**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Press images (including new rehearsal photographs) are available for download at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wamtheatre/sets/72157635251271398/>

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**WAM Theatre Announces ASL Interpreted Performance and “Talkbacks” for**

**“Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight”**

The production will run from Nov. 7 through 24 at the St. Germain Stage

in the Sydelle and Lee Blatt Performing Arts Center

PITTSFIELD, Mass. (Oct. 28, 2013) — WAM Theatre will provide an ASL Interpreted Performance for the deaf and hearing impaired on Sunday, Nov. 10 at 2 p.m. at its performance of “Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight”. This is the first time WAM Theatre will present an ASL Interpreted Performance, making them one of the first cultural organizations in the Berkshires to do so. WAM also announces two “Talkbacks”, post-show discussions with members of the artistic staff and cast, following the 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, Nov. 10 and 17.

The Northeast regional premiere of “Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight”, written by Lauren Gunderson and directed by Kristen van Ginhoven, will run from Nov. 7 through 24 with preview performances on Nov. 7 and 8, will be held at the St. Germain Stage in the Sydelle and Lee Blatt Performing Arts Center, 36 Linden St., Pittsfield. Tickets are $15 for previews; all other performances are $10 to $30. For tickets and more information, see [www.WAMTheatre.com](http://www.WAMTheatre.com) or call (800) 838-3006.

“Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight” had its world premiere in 2009 at South Coast Repertory Theatre in Costa Mesa, Calif. The play has been described as “fiercely inquisitive and joyfully sexy” (The San Francisco Chronicle) and an “ambitious, highly theatrical romp that literally crackles with electricity” (LA/OC Examiner).

Emilie Du Châtelet (1706-1749), best known for her 15-year-liaison with Voltaire, a French Enlightenment writer, historian and philosopher, was far more than a great man’s mistress. She became a highly regarded interpreter of modern physics and a master of mathematics and linguistics during the Age of Enlightenment. In the play, Emilie searches for a formula that will convince the world of her worth by tallying her achievements in love and philosophy.

“Presenting this play continues WAM Theatre’s mission to highlight the stories of women and girls. Emilie Du Châtelet was a fascinating woman who lived life fully and transformed her existence beyond societal expectations. We are very excited to share her story,” said Artistic Director Kristen van Ginhoven.

Kim Stauffer, whose credits include “Mary Stuart” and “Macbeth” at New York Classical Theatre, “Crime and Punishment” at Chester Theatre, and “A Streetcar Named Desire” and “The Crucible” at Barrington Stage Company, will play the role of Emilie. Voltaire will be portrayed by Oliver Wadsworth, whose credits include the National Tour of “Chitty, Chitty Bang, Bang”, “The Well” at The Public Theatre and “Fully Committed” (Metroland Best Performance) at Capital Repertory Theatre. Additional cast members include Suzanne Ankrum (Tennessee Shakespeare Company), Brendan Cataldo (Adirondack Theater Festival), and Joan Coombs (Shakespeare & Company).

Established in 2009, WAM Theatre is a comparative newcomer to the area’s performing arts scene. Under the artistic direction of van Ginhoven, the company has rapidly become a strong community presence through its mission to create theatre for everyone that benefits women and girls. “In a relatively short time, WAM has sent shockwaves throughout the Berkshire theatre community,” notes Berkshire Fine Arts in a recent review. WAM Theatre has been hailed for its “superb casts, equal of any we see at the four major theaters in the summer” (Berkshire On Stage) and its dual mission: “Two birds, one stone; theatre for cause, cause for theatre” (Did You Weekend?).

In keeping with WAM Theatre’s unique double philanthropic mission, a portion of the proceeds from each production is donated to an organization that benefits women and girls. Proceeds from “Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight” will benefit Rites of Passage and Empowerment Program for Girls (ROPE), founded by Pittsfield community leader Shirley Edgerton. ROPE is a program for young women in Berkshire County, with a particular focus on young women of color, that teaches the skills and confidence needed to succeed in today’s world. WAM Theatre’s donation will go towards a college tour for ROPE participants at the culmination of their program.

Corporate and Foundation support for “Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight” is provided in part by Adams Community Bank; Berkshire Bank; Cohen Kinne Valicenti Cook, Attorneys; Gogel & Gogel; Greylock Federal Credit Union; Interprint; Mass Humanities, Nicholas L. Parsenios, Attorney at Law; Pittsfield Cooperative Bank; and Toole Insurance Agency. Media Sponsors include Berkshire Magazine and The Rogovoy Report.

**About WAM Theatre**

WAM (Women’s Action Movement) Theatre is based in the Berkshires of Massachusetts and the Capital Region of New York State. Inspired by the book “Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide” by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, WAM Theatre was founded in 2009 by professional theatre artists Kristen van Ginhoven and Leigh Strimbeck.

WAM Theatre’s philanthropic mission is two-fold: first, to create theatrical events for everyone, with a focus on women theatre artists and/or stories of women and girls; and second, to donate a portion of the proceeds from those events to organizations that benefit women and girls. Since 2009, WAM Theatre has donated more than $7,000 to its beneficiaries. For more information, see [www.WAMTheatre.com](http://www.WAMTheatre.com).

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**Calendar Listings:**

**WAM Theatre Presents: “Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight”**

Nov. 7 through 24 at the St. Germain Stage in the Sydelle and Lee Blatt Performing Arts Center, 36 Linden St., Pittsfield, Mass. Tickets: $15 previews; all other performance: $10 to $30. Reservations: (800) 838-3006 and www.WAMTheatre.com

**Performance dates and times:**

Thursday, Nov. 7: 7:30 p.m. (preview)

Friday, Nov. 8: 7:30 p.m. (preview)

Saturday, Nov. 9: 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 10: 2 p.m. \*ASL Interpreted Performance. \*\* Talkback

Friday, Nov. 15: 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 16: 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 17: 2 p.m. \*\*Talkback

Friday, Nov. 22: 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 23: 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 24: 2 p.m.