



**News Release
Virginia Repertory Theatre**

For Immediate Release

Date: November 6, 2013

**Contact: Susan Davenport
Director of Communications
Virginia Repertory Theatre
susandavenport@comcast.net
804-513-8211**

**Virginia Rep Opens the Holiday Season with *Fiddler on the Roof*
Starring Broadway's David Benoit as Tevye**

**Community Partnerships with The Weinstein JCC, The Virginia
Holocaust Museum and Chabad of Virginia**

Richmond, VA – Virginia Repertory Theatre announces the opening of the Tony Award-winning musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*, at the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre, 114 West Broad Street on Friday, November 22 with a preview on Thursday, November 21. The show runs through January 12, 2014. Based on the tales by Shalom Aleichem and set in Tzarist Russia in 1905, this touching musical tells the story of Tevye, a poor milkman, who must weigh his family's happiness against the traditions that have preserved a way of life in his village for centuries. His eldest daughters want to marry for love rather than an auspicious match, and outside political forces threaten everything he holds dear. The beloved score with a book by Joseph Stein, Music by Jerry Bock and Lyrics by Sheldon Harnick celebrates 50 years in 2014.

Director Richard M. Parison, Jr. makes his directing debut with Virginia Rep and shares his thoughts on this classic story. "Fiddler on the Roof is timeless. But more importantly is universal. It is about universal human values. The story transcends the bounds of the Jewish faith and culture. The conflict between the generations, the struggle between different cultures, the power and strength of love ... these are Japanese themes, these are Italian themes, these are Indian themes, these are

American themes ... these are universal themes.” Parison is the Executive Director of Richmond CenterStage after over a decade in Philadelphia as Associate Artistic Director at the Prince Music Theater and as Assistant Producing Artistic Director at the internationally recognized Walnut Street Theatre. He is a two-time Barrymore Award nominee for Outstanding Direction of a Musical for *Dreamgirls* and *The Big Bang* at Act II Playhouse. Regional directing credits include *Dessa Rose*, Firehouse Theatre (RTCC People’s Choice Award 2012); *The Interview*, Cleveland Playhouse; *Eye of the Storm*, Barter Theater; *Noel Coward in Paris*, Asolo Theatre Company; *The Laramie Project*, Barrington Stage Company; *HAIR*, *Ain’t Misbehavin*, Prince Music Theater and *Pump Boys and Dinettes* and *The Lake and Collected Stories* at Walnut Street Theatre.

Also new to Virginia Rep are award winning Philadelphia-based choreographer, **Karen Getz**, New York set designer, **Brian Prather**, and lighting designer **Robert Perry**. Getz’s most recent work includes *Spring Awakening* at The University Of The Arts, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Little Women* at Bristol Riverside Theater, *Dessa Rose* at The Firehouse Theatre Project, *Twelfth Night* at The Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival, *Our Class* at The Wilma Theatre and *The Big Bang* (again, with Richard Parison) at The Kimmel Center.

Brian Prather’s recent Off-Broadway design credits include *Becoming Dr. Ruth* at Westside Theatre, *The Memory Show* at Transport Group, *Freud’s Last Session* at New World Stages, *Nymph Errant* at Prospect Theatre Co. and *The Burnt Part Boys* at Playwrights Horizons. Regional credits include The Alley Theatre, Barrington Stage Co., The Broad Stage, The Mercury Theatre, Delaware Theatre Co., The Hangar Theatre and TheaterWorks Hartford.

Robert Perry has been designing lighting for over 25 years with projects ranging from Off-Broadway to dance and opera. Regionally he has designed for the Goodman Theatre, LaJolla Playhouse, Chicago Shakespeare, Dallas Theater Center, California Shakespeare Festival, Triad Stage, the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington DC, Hartford Stage and the McCarter. He received a Drama Desk nomination for *The Water Engine* at the Atlantic Theater Company.

Music Director **Anthony Smith** most recently served as musical director for *The Music Man*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Nunsense* at Virginia Rep and *Spring Awakening* at the University of Richmond.

Virginia Rep welcomes Broadway’s **David Benoit** to the stage in the lead role of Tevye. Benoit recently appeared in the Broadway and touring production of *Jekyll and Hyde* (Bishop/Spider). Other Broadway credits include: *Avenue Q* (Nicky/Trekkie), *Les*

Miserables (Bishop of Digne, Javert), and *Dance of the Vampires*. National Tours include: *Young Frankenstein* (Kemp/ Blind Hermit), *Avenue Q*, *Les Miserables* (Thernardier) and *All Shook Up* (Sheriff Earl).

Tamara Johnson, a Williamsburg resident, joins Benoit as Golde. Recent stage credits include Emilie du Chatelet in *Legacy of Light* at Virginia Rep, Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* at REP Stage MD, and Lotte in *Lettice and Lovage*, Jackson Hole, WY. Film and television credits include *Six Souls* co-starring with Julianne Moore, *Lake Effects* co-starring with Jane Seymour, *Killing Lincoln*, *One Tree Hill*, *The Wire*, *A Haunting*, and TV pilot *Young Americans*. She is the recipient of the Kennedy Center Award for Excellence and the Individual Artist Award by the Maryland State Arts Council for *In Haste*, *Laura Keene*.

Audra Honaker (*The Importance of Being Earnest* at Henley Street/Richmond Shakespeare/RTP, *Pop!*, *Time Stands Still*, *Dog Sees God*, *A Bright New Boise* at Firehouse Theatre Project) and **Brittany D. Simmons** (*The Music Man*, *Nunsense* for Virginia Rep) play the two older daughters, Tzeitel and Hodel. Steward School sophomore **Ally Dods** (Ariel in *Little Mermaid* and Lucky in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* at CYT) joins the company as Chava.

Nicholas Park and **Matt Zimmerman** make their debuts at Virginia Rep as Motel and Perchik. Recent Off-Broadway credits for Park include *Dear Edwina*, *Bedbugs: The Musical* and *Mr. Irresistible*. Matt Zimmerman was most recently seen in the New York workshop/concert for Andrew Lipka's latest work, *I Am Harvey Milk*. He was also featured in the NY City Center Production of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* starring Megan Hilty. **Richard Travis** (*Olympus on My Mind*, *Four Part Harmony*) returns to Virginia Rep as Lazar Wolf, and **Deb Clinton** (*The Sound of Music* for Virginia Rep, *The Winter's Tale* for Henley Street Theatre) plays the role of Yente, the Matchmaker.

Corporate Sponsors

Virginia Rep is grateful for the support from Altria, BB&T, Shubert Foundation, Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond.com and Community Idea Stations.

Community Partnerships

Virginia Rep is proud to partner with the Weinstein Jewish Community Center, Virginia Holocaust Museum and the Chabad of Virginia on this production. Leaders from each organization will participate in talkbacks and outreach to special groups.

Student Matinees

Middle and high school matinees will take place on December 11 and 12 at 10:30 a.m. Tickets are \$14. Shows include talkback with cast members and leaders from the Jewish community.

Talk on Tap

The Talk on Tap conversation series will continue on Friday evenings after the 8:00 p.m. performance on December 6, 13, 20, 27, January 3 and January 10. Cast members will join the audience for casual conversations about the production. Additional Sunday talkbacks lead by local Jewish leaders will take place on December 1 and 8.

Ticket Information

Box Office 804-282-2620

www.va-rep.org

Full Price Tickets: \$48 - \$60

Discounted Group Rates and Rush tickets available.

U-Tix for college and high school students \$15. Available by phone or in person day of show only. Student ID required.

The Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre is equipped with a new state-of-the-art induction loop hearing system that is compatible with all telecoil-equipped hearing aids and cochlear implants. A handheld receiver and headphone system is also available free of charge for anyone who is hearing impaired.

Valet parking is available for \$8 at during Wednesday matinees and Friday and Saturday evening performances.

Press Kits Available at <http://va-rep.org/press.html>

Pass code accessible Hi Res photos available to media.

username = press password = HiRes121

Evening performances at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, Saturday 7:00 p.m. pm on select Wednesdays

Matinee performances at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday and select Wednesdays and Saturdays

Direction & Design

Director

Richard M. Parison, Jr.^

Choreography

Karen Getz^

Musical Director

Anthony Smith

Scenic Designer
Lighting Designer
Costume Designer
Stage Manager

Brian Prather+
Robert Perry+
Sue Griffin
Wendy Vandergrift*

Cast List

Tevye	David Benoit*
Golde	Tamara Johnson*
Tzeitel	Audra Honaker
Hodel	Brittany D. Simmons
Chava	Ally Dods
Shprintze	Kendall Wilkinson, Mila Cesaretti
Bielke	Maggie Scott, Tori Eriavez
Yente	Debra Clinton
Lazar Wolf	Richard Travis
Mordcha	Barry Pruitt
Perchik	Matt Zimmerman*
Motel	Nicholas Park*
Constable	Andrew C. Boothby
Fyedka	Samuel Elton
Sasha	James Bock
Grandma Tzeitel	Mary Anne Furey
Fruma-Sarah	Bianca Bryan

Ensemble

James Bock, Bryan Charles Moore, Jon Cooper, Matthew Curiano, Lauren Marie Hafner, Zachary Kenney, Shaina Virginia Kuhn, Will Meredith, Bryan Charles Moore, Neil Rushnock, Kevin Scott, Boe Wank

The director and choreographer are members of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

+Member of USA United Scenic Artists: local 829

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the U.S.A.

Full bios can be found at www.va-rep.org.

About Virginia Repertory Theatre

Virginia Repertory Theatre, located in Richmond, VA, combines the talents and strengths of two nonprofit companies that shared facilities, resources, and management teams for over a decade. Now the heritages of Barksdale Theatre (founded in 1953) and Theatre IV (founded in 1975) live on in their new form, as Central Virginia's leading professional theater company. Virginia Rep presents national caliber productions of the great dramas, comedies, and musicals as well as classics, contemporary works, and world premieres, always seeking to demonstrate the unique power of theater to engage, enthrall, educate, and inspire. Productions are staged at four distinct venues: the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre and Theatre Gym at the downtown Virginia Rep Center, Virginia Rep's Children's Theatre of Virginia located at Willow Lawn, and at Hanover Tavern, home to Virginia Rep's Barksdale Season.

