these new works, all of which revolve around themes of humanity that we hope will resonate with audiences as we emerge from months of isolation."

"We invite every theater lover here in the Berkshires, Boston, the Hudson Valley, New York City and beyond to be with us for an especially lively summer," Deann Simmons Halper, Executive Director added. "We're thrilled to present new comedies and dramas with superb writers, actors and designers as we look forward to lighting up the summer on two separate stages."

The Public's season opens in the Daniel Arts Center's Liebowitz Black Box Theatre with the GB Public Solo Fest running June 3 – July 10. This four-show series begins with ***Grief, the Musical...a Comedy***, written and performed by Alison Larkin, with music by Gary Schreiner and directed by James Warwick (June 3 – 12). When you fall in love for the first time in your 50's and the worst happens, you have a choice. You can hide under the bed—or, you can write ***Grief, the Musical...a Comedy***. Arising from Larkin's experience with heartbreaking loss, this deeply funny love story blends stand-up comedy, songs and theatre to bring audiences on a soul-healing journey through joy and the depths of sorrow to the heights of the human experience.

Next in the GB Public Solo Fest (June 16 – 19), is Robin Gerber's new play, ***The Shot***, based on the remarkable life of Katherine Graham, renowned Pulitzer Prize-winning publisher of *The Washington Post*. ***The Shot*** is directed by local writer and director Michelle Joyner and stars Emmy-nominated and award-winning actress Sharon Lawrence in the role of Katherine Graham. Sharon Lawrence's credits include memorable roles in *NYPD Blue*, *Shameless* and *Dynasty*, and on Broadway in *Cabaret*, *Fiddler on the*



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Roof, *Chicago* and numerous other titles on stage and screen. ***The Shot*** is a searing story of a powerful woman uncovering her own shadowed past to overcome adversity.

Leave Your Fears Here (June 30 – July 10) is a profound and insightful memoir written and performed by acclaimed stage and screen actor James Morrison. The play will be directed by Housatonic resident Robert Egan, Artistic Director of the internationally renowned Ojai (CA) Playwright's Conference, where this piece was developed. In this intense and personal story, Morrison recounts his 10-year-old son Seamus's journey from brain cancer diagnosis through his treatment and ultimate recovery. It is a poignant, poetic story of fear, the power of language, and ultimately of triumph. Its theme is the power of hope in the dimmest of hours. Legendary producer Norman Lear calls the work, "An extremely moving play by an extremely moving performer." Audiences will recognize James from the Emmy-winning drama, *24*, *Law and Order SVU*, and *Twin Peaks: The Return*.

The final play in the GB Public Solo Fest is ***The Bard The Beat The Blues***. This new solo piece is a punchy compilation of Shakespeare monologues, Beat poetry and live music composed and performed by Will LeBow. This piece will run in rotation throughout the Solo Fest (June 8 – July 8). Becket MA resident LeBow is one of the most lauded stage actors in the country, whose credits range from Broadway and Lincoln Center to Off-Broadway, with more than twenty seasons as a company member of ART in Cambridge, MA and multiple film and TV roles, including his appearance in GB Public's 2021 *The Christopher Boy's Communion*. An ardent Shakespearean, poet and musician, ***The Bard The Beat The Blues*** spotlights some of Shakespeare's most challenging characters, such as Lear, Shylock and Malvolio, blended with LeBow's original songs and the poetry of Lawrence Ferlinghetti. GB Public's Artistic Director Jim Frangione will direct.

The McConnell Theater mainstage springs to life July 14 with ***Public Speaking 101***, a brand-new comedy by Berkshire playwright Mark St. Germain, running through July 24. A neurotic amateur actress leads her community theater class of terrified adults to compete in their county's First Annual Public Speaking Competition. This is the premiere of a brand-new comedy, with a stellar cast of Berkshire actors. Jim Frangione will direct.

From August 4th – August 14th audiences will be drawn in and touched by ***Things I Know to Be True***, by award-winning playwright Andrew Bovell (*Broadway—When the Rain Stops Falling*). A sweeping, powerful midwestern family drama, it was first presented by Milwaukee Rep in 2019 to rave reviews and was headed for Broadway until Covid intervened. GB Public will present the East Coast premiere of this brilliant new play. Judy Braha, who helmed GB Public's 2021 hit *Mr. Fullerton*, will direct. ***Things I Know to Be True*** goes straight to the heart of family love, truth and bonding, and exemplifies the power of transformative theater.

More information on the ten-week, two-stage season can be found in the coming weeks as plans roll out on the [Great Barrington Public Theater](http://www.greatbarringtonpublictheater.org) site and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/greatbarringtonpublictheater). Tickets will go on sale April 1 and are affordable to all, but seating is limited, especially in the case of the Berkshire Solo Series. Early purchase is highly encouraged.

The Liebowitz and McConnell Theaters are in the Daniel Arts Center, five minutes minutes by car from downtown Great Barrington on the beautiful and bucolic campus of Bard College at Simon's Rock, 84 Alford Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

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