

A GRAND REOPENING

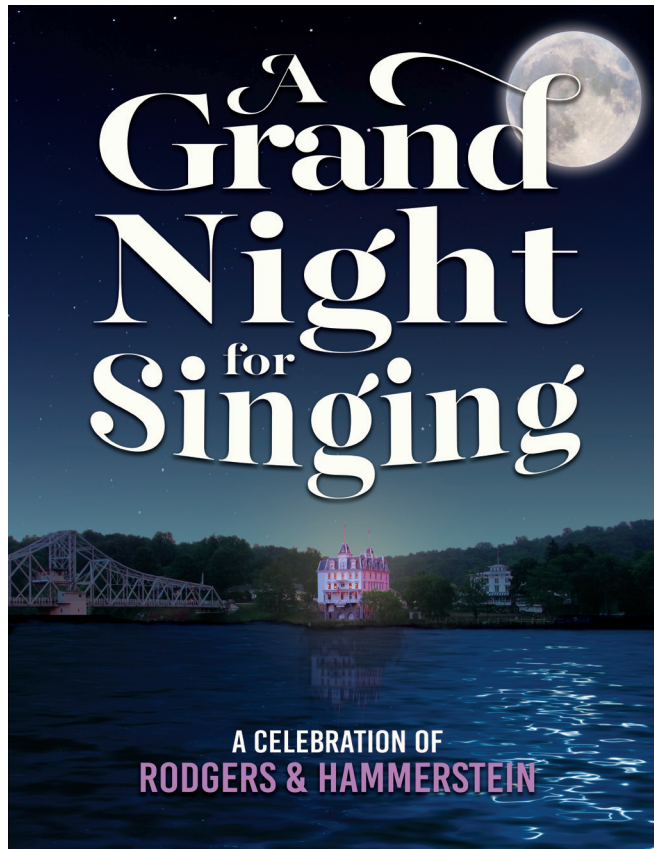
BY DAN McMAHON | MARKETING DIRECTOR

All of us at Goodspeed are thrilled to finally reopen the Opera House and enjoy live musicals once again—and we're sure you are too. After 21 months of darkness, our iconic and much-loved theatre will once again buzz with activity and sit like a bright white beacon along the Connecticut River.

It is fitting that we reopen with a celebration of the world's favorite musical theatre writing team: Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. Since 1943, when

Oklahoma! debuted, generation after generation has fallen in love with Rodgers & Hammerstein's music. How could you not with tunes like "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "Shall We Dance," and "If I Loved You"? These songs and many more will be performed by a top-list cast and the 7-piece Goodspeed orchestra for our production of *A Grand Night for Singing: A Celebration of Rodgers & Hammerstein* which was originally conceived by award-winning director and author Walter Bobbie.

When it opened on Broadway in 1994, critics were wildly enthusiastic and it was nominated for two Tony Awards, including Best Musical. Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II may



never have imagined "Shall We Dance?" as a comic pas de deux for a towering beauty and her diminutive admirer, nor did they suspect that one day a lovelorn young lad might pose the musical question, "How do you solve a problem like Maria?" But that's precisely the kind of invention lavished upon this new revue, with innovative musical arrangements including a sultry Andrews Sisters-esque "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair," a swingin' "Honeybun", and a jazzy "Kansas City," which leaves no question about how terrifically up to date the remarkable songs of

Rodgers and Hammerstein remain.

Our production will be directed by a Goodspeed favorite—Rob Ruggiero (*Show Boat*, *Carousel*, *Fiddler on the Roof*) who no doubt will make this a bright, fun and joyful evening for all of us. Choreography will be provided by Lainie Sakakura.

We're sure Goodspeed Members will be as happy as we are to see the "grand old lady" all lit up for another opening night. In the words of Donna Lynn Hilton, Artistic Director and Goodspeed staff member for over 35 years, "Goodspeed is back and it's time to celebrate!" She and Managing Director David Byrd look forward to seeing all of you at the bottom the stairs after the show.