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M E D I A R E L E A S E

Sex. Drugs. Chamber music? *Opus opens April 15, 2011 at Portland Center Stage*

March 31, 2011– PORTLAND, OR. What happens when some of the world's most highly-strung artists become...unstrung? Opening night is just around the corner for *Opus*, by Michael Hollinger, the tart, witty play about the politics and passions that threaten a classical string quartet. *Opus* previews on Tuesday, April 12, 2011, with **opening night set for April 15**, and performances through May 8. Performance times are Tuesday through Sunday, 7:30 pm, with matinees at 2:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday, and some Thursday matinees at noon. Tickets start at \$33 for full adult prices, with student and under age 30 discounts available. Rush tickets may be available for some performances at \$20 each. For a full calendar of performances and ticket availability, visit the show page at www.pcs.org/opus.

Opus tells the story of the world's foremost string quartet, on the verge of meltdown right before the most important performance of their careers--a live concert at the White House. In a unique collaboration, PCS invited artists from Chamber Music Northwest, Oregon Symphony, Portland Baroque Orchestra and Portland Youth Philharmonic to teach the company about chamber music and performance and to train the actors how to convincingly "play" their instruments. "Though we don't have to actually play them, we do have to credibly mime the bow strokes along to recorded music. It is farrrrrrrr more challenging than one might think," noted Artistic Director Chris Coleman.



Violin coach Adam Lamotte, Actor Greg Jackson (Alan), Actor Chris Coleman (Elliot) and Violin coach Kevin Lefohn

Coleman makes his Portland acting debut in the role of Elliot, the quartet's volatile first violinist, . "Having been performing since I was five, it's a little hard to believe that I took [this] long of a hiatus, but I've had plenty to keep me busy," said Coleman about taking on the role. **Matthew Boston is cast as Dorian**, viola player in the quartet; Boston was last seen at PCS as Adult Reuven in *The Chosen*. Also returning to the Gerding Theater stage is **Sarah Stevens**, who played Betty Schafer in *Sunset Boulevard*; in *Opus*, Stevens plays Grace, a young violist whose appearance on the scene shifts the well-established balance of the group. Finishing out the original quartet are **Greg Jackson as Alan, on second violin**, and **Chris Hietikko as Carl**, the cellist; both are making their Portland Center Stage debuts.

Opus is directed by **Brendon Fox**. Scenic Design is by **James Kronzer**, with costumes by **Holly Poe Durbin**. Lighting design is by **Patricia Collins** and the sound designer is **Casi Pacilio**.

Production Sponsors for *Opus* are **Umpqua Private Bank, Ann and Tom Ridenhour and Ronni Lacroute/Willakenzie Estate**.

Portland Center Stage's 2010/11 season is funded in part by **Umpqua Private Bank**, the **Regional Arts & Culture Council** and **Work for Art**; the **Oregon Arts Commission**; the **Paul G. Allen Family Foundation**; and **Tim & Mary Boyle**.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including discussions, classes, workshops and partnerships with organizations throughout the Portland metro area.

THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY houses a 599-seat Main Stage and the 200-seat black box Ellyn Bye Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.

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