



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**Media Contact:** Adrienne Sweeney  
507-467-2905 x208 or  
adrienne@commonwealththeatre.org

**Box Office:** 800-657-7025 or  
www.commonwealththeatre.org

### **COMMONWEAL THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2011 SEASON**

LANESBORO, MN. — The Commonweal Theatre Company, located in historic, downtown Lanesboro, proudly announces the lineup for its 2011 season of plays. Five mainstage productions – a masterwork from playwright Henrik Ibsen, a tragically funny look at man’s best friend, a riotous campy musical, a classic small-town American tale, and a heartwarming holiday comedy – each explores the power of the community around us to shape our lives.

The twenty-third season for the Commonweal Theatre Company officially opens with *An Enemy of the People*, a classic play from Henrik Ibsen, the Father of Modern Drama. First presented by the Commonweal in 2001, it is the story of doctor in a small tourist town who discovers the waters of the health springs, which have made the town famous, are dangerously polluted. But when no one wants to hear the truth, the doctor finds himself standing alone against his friends, neighbors, and even his own family, in his crusade to save the town from itself. *An Enemy of the People* will tour several sites in Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin before officially opening in Lanesboro on April 16th as the centerpiece of Commonweal’s 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Ibsen Festival.

*An Enemy of the People* will then run at the Commonweal through June 10th, playing partially in repertory with A.R. Gurney’s off-Broadway comedy, *Sylvia*. When a middle-aged Manhattan businessman brings home a stray dog from the park, his new four-legged friend ends up turning his life and his marriage upside-down in surprising ways. *Sylvia* opens May 21st and closes August 19th.

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One of the most fun, campy musicals of all time takes to the Commonweal stage in the summer and fall. Based on Roger Corman's cult classic, *Little Shop of Horrors* tells the story of Skid Row florist Seymour Krelborn who discovers an amazing talking (and singing!) Venus flytrap named Audrey. Audrey has the power to grant Seymour's every wish, but only if he satisfies the plant's very unusual appetite! It's man versus plant in a musical romp the whole family will love! *Little Shop of Horrors* plays from June 25th through October 28th.

In the fall of 2011, a great American novel comes to life at the Commonweal. Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* is the story of one woman's memories growing up in the Deep South during the Depression, and what happened one summer when her lawyer-father confronted bigotry in their small town head-on by deciding to defend a black man falsely accused of a horrible crime. This classic piece of literature is on stage from September 3rd through November 13th.

And for the holidays, the Commonweal is proud to present the romantic comedy, *Parfumerie* - the play that was the basis for the movies *Shop Around the Corner* (starring Jimmy Stewart) and *You've Got Mail* (starring Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks). It's the Christmas shopping season and two shop clerks at Hammerschmidt's Parfumerie engage in a tense rivalry, not realizing that they have actually fallen in love with each other through a year-and-a-half's worth of anonymous, romantic letters. This warm and touching story about the search for hope and love amidst the stress of everyday life opens November 25th and closes December 20th.

As part of its mission to make personal connections with their audiences and to make the power of live theatre accessible to everyone in the region, Commonweal offers Student Matinees of all its 2011 productions to area teachers and students, enhanced with complementary study guides and in-class workshops. All productions also include preview performances, which are open to the public at a discounted admission price. The theatre itself has been upgraded by the addition of acoustical treatments to markedly improve audibility and one performance of every mainstage production will feature an American Sign Language interpreter (tickets half off for those needing interpreter services).

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Season passes to the Commonweal Theatre give the best savings to come see all five shows, and they make great gifts for the holiday season. For more information, contact Commonweal Box Office Manager Irene ErkenBrack at [tickets@commonwealtheatre.org](mailto:tickets@commonwealtheatre.org) or call the Box Office at 1-800-657-7025. Season Passes for 2011 go on sale starting November 12th.

All performances are at the Commonweal Theatre, 208 Parkway Avenue North in historic downtown Lanesboro. For ticket reservations and season brochure requests, call 800-657-7025 or 507-467-2525. More information can also be found online by visiting [www.commonwealtheatre.org](http://www.commonwealtheatre.org).

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