



Bazaar Productions / Cultural Pittsfield
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BERKSHIRE FRINGE MOVES NORTH TO PITTSFIELD'S UPSTREET CULTURAL DISTRICT

*For Immediate Release
Photos available upon request*

Pittsfield, MA—The Office of Cultural Development and Bazaar Productions, Inc. announced today that The Berkshire Fringe will be moving north this August to spark an exciting new partnership with the City of Pittsfield.

Megan Whilden, Director of Cultural Development for the City of Pittsfield said, *"I have been a fan of the Berkshire Fringe Festival since it launched ten years ago and love the creative and innovative energy and performers they bring to the Berkshires each year. The Fringe festival will be an exciting new addition to the Upstreet Cultural District."*

"We're extremely pleased to welcome the Berkshire Fringe Festival to Pittsfield's vibrant Upstreet Cultural District this summer," noted Pittsfield Mayor Dan Bianchi. *"The economic impact of dozens of performers from around the world and hundreds of audience members heading upstreet this August will benefit local businesses and residents."*

With assistance from the Office of Cultural Development, The Berkshire Fringe has secured a venue for its 10th annual performing arts festival at the Shire City Sanctuary owned and operated by textile artist Crispina ffrench. The former Notre Dame Church, located at 40 Melville Street, is situated in the heart of the Upstreet Cultural District and will host Berkshire Fringe theater performances and events August 2–August 18. *Retro Spectacle*, a ten-year anniversary celebration and fundraiser will kick-off the festival on Saturday, August 2.

"We are very excited to showcase our building with this wonderful group of creative entrepreneurs and look forward to growing our mission with like-minded people and organizations", said Crispina ffrench.

ffrench and her husband, Chris Swindlehurst, recently completed major renovations at the Shire City Sanctuary, allowing them to lease their space to the Fringe, which has been based on the campus of Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington since 2005.

"We are always on the lookout for people and places that share our commitment to cultivating creative risk and new ideas, and we are excited to join forces with the city of Pittsfield and the diverse cultural momentum taking place there," said Berkshire Fringe co-Artistic Director, Sara Katzoff. *"The new availability of Crispina's Shire City Sanctuary for public events and the support of Pittsfield's Office of Cultural Development have combined to make this big move an easy transition for us. Simon's Rock provided a very safe nest for us to hatch The Fringe in for our first nine seasons. As alumni of the College, we are deeply grateful for the support they have given us over the years."*

The Fringe's move to Pittsfield also creates new opportunities for emerging artists from across the globe to contribute to the growing creative hub of the city. Two Fringe favorites will be returning to headline the 2014 festival in its new home.

The Wardrobe Ensemble from Bristol, UK will present the U.S. premiere of their newest work, **33**—a show reexamining the media frenzy surrounding the Chilean miners crisis—in addition to remounting their 2012 Fringe hit **RIOT**.

Under The Table Theater Ensemble from Brooklyn, NY presenting two productions at the fringe this summer: **The HunchbackS of Notre Dame**, and **Solo: A Two Person Show**.

In addition to over 30 main performances at Shire City Sanctuary, the Fringe intends to schedule smaller events, including its **30 Live!** free concert series and a free **Community Performance Laboratory**, at smaller venues like the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts. A complete schedule of performances, family programs, free concerts, workshops, pick-your-own-price nights and open rehearsals will be announced in May.

"We are big fans of WordXWord, the 10X10 Upstreet Arts Festival and other collaborative events held here," said Katzoff. *"Having colleagues and collaborators in the arts is so essential and everyone we have spoken to in Pittsfield has welcomed the Fringe with open arms. We are looking forward to sparking new partnerships with the numerous organizations, artists and businesses who are bringing so much creative energy to this city."*

Founded in 2005, The Berkshire Fringe has presented over 130 original works of theater, dance and new music by 550 artists and ensembles from around the world, throughout the United States, and right here in the Berkshires. The 'sassy and experimental' festival has been hailed as a vibrant testing ground for new performance that provides vital support, resources and recognition to emerging theater makers, performers, composers and multimedia artists whose voices are often underrepresented in the mainstream.

To learn about sponsorship opportunities, to volunteer to house an artist or find out more about the 2014 Berkshire Fringe and how to get involved, visit <http://berkshirefringe.org> or contact Co-Artistic Director Sara Katzoff at sara@berkshirefringe.org.

The Berkshire Fringe is made possible through the generous support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, The Office of Cultural Development for the City of Pittsfield, The Tadd Gero Fund for Emerging Artists and a network of donors and supporters throughout the Berkshire community and beyond.

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