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Spencertown Academy Presents *Music Lessons* Live Show by Ed Napier

Spencertown, New York—Spencertown Academy Arts Center presents *Music Lessons* written and performed by Ed Napier on Saturday, November 13 at 7:00pm. Directed by Robert LuPone, the production also features William Lewis on piano and soprano Maria Gabriella Landers. For Covid safety, proof of vaccination will be required for attendance, seating will be distanced and limited, and masks will be required for audience members while in the building. The Academy has installed Blue Pure 211+ air filters in the auditorium. General admission tickets (\$20 public, \$15 Academy members) may be purchased in advance via www.spencertownacademy.org and, pending availability, will be available at the door.

Music Lessons tells the story of Ed Napier’s journey from the backwoods of West Virginia to the halls of Columbia, Herbert Berghof (HB) Studio, and Juilliard in New York in pursuit of becoming a playwright and opera singer. Through scenes, stories, and songs, he recounts the process of growing up, becoming an artist, and learning, he says, “to relish the glory of just being alive.” On stage he channels a multitude of characters from his life with ebullience and humor. He slips into many roles—ranging from singing gospel as a kid in a West Virginia church to country songs in a bar with drunken locals; from Enrico Caruso singing Neapolitan songs of love and revenge to Puccini in the voice of his Viennese acting mentor to playing Constantine in Chekhov’s *Seagull*.

“Ed Napier has a great set of pipes!,” says Academy Board Member Cindy Atkins. “The life of any artist is always full of obstacles which can seem insurmountable. If Ed’s show about overcoming his on the way to becoming one is as wonderful as his voice is, we’ll be in for a funny and poignant evening.”

Napier's plays have been presented in New York at the HB Playwrights' Foundation, MCC Theater, WPA Theater, Ensemble Studio Theatre, and more. He has had the privilege of singing in many notable venues, among them the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, Steinway Hall, the Bohemian National Hall, and Walt Disney Hall. He previously performed *Music Lessons* for Engarde Arts' Uncommon Voices series, in the H.E.R.E Summer Co-op, and at the Theatre Row Theatre in the United Solo Festival, where it won the Award for Best Non-Fiction piece.

Robert LuPone's Broadway credits include *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *A Chorus Line* (Tony Nomination), *A Thousand Clowns*, *True West*, *A View From The Bridge*, *Zoya's Apartment*, and *Saint Joan*. He is the co-artistic director of MCC Theater, an award winning Off-Broadway Theater.

Maria Gabriella Landers is an entrepreneur, operatic soprano, collage artist, and celebrated party host. After Barnard College, she cofounded the CoOPERative, a New York City based nonprofit that provided performance opportunities to classical singers between formal studies and a professional career.

William Lewis, pianist/accompanist, vocal coach, arranger, and performer has worked as a professional musician for more than 50 years. He regularly appears with Irish tenor Ronan Tynan in concert and also plays for Marcello Giordano and violinist Gregory Harrington. He has performed throughout the US, Canada, Iceland, Brazil, Germany, Sicily, the British Isles, and China.

Founded in 1972, Spencertown Academy Arts Center is a cultural center and community resource serving Columbia County, the Berkshires, and the Capital region. Housed in a landmark 1847 Greek Revival schoolhouse, the Academy is located at 790 State Route 203 in Spencertown, New York. For more information, please contact info@spencertownacademy.org.