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Press photos available for download at <https://picasaweb.google.com/nilesmedia/HLSLoveSong?feat=directlink>

LOVE SONG

**Harbor Light Stage comes to Portsmouth —
to a brand new place and in a whole new way.**

May 13-29, 2011

Harbor Light Stage is coming to Portsmouth — to a brand new place and in a whole new way.

This May, the professional theatre company will produce LOVE SONG by John Kolvenbach in the soon-to-open Music Hall Loft on Congress Street. It will be the first theatre production staged in the new performance space, and the first Main Stage play the company has presented on the New Hampshire side of the Piscataqua.

It will also be the first time Harbor Light Stage has produced a play in an actual theatre! The nonprofit company, which was founded in 2006 by national theatre artist Kent Stephens, is known for staging its productions in “unique” locations — including a restored 19th century barn, the ceremonial room of a Masonic lodge, the vaulted Great Room of a private seaside club, and within several of the historic properties of Strawberry Banke Museum.

“We are pleased to have contracted with The Music Hall Loft to produce there in its maiden year,” says Stephens, “and we are genuinely thrilled to bring our audiences a full production of a magical play in a new, hip location in Portsmouth, with great food and drink that you can take to your seat!”

Harbor Light Stage is no stranger to the city. The company has enjoyed critical acclaim for its History Theatre @ Strawberry Banke Museum series, featuring original scripts written by Stephens, including LAMPLIGHT DIALOGUES and COME NIGHT FALL. And in 2009, Harbor Light offered some special play readings at the Portsmouth Pearl. But accommodations at the new Loft, he says, combined with the hilarious and moving LOVE SONG, presented an exciting chance to expose new audiences to Harbor Light Stage’s distinctive brand of contemporary theatre.

And LOVE SONG, Stephens says, is the perfect play for the month of May.

Nominated in 2007 by London theatre critics for the renowned Olivier Award for Best New Comedy, the play centers around Beane, a reclusive oddball who lives alone in a nearly bare studio apartment. His sister Joan, in her Type-A but well-meaning way, and her husband Harry, try to take care of Beane and draw him out, but to no avail. Then a mysterious woman named Molly robs Beane in his own apartment — and leaves him walking on air. As Joan and Harry struggle to unravel the puzzle behind Beane’s dramatic change of personality, they find themselves transforming, too.

What happens next in this one-of-a-kind comedy is by turns hilarious, heart-breaking, head-spinning, and ultimately inspirational.

“One of the best new plays of the year. Richly comic and deeply touching, this is a smashing, compassionate new play,” raved the Daily Telegraph after LOVE SONG’s London premiere. “The writing is crisp, tough, undogmatic, menacingly funny,” said the London Sunday Times. “Strongly recommended, especially to those not afraid of the freedom of fantasy.” The play was first developed at Chicago’s legendary Steppenwolf Theatre, where it was hailed as “a work of, by, and for the live stage: the stuff of pure theatre” (*Chicago Sun-Times*).

The Portsmouth production stars local favorites Chris Curtis (Beane), Christine Penney (Joan) and Andrew Fling (Harry). Harbor Light Stage audiences will recognize all three from their roles in the company’s 2010 Bold Face Play Reading of LOVE SONG, which Stephens describes as one of the most acclaimed events of that

series' four-year history. Minneapolis actress Amy McDonald joins the cast as the ferocious and mysterious Molly.

LOVE SONG is produced in partnership with Seascope Capital Management, a New Hampshire-based asset management firm that has just opened new offices at 99 Bow Street in Portsmouth. Harbor Light Stage is also grateful to sponsors Karin and Steve Barndollar, and in-kind sponsors CAVA, Autoworks, and The WiRE for their support of this new downtown production.

LOVE SONG performances will be held at The Music Hall Loft, 131 Congress Street, Portsmouth, N.H. The production runs May 13 through 29 as follows: Thursdays (May 19 and 26) at 7:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., and Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Advance tickets for reserved seating (\$24.25 to \$29.25) are on sale through The Music Hall box office at 28 Chestnut Street, Portsmouth, N.H., open Monday through Saturday from noon to 6:00 p.m. All major credit cards are accepted. Tickets may be purchased in person at the Chestnut Street box office, or by mail to 28 Chestnut Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801. Seats may also be purchased online at www.tickets.themusicall.org (note: online orders incur a \$4 per ticket nonrefundable surcharge), or by phone during box office hours at (603) 436-2400 (note: phone orders incur a \$4 per ticket nonrefundable surcharge, up to \$20.00 per phone order).

For more information about LOVE SONG and Harbor Light Stage, visit www.harborlightstage.org, email harborlight@bitstream.net, or call (207) 439-5769.

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calendar listing

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Tickets \$24.25 to \$29.25, reserved seating, available through The Music Hall Box Office at 28 Chestnut Street, Portsmouth, www.tickets.themusicall.org, (603) 436-2400.

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