



## **NEWS RELEASE**

***For Immediate Release: March 1, 2010***

*Kill Date: April 18, 2010*

**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 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL IBSEN FESTIVAL**

LANESBORO, MINN. — Commonweal Theatre announces its 13th Annual Ibsen Festival April 16-18, 2010 in downtown Lanesboro. Named for the acclaimed “Father of Modern Drama”, the Festival is a celebration of Scandinavian theatre, visual art, music and dance and centers around the opening weekend of Commonweal’s annual Ibsen production. For 2010, the theatre is proud to present *John Gabriel Borkman* – the story of a banker imprisoned for misuse of investor funds and obsessed with recapturing his former power and influence.

IbsenFest offers numerous events and presentations throughout the weekend to satisfy a variety of interests. Throughout the weekend, guests may attend lectures, film presentations, musical concerts, artist displays, and a Norwegian/English Worship Service at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Lanesboro. The Commonweal Theatre is excited to welcome **Professor Simon Williams** as this year’s keynote speaker. Professor Williams is Chair of the Department of Dramatic Art at the University of California, Santa Barbara and author of over forty books and articles on European drama, especially of the period dominated by Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw and Wedekind. The title of his lecture will be “Coming to Terms with the Industrial Revolution: The Politics of *John Gabriel Borkman*”.

~ more ~

**Commonweal Theatre Company**  
**13<sup>th</sup> Annual Ibsen festival, page 2**

The highlight of the weekend will be the opening night of Henrik Ibsen's penultimate work, *John Gabriel Borkman*. Commonweal Theatre's production will feature Resident Artists Stela Burdt, Sarah Hawkins, David Hennessey, Tim Sailer and Adrienne Sweeney with Hal Cropp - Commonweal's Artistic Director and a 2009 Nominee for the International Ibsen Award - in the title role. Commonweal Theatre has commissioned Minnesota's premiere playwright, **Jeffrey Hatcher**, to develop an original adaptation of the script for our audiences. Mr. Hatcher plays include *Complete Female Stage Beauty*, *Scotland Road* and *Three Viewings* and adaptations of Jean Anouilh's *To Fool the Eye* (produced by Commonweal in 2006) Henry James' *Turn of the Screw* (onstage at Commonweal later in 2010).

The show will be directed by **Risa Brainin**, former Resident Director of the Guthrie Theatre and current Director of Performance/Associate Professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Locally, Ms. Brainin's directing credits include The Guthrie, Mixed Blood, History Theatre and Illusion Theatre and regionally at Indiana Repertory, Milwaukee Repertory, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, and Actors' Theatre of Louisville.

The Commonweal also welcomes **Henry Shea**, Senior Fellow at the University of St. Thomas School of Law and a Fellow at the Holloran Center for Ethical Leadership in the Professions. He will provide a lecture entitled "Confronting the Temptations of Greed, Power and Money in Our Society." A former Assistant U.S. Attorney, Shea prosecuted countless white-collar criminals. His address will provide some insight into the mindset of a person who could knowingly speculate with the resources of others—much like John Gabriel Borkman and Bernard Madoff.

Throughout the weekend, we will provide screenings of the Frontline documentary *The Madoff Affair*, which examines Bernard Madoff's global Ponzi scheme that cost investors over \$65 billion.

While most events and classes require pre-registration, many are free. A complete list of Festival events is available by calling 1-800-657-7025 or going online to [www.ibsenfest.org](http://www.ibsenfest.org).

The Commonweal is a non-profit professional theatre with year-round main stage and educational programming located at 208 Parkway Avenue North in historic downtown Lanesboro. For more information about the 2010 Ibsen Festival, contact Adrienne Sweeney at 507-467-2905 x208 or [adrienne@commonwealtheatre.org](mailto:adrienne@commonwealtheatre.org).

###