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WESTON THEATER COMPANY RESTRUCTURES SEASON 87 DUE TO CATASTROPHIC FLOODING. TWO SHOWS CANCELED. APTLY TITLED SINGIN' IN THE RAIN MOVES FROM FLOOD-RAVAGED PLAYHOUSE TO SMALLER WALKER FARM THEATER.

WESTON, VT (July 27, 2023) - Weston Theater Company recently suffered catastrophic flooding that rendered the beloved Weston Playhouse unusable for the remainder of the year. This heartbreaking loss forced a last-minute restructure of season programming.

The impact from the July 10, 2023 flood far eclipsed that of Hurricane Irene (2011). The damage to The Playhouse, administrative offices, and residences in town is extensive. The flooding occurred at the height of the summer when *Buddy: the Buddy Holly Story*, *What the Constitution Means to Me*, and *Singin' in the Rain* were all underway.

Executive Artistic Director, **Susanna Gellert** says: "*The extremity of the damage combined with the difficulty of the timing require us to make some essential changes to the remainder of our season. The adjusted plan considers our new physical realities and makes the most of the artistic projects that were in motion when the flood hit, while responsibly directing our limited resources. Though we're heartbroken to cut such a promising season so short, we celebrate the successes we were able to reap early in the season, and know that this decision will equip us to return next year stronger than ever.*"

Singin' In the Rain, originally scheduled for the Playhouse stage, is now going to perform at the smaller and more intimate Walker Farm theater. **Says Gellert:** "*We are very glad that we have found a way forward for this glorious show and that it does not have to be canceled.*"

The Porch on Windy Hill, which was to run August 16 - September 3 at Walker Farm, will be moved to the 2024 season and *Let There Be Love*, scheduled for October 4 - October 22, 2023, also at Walker Farm, is canceled. Current ticket holders to canceled performances, including the final week of *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* have the option to receive a refund or contribute to flood relief efforts by converting tickets into a donation.

While bucking national industry trends with record-breaking 2023 subscription sales and single tickets on pace with pre-pandemic numbers, sales for the remainder of the season dropped precipitously over the past two weeks in the wake of the flooding. As financial losses multiply, sustainability and rebuilding for 2024 have become Weston's focus.

In the 48 hours after the flood, hundreds of friends, supporters, community members, and businesses showed up from near and far to offer their generous support. They offered their time,

food, shelter, and helped dig out the mud-laden lower level of the theater and its contents: costumes, props, equipment, furniture, documents, tools, and appliances. A disaster cleanup and remediation company arrived on Wednesday, July 12, 2023 to start the hard work of clearing the last of the water, mud, and debris. Their work continues even now, more than two weeks later, as they attempt to prevent mold and further structural damage. Assessors have been on-site to evaluate the damage. Loss numbers and their reports are forthcoming.

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN plays from August 3 - 20 at Walker Farm. Once all current ticket holders have been reseated at Walker Farm, remaining tickets will be available online and by calling the Weston Box Office at **802-824-5288**.

Weston Theater Company builds on and enhances the unique assets of its Vermont village campus to produce a diverse, entertaining, and challenging season of live professional theater and high-impact events; enrich the theater-going experience with education and outreach programs for all ages; and make significant contributions to the American theater through training programs, play development, and retreats. It is a non-profit organization supported in part by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and an ever-growing family of individuals and organizations who believe in the impact the performing arts make on its community. **Learn more at westontheater.org**

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