

For Immediate Release

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Berkshire Opera Festival Announces The Cancellation of Its Summer 2020 Production

(Great Barrington, MA) — Berkshire Opera Festival (BOF) announced today that it is canceling its performances of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, originally scheduled at the Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield, MA on August 22, 25, and 28, 2020, in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. BOF Executive Director Abigail Rollins notes, "Throughout the past few months, we have worked tirelessly to develop a number of alternative possibilities for safely producing *Don Giovanni*, given that we did not know what the state of Massachusetts's reopening mandate would be for indoor, live performances. On July 6, 2020, the state's Phase 3 reopening protocols began to roll out, and it is now quite evident that we have no alternative but to cancel this performance."

Co-Founders Jonathon Loy and Brian Garman created a personalized video message for their patrons, which can be found on their website: <https://www.berkshireoperafestival.org/season>

This is not the first adjustment that BOF has made to its Fifth Anniversary Season. In a May 27 press release, BOF announced the cancellation of its Fifth Anniversary Gala Concert and Celebration - originally scheduled for August 13 at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington, MA - as well as its plan to adapt its mainstage opera, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, to be performed in a semi-staged, concert version in order to better accommodate COVID-related

safety parameters, including social distancing for its performers and audience members. Since then, BOF's staff and Board of Directors have been carefully monitoring the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic, the evolving health and safety standards for both performers and audience members, and the State of Massachusetts's Reopening Plan to make a final determination as to the feasibility of safely performing *Don Giovanni*. BOF has ultimately concluded that welcoming audiences to any indoor venue is simply not possible this summer.

Berkshire Opera Festival is currently developing plans for alternative events and programming to reconnect with its patrons and supporters from the safety of their homes later this summer.

Berkshire Theatre Group will issue all current *Don Giovanni* ticket holders a full refund for the face value of their tickets, which will be paid via check and mailed no later than August 7, 2020. Questions regarding the delivery of ticket refunds may be directed to the Berkshire Theatre Group box office at info@berkshiretheatre.org.

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About Berkshire Opera Festival

Berkshire Opera Festival (BOF) is a fully-producing summer festival founded by Jonathon Loy and Brian Garman which premiered its first season in 2016. The mission of Berkshire Opera Festival is to entertain and enrich the lives of people of all ages and backgrounds throughout the Berkshire region by providing accessible and affordable performances of a broad range of operas with the highest artistic standards. Each summer, BOF presents musically and dramatically compelling operatic productions, in addition to recitals and other related musical events. Recent productions include Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, Strauss's *Ariadne Auf Naxos*, Verdi's *Rigoletto*, and Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*.

For more information on Berkshire Opera Festival, visit: <https://www.berkshireoperafestival.org>