



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2010

## **Tapestry & Words in Motion announce the 2010 Ontario tour of *Get Stuffed* – an opera for children that’s good enough to eat – including free public performances in the Distillery Historic District!**

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TORONTO, ON...Tapestry new opera works and Words in Motion are pleased to announce the spring 2010 tour of *Get Stuffed*, a comic opera about serious decisions – making healthy food choices. *Get Stuffed (with the good stuff!)* features vocalizing vegetables along with a big helping of other opinionated edible characters, all competing to influence one child’s daily diet, addressing a timely health and social issue – poor nutrition and the problems which arise as a result, e.g. the rise of type 2 diabetes among children. **Beginning April 19, 2010 the *Get Stuffed* company will tour to communities all over Ontario including inner city and northern, rural regions which have rare access to the professional performing arts. The tour culminates on May 15, 2010 with a day of free outdoor performances in Toronto’s Distillery Historic District.**

Written by Toronto **composer Richard Payne** and Montreal **writer Alexis Diamond** for 5 singing actors and 2 musicians, *Get Stuffed* is intended for family and school audiences. Set in a school cafeteria, *Get Stuffed* promotes environmentally-friendly, healthy food choices inspired by the Canada Food Guide, with special prominence for fruits and vegetables grown in Ontario. The dramatic conflict revolves around introducing a new chef to the school cafeteria. With a libretto that includes foods representative of Canada’s ethnic diversity, this opera will be a feast for young ears, eyes and minds.

A new Canadian opera for young audiences, *Get Stuffed* is presented by **Tapestry** and **Words in Motion**, and was developed in association with **The Canadian Diabetes Association**. With multi-year support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, sponsorship from the Ministry of Health Promotion and support from the Healthy Eating Program at Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc, last season’s 2008/09 tour reached 10,000 students in the Greater Toronto Area, culminating with a special world premiere public performance in the Distillery Historic District, hosted by The Honourable Margaret Best, Ontario’s Minister of Health Promotion. The spring 2010 tour, with new support from Loblaws Canada, will visit schools in the North Bay and Sudbury regions, on Manitoulin Island, in Blind River and the Algoma Region, Brockville, the Gananoque/Smith Falls area, Pembroke, Ottawa, the Golden Horseshoe and the Greater Toronto Area. **Further details about the May 15 free performances in the Distillery Historic District will be released soon. Check [www.getstuffed.ca](http://www.getstuffed.ca) for more information.**

### **From the Ministry of Health Promotion:**

*“Encouraging children to eat more fruits and vegetables and to be active every day is vital to good health and well being,” says Margaret Best, Ontario’s Minister of Health Promotion. “The Get Stuffed school tour is a creative way to deliver important health promotion and disease prevention messages to children in communities throughout Ontario.”*

### **From the Ontario Trillium Foundation:**

*“This is a fresh approach for delivering a message about good nutrition to children without it seeming like a lesson,” said L. Robin Cardozo, CEO of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. “The Foundation is glad that we could provide Tapestry and the Canadian Diabetes Association with this grant that is using music and performance to help deliver a message on the importance of healthy eating.”*

### **Teachers and students have given us great feedback:**

*“Adults and children alike were entertained by big voices and splendid soundscapes at the performance of “Get Stuffed”, definitely not an ordinary opera. The primary students were mesmerized by the complex yet accessible medley of voices and veggies as well as instruments (where did that sound come from?) provided by a stellar cast of musicians and vocal artists. The children were completely engaged by the dramatic performances and responded enthusiastically to the non-stop, ever-changing musical smorgasbord of continually surprising and often amusing rhythms and sounds. Adults were moved to laughter by the nuances of the script but nothing was lost on the children who sat up taller and craned their necks, anxious to see if their fallen diva would revive. All this and learning, too! Canada’s Food Guide never had it so good.”*

**West Prep Public School**

As Diabetes continues to impact more and more Canadians, it is clear that primary prevention strategies and educational programs must be initiated. Currently there are 2,000,000 Canadians living with Diabetes and this number is projected to increase to over 3,000,000 by 2010. In Ontario alone, the current prevalence rate is approaching 9%, almost 3 percentage points higher than the global incidence of 6.4%. Particularly alarming is the increase in Type 2 diabetes among children.

- **In the next 15 years, it is anticipated that the global incidence of type 2 diabetes in children will increase by up to 50 per cent.** (Statistics taken from the CDA website: <http://www.diabetes.ca/about-diabetes/youth/type2/>)

*Get Stuffed* is directed by **Emma Tibaldo**, Artistic and Executive Director of **Playwrights Workshop Montréal** with music direction from **Wayne Strongman**, Tapestry's Managing Artistic Director, set and costume design by **Beth Kates** and stage choreography from **Viv Moore**. A vibrant young cast of 5 singing actors and 2 musicians bring this world of colourful characters to life!

#### **Get Stuffed 2010 Company:**

Alexis Diamond, Librettist  
Richard Payne, Composer  
Emma Tibaldo, Stage Director  
Wayne Strongman, Music Director  
Beth Kates, Set & Costume Designer  
Viv Moore, Stage Choreographer  
Gerry Egan, Stage Manager  
Christopher Mayell (tenor), *Student, Sous Chef, Carrot, Cheeseburger*  
Justin Welsh (baritone), *Student, Sous Chef, Broccoli, Big Cheese*  
Catharin Carew (mezzo soprano), *Student, Miss French Fry*  
Christopher Ryan (baritone), *Zach*  
Lisa Di Maria (soprano), *Teacher, The New Chef, Miss Apple*  
Lizzie Lavado, *piano*  
Ed Squires, *percussion*

**For booking or other enquiries** please contact Amber Ebert, Outreach & Education Director, Tapestry at 416.537.6066 x224 or [education@tapestrynewopera.com](mailto:education@tapestrynewopera.com).

**For more information** please visit [www.getstuffed.ca](http://www.getstuffed.ca) or [www.tapestrynewopera.com](http://www.tapestrynewopera.com)

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#### **ABOUT THE COMPANIES**

**Tapestry new opera works** - Celebrating 30 years, **Tapestry** is dedicated to the creation, development and performance of new opera works through its unique and highly collaborative work process. Under the leadership of Managing Artistic Director Wayne Strongman, Tapestry engages the hearts and minds of artists and audiences on subjects relevant to contemporary society. The Tapestry process begins at the annual Composer-Librettist Laboratory where writers and composers are introduced to collaborative creation. Successful partnerships move on to create 15-minute operas for our annual *Opera to Go* production and graduate to full-length works. Our INside Opera Education Programme gives students the chance to discover their own stories and engage in the creation of new opera. Our children's opera, *Elijah's Kite* by Camyar Chai & James Rolfe has already toured to over 30,000 students across Ontario. Tapestry productions which have premiered to critical and popular acclaim include *The Shadow* by Omar Daniel & Alex Poch-Goldin, *Sanctuary Song* by Abigail Richardson & Marjorie Chan (with Theatre Direct in partnership with Luminato) which won the 2009 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Opera/Musical, *Nigredo Hotel* by Ann-Marie MacDonald & Nic Gotham, *Elsewhereless* by Atom Egoyan & Rodney Sharman, *Still the Night* by Theresa Tova, *Facing South* by Don Hannah & Linda C. Smith and the Dora Award-winning *Iron Road* by composer Chan Ka Nin & librettist Mark Brownell. [www.tapestrynewopera.com](http://www.tapestrynewopera.com)

**Words in Motion** - **Words in Motion** promotes literacy in its broadest sense. This encompasses not only reading, writing and numeracy, but also emotional and social literacy as well as cultural appreciation. Specializing in arts education, Words in Motion promotes intellectual development, self-esteem and arts appreciation in young children by presenting music, drama and literature. The not-for-profit company works with accomplished musicians, actors, dancers and improvisational performers to support teachers in elementary schools who are increasingly challenged to provide for both the academic and social, emotional needs of young children. It is critical that the impact of Words in Motion be sustainable. Through its programs, participants recognize the performing arts as a vital, creative and educational tool, both within and outside the traditional classroom setting. A Words in Motion experience demonstrates the possibilities of incorporating expression and imagination into the day-to-day activities of children. The expectation of our programs is that the life lessons learned will remain with students as they develop into mature and contributing members of their communities. [www.wordsinmotion.ca](http://www.wordsinmotion.ca)

## MORE UPCOMING TAPESTRY 2009-2010 PROGRAMMING:

### **Dark Star Requiem: A World Premiere production from Tapestry new opera works and Luminato**

**Written by Jill Battson and Composed by Andrew Staniland**

**Music Director** Wayne Strongman

**The Elmer Iseler Singers** - Lydia Adams, Artistic Director

**The Gryphon Trio**

(Annalee Patipatanakoon, violin; Roman Borys, cello)

Jamie Parker, piano)

**Percussion:** Ryan Scott, Mark Duggan

**Dramaturg** Tom Diamond

**Soloists:**

**Soprano** Neema Bickersteth

**Mezzo soprano** Krisztina Szabó

**Baritone** Peter McGillivray

**Bass-Baritone** Marcus Nance

**Dark Star Requiem** explores the 25-year history of the AIDS pandemic with astonishing power and hope. Shining a light on those affected by the fear, confusion and devastation that AIDS has wrought, this world premiere features four outstanding soloists and two percussionists alongside two of Canada's premiere ensembles: **the Elmer Iseler Singers** and **the Gryphon Trio**. The four soloists have impressive talent and represent our national, cultural diversity: **Neema Bickersteth** (soprano), **Krisztina Szabó** (mezzo soprano), **Peter McGillivray** (baritone) and **Marcus Nance** (bass-baritone). **Dark Star Requiem** premieres June 11 and 12, 2010 at 8pm during the opening weekend of **Luminato, Toronto's Festival of Arts and Creativity**. Presented in Toronto's breathtakingly beautiful new Koerner Hall at the Royal Conservatory of Music, **Dark Star Requiem** will be shown on Friday and Saturday night and is sure to garner public and artistic accolades for its power, poetry and poignancy.

Friday, June 11 – Saturday, June 12, at 8 PM

at Koerner Hall in the Royal Conservatory of Music, 273 Bloor Street West

\$30 – 50

For more information, visit [luminato.com](http://luminato.com). Tickets will be available at 10:00 AM, April 15th through all Ticketmaster outlets call 416-872-1111 or visit [www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca).

### **INside Opera Education Programme**

Tapestry continues partnerships with the Regent Park School of Music and City Hope in St. Jamestown with programme sponsorship from BMO Financial Group. With funding from the TELUS Community Investment Board, Tapestry conducted a summer INside Opera programme with City Hope entitled the "Real Time Project". Several youth participants collaborated with professional videographer Juan Baquero to document their peers during the INside Opera creation and performance process. Mr. Baquero is a Toronto based filmmaker who, for the past year, has been working on Listen to This, a Bravo/TVO documentary that explores the influence of music as a creative outlet for kids living in the inner city. A trailer for the documentary can be found on [www.tapestrynewopera.com](http://www.tapestrynewopera.com) or [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

*"The TELUS Toronto Community Board is excited to support the INside Opera Education Programme, opening the door to an artistic education that at-risk youth in our communities may not otherwise have," said Johnnie-Mike Irving, acting chair of the TELUS Toronto Community Board. "This program brings youth together with professionals in the field, connecting minds through creativity and building healthier communities in the process."*

For more information on INside Opera please call 416.537.6066 x224 or email [education@tapestrynewopera.com](mailto:education@tapestrynewopera.com)

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For further media information and artist interviews please contact **Anna Mathew, Marketing & Communications Director** at 416-537-6066 x221 or [media@tapestrynewopera.com](mailto:media@tapestrynewopera.com)



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