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Bazaar Productions Shifts Focus to Developing New Work in 2015

For Immediate Release

Pittsfield, MA – With a renewed focus on creating new work in 2015, Bazaar Productions is pleased to announce that **Kickwheel Ensemble Theater** (the company's creative arm) will break ground this summer on their newest original theater piece, *PASSAGE*. This new work will explore the history, politics, and recent thawing of the once impenetrable Northwest Passage.

This July, Kickwheel will begin an immersive artist-in-residence program at the Millbrook School in Millbrook, NY. The residency provides the company with artist housing and space in the school's theater and studios in support of the development of *PASSAGE* and will culminate in a series of public workshop performances. The residency also furthers Bazaar Productions' mission to engage the next generation of theater makers by providing a unique opportunity for students to work alongside the company. A work-in-progress showing of *PASSAGE* will be presented at the Millbrook School's Chelsea Morrison Theater on July 17th and 18th at 7pm.

Merging original sound, virtuosic physical performance, and questionably accurate historical reenactments, *PASSAGE* focuses an often humorous lens on the Canadian Arctic, a hotbed of political unrest with a tragic past and an uncertain future. As an ensemble theater company, Kickwheel has spent the past year writing, devising, generating, and exploring diverse source materials including researched accounts, news reports, letters, and interviews.

Upon completion of the residency in Millbrook, Kickwheel will return to its Berkshire home in August for another work-in-progress showing of the piece in Pittsfield, MA. "As theater makers creating new work, the feedback we receive from our community is a huge part of our creative process" says *PASSAGE* director Sara Katzoff. "Reactions to these first public showings will inform how this project grows, evolves, and changes." Kickwheel Ensemble also plans to premiere *PASSAGE* in the Berkshires in 2016 and to tour the work worldwide in 2016 and 2017.

The Berkshire Fringe—the theater festival that is historically the biggest and best known project of Bazaar Productions—will take a hiatus in 2015. "We're taking this year off from producing the festival to dedicate our minds and bodies more fully to creating our own work," says company co-artistic director Peter Wise. "It will also be an opportunity to take the time needed to create a more sustainable long term vision for the festival in 2016 and beyond."

Bazaar Productions will continue its presenting activities in 2015, launching a new music series called **Fringe Music** in collaboration with Shire City Sanctuary and the City of Pittsfield's First Friday Artswalk. The monthly series will present sonic innovators from across the Northeast that

break down genre barriers and come from a wide array of stylistic backgrounds. The new series will start in September 2015 and is a direct offshoot of the 30 Live! series that has been the music presentation portion of The Berkshire Fringe since 2006.

For more information, please visit kickwheel.org and berkshirefringe.org.

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