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OPERA HOUSE ARTS' SUMMER THEATRE CONTINUES WITH A WORLD PREMIERE
BASED ON THE WRITINGS OF BELOVED DOWN EAST AUTHOR RUTH MOORE

*I Have Seen Horizons: Ruth Moore's Stories from Maine fills the Opera House stage with characters and voices from a time long gone.*

The press performance is Thursday August 16 at 7pm.
Email for press tickets, high-resolution images, and interviews.

[August 4, 2018: Stonington, ME] Opera House Arts final production of the summer season couldn't possibly be more local. This world premiere presentation of a new play based on the writing of Down East author Ruth Moore features a small cast who are joined onstage by local musicians to tell stories of life in Down East Maine in the early part of the last century.

Hailed as "New England's only answer to Faulkner," beloved Maine author Ruth Moore filtered personal and family histories through her vibrant imagination to create masterful snapshots of life in Maine. Her intimate knowledge of those living and working on the islands Down East gives her wide-ranging stories an authentic voice. Through the struggles and triumphs of the characters who fill them, we see a world that is completely of its time and also surprisingly contemporary.

This summer, these portraits leap off the page and onto the Opera House stage in a celebration of story-telling and place that is touching, funny, sometimes nostalgic – and always vividly alive.

"We always strive to tell stories that resonate with our community," says Opera House Arts Interim Artistic Director Peter Richards. "Ruth Moore's touching, humorous, and familiar tales will surely hit home."

In this World Premiere production, playwright Meg Taintor (former Producing Artistic Director of Opera House Arts) and director Natalya Baldyga (who Stonington audiences will know from her production of *Orlando* in the Burnt Cove Church), have combined seven of Ruth Moore's short stories to create an intimate evening of story-telling. The production is shot through with music, from beloved folk and traditional songs to new pieces composed for the play by music director Veronica Barron, and all six of the actors play instruments and sing in addition to their acting.

"To me, reading Ruth Moore's writing has the feel of sitting at your kitchen table and having a story told to you by a good friend," says Taintor. "So as we were adapting this, we aimed to create that experience for the audience. And, as Maine kitchens are filled equally with stories and songs, having a strong musical component to the play was so important to us both."

Ruth Moore, born in 1903 on Gott's Island, is perhaps best known in Maine, but her work far exceeds the label of "regional writer". In the same way that Robert Penn Warren, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor and others wrote about global themes through the exploration of a very particular location and community, Moore had the gift of capturing the universal in the local.

"Our hope is to create a space where everyone feels welcome" says Baldyga. "You don't have to have read Ruth's Moore's novels to relate to the wonderful characters who fill her books. People of all ages should feel, when they join us, like friends and neighbors."

**I HAVE SEEN HORIZONS: RUTH MOORE'S STORIES FROM MAINE** takes place at the Stonington Opera House, located in downtown Stonington, just above the working fish pier. Tickets are $25 and $40 and may be purchased online at www.operahousearts.org or by calling 207-367-2788. Deer Isle students may attend all Opera House Arts productions for free.

***I HAVE SEEN HORIZONS*** **Performance Schedule**

| | | |
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| Thursday, August 16 | 7pm | |
| Friday, August 17 | 7pm | Press Performance |
| Saturday, August 18 | 7pm | |
| Sunday, August 19 | 4pm | Talk-back after the performance |
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| Thursday, August 23 | 7pm | |
| Friday, August 24 | 7pm | |
| Saturday, August 25 | 7pm | |
| Sunday, August 26 | 4pm | |

**Creative Credits:**
By Meg Taintor & Natalya Baldyga
Based on the writing of Ruth Moore
Directed by Natalya Baldyga

Cast:
Summit Coleman
Cate Damon*
Paul Farwell
Caleb Mayo*
Dee Pelletier*
Katie Zaffrann*

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| Stage Manager | Jennifer Caster* |
| Dramaturg | Noe Montez |
| Music Director/Musician | Veronica Barron |
| Set Designer | Ted Simpson |
| Costume Designer | Chelsea Kerl |
| Light Designer | Natalie Robin |

* denotes member of Actors Equity Association, union of professional actors and stage managers

**About Opera House Arts Summer 2018 Theatre Season**
Opera House Arts Summer 2018 Theatre Season, which runs from June 29-August 26, features two productions: Shakespeare's classic tail of old revenge and new love (***The Tempest*****, June 29-**

**July 15**), and a World Premiere celebration of one of Maine's most beloved authors (***I Have Seen Horizons: Ruth Moore's Stories from Maine*****, August 16-26**).

Both productions invite audiences to celebrate life in Maine through their powerful connections to the island and the region's history and culture. From the beauty of the historic saltwater farm that will serve as a backdrop for Shakespeare in Stonington to the rich Down East characters who fill Ruth Moore's stories, Opera House Arts honors the vibrant spirit of this corner of Maine.

**About Opera House Arts**

Opera House Arts, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, was originally established to restore the historic Stonington Opera House, on the National Register of Historic Places, to its original role as a center for performance and a community gathering space. Now in its 18th year, OHA produces live theatre, music and dance in both the Stonington Opera House, and on our second stage, the restored Burnt Cove Church Community Center.

Opera House Arts' high quality, original, professional performance programs serve all of Hancock County's winter and summer residents and visitors, of all ages, with special emphasis on the residents and students of Deer Isle and the Blue Hill Peninsula. We offer a full year-round schedule of professional theatre, film, educational programs, digital media, concerts, and community events.

OHA is an unique organization. Many of our audiences know us as a professional theatre presenting plays, concerts and family programming in the summer – and indeed we are that, but we are also so much more. As soon as the calendar turns the page from August to September, we dive back into the other half of our identity: as a civic gathering space rooted in the belief that access to and participation in the arts can change lives.

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Captions:

Horizons 1: The women of *I Have Seen Horizons: Ruth Moore's Stories from Maine* gather to learn music for the production. From left to right, Dee Pelletier, Summit Coleman, Cate Damon and Katie Zaffrann.

Horizons 2: Actors in *I Have Seen Horizons: Ruth Moore's Stories from Maine* not only act and sing, but also play music throughout the production. (Paul Farwell on guitar and Caleb Mayo on piano).

Horizons coming soon.jpg: Opera House Arts hosts the world premiere of *I Have Seen Horizons: Ruth Moore's Stories from Maine*, a theatrical adaptation with music of seven short stories written by Ruth Moore, August 16-26.