



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:**

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## **Celebrating 46 years of Making Theatre Magic in Central Maine**

**Monmouth, Maine** – In 2015, Theater at Monmouth celebrates not only 46 years of producing classic theatre, but also 46 years of providing access to engaging arts education experiences for our community. TAM's mission is to present innovative approaches to Shakespeare and other classic plays through professional productions that enrich the lives of people throughout Maine. Through the Summer Repertory Season, statewide Education Tours, and Fall musical, TAM endeavors to promote the value of the arts in Maine. Whether it's bringing great works of literature to schools or inviting the community to take part in productions, TAM has been committed to building community through the arts since 1970.

Each summer people come to the Lakes Region to enjoy the natural beauty of Maine. The area is filled with everything from outdoor activities to historical locales to arts and culture. As the only professional theatre in Maine dedicated to Shakespeare and the classics, TAM is a critical contributor to the cultural life of the state. An average audience travels from more than 40 miles to attend productions and in the summer, TAM welcomes audiences from 36 states to Cumston Hall. Cumston Hall is a remarkable 115-year-old Victorian Opera House that was deeded to the people of Monmouth. The building includes a 250-seat, jewel-box theatre with exceptional acoustics and original murals painted by Harry Cochrane.

TAM takes great pride in its education programs and the opportunity to reach audiences that may otherwise not be exposed to the theatrical arts. Education programs give geographically or economically isolated learners of all ages access to great literature through performance. Each spring, *Page to Stage* tours bring adaptations of classic literature to elementary and middle school students statewide. In the fall, TAM's *Shakespeare in Maine Communities* brings the Bard to high schools and community centers across the state. Made possible by a grant from Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation, the *Write On! Student Playwriting Project* encourages schools to integrate playwriting into their curriculum to enhance creativity and communication. TAM supports this integration with teaching guides, playwriting workshops, and professional development. Students grade 5-12 then submit an original play that is juried by professional theatre artists. Finalists' plays receive a workshop and a stage-reading during TAM's summer season. TAM's education programs reach every corner of Maine from Kittery to Fort Kent and go where many other touring programs will not. In the past three years, TAM has brought productions to each of Maine's 16 counties and performed for 15,000 students annually, the only Maine organization to reach such a widespread audience.

Bob Keyes of the *Portland Press Herald* says TAM is known around the country for the quality of its productions. "[TAM] remains one of the very few theaters in all of America that produces a summer season in repertory," Keyes said. "Each week brings a new opening, with resident actors shifting roles from one show to the next, sometimes in a matter of hours and never more than a matter of days."

Hiring the best regional and national talent, placing significant emphasis on Shakespeare's text, emphasizing the unique nature of the venue, and a strong commitment to community has ensured that audiences experience Shakespeare and other classical plays at their best. Scott Moreau of *Broadway World* writes, "It is almost hard to single out the cast. The cast is unbelievably strong and works together as a wonderfully cohesive ensemble. Almost more than the way they inhabit their character's strengths and peccadillos, the cast's most important accomplishment is the grasp they have on Shakespeare's language."

This summer, TAM adds a fifth mainstage show to its line-up. The 2015 Summer Repertory includes Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Janis Stevens and *The Winter's Tale*, directed by Dawn McAndrews; Tom Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound*, directed by Matthew Arbour; Noël Coward's *Fallen Angels*, directed by Brendon Fox, and Jeffrey Hatcher's adaptation of Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*, directed by James Noel Hoban. This fall TAM welcomes back founding artistic director Richard Sewell to direct Gilbert & Sullivan's *Ruddigore, or The Witch's Curse*.

Thanks to support from members of the business community like Kennebec Savings Bank, Main Street Psychotherapy, MaineGeneral Health, Granite Hill Estates, D.R. Struck Landscape Nursery, E.J. Prescott, Austin Associates, Bangor Savings Bank, Eaton Peabody Foundation, TexTech Industries, Simply Divine Brownies, Tubby's Ice Cream, Maine Heritage Weavers, The Sedgley Place, MacKenzie Landscaping, Inc., and Gritty McDuff's, TAM's board, staff, and resident artists remain dedicated to producing engaging, entertaining, and educational programming that enriches the lives of our community.

For more information on TAM's Artistic and Education programs as well as details on Cumston Hall please visit our website, [www.theateratmonmouth.org](http://www.theateratmonmouth.org), or call the box office at 207.933.9999. You can find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TAMonmouth](http://www.facebook.com/TAMonmouth) and follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/TAMonmouth>.

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Theater at Monmouth, founded in 1970, was named the Shakespearean Theater of Maine by the State Legislature in 1975. The theatre's mission is to present innovative approaches to Shakespeare and other classic plays through professional productions that enrich the lives of people throughout Maine. Since its founding, TAM has produced expertly crafted, engaging productions in its three-month Summer Repertory Season entertaining audiences from 36 states and through Education Tours annually reaching more than 15,000 students statewide.

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