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# MEDIA RELEASE

## THE SOULPEPPER AUDIO PROJECT & SPOON RIVER RECORDING

Toronto, ON – February 26, 2015: “[A] once-in-a-lifetime show. See it, hear it, celebrate it,” (*Toronto Star Spoon River review, 2014*). **Albert Schultz, Founding Artistic Director of Soulpepper Theatre Company**, today announced Soulpepper’s new recording initiative, the Soulpepper Audio Project, and its first confirmed audio recording: Soulpepper’s acclaimed musical, *Spoon River*. This original production, adapted by **Slaight Family Director of Music Mike Ross** and Albert Schultz, composed by Mike Ross, and based on *Spoon River Anthology* by Edgar Lee Masters, will be recorded this month during the show’s triumphant return to the Soulpepper stage.

Made possible through a generous gift from Richard Wernham and Julia West, the *Spoon River* recording launches a multi-year project to create live-performance audio recordings of plays and musical performances with the Soulpepper ensemble. Completed audio programs, professionally recorded and mastered, will be made available by either digital subscription or as individual downloads, and on CD. The Soulpepper Audio Project recordings represent the creation of a new and dynamic digital stage for Canadian writers, composers and performing artists. It also represents a ground-breaking recording agreement between Canadian Actors’ Equity Association, ACTRA and Soulpepper.

“The capture of Soulpepper’s *Spoon River* is the first big step in a project of national significance,” said Schultz. “The creation of original Canadian audio programming is something that we have been dreaming about at Soulpepper for years. Thanks to the remarkable generosity of Richard Wernham and Julia West, we are able to make these dreams a reality not only for this show, but for many more to come.”

The *Spoon River* recording session will be produced by multiple award-winning audio drama & transmedia producer and inaugural Wernham West Director of Audio Programming, **Gregory J. Sinclair**, (*Afghanada, Trust, Inc.* for CBC Radio), with acclaimed recording engineer **Doug McClement** (LiveWire Remote Recorders) and Juno Award-winning mixing engineer **Danny Greenspoon**.

“We are thrilled that our support of Soulpepper will result in having their productions so artfully captured and made available to audiences locally, nationally, and around the world,” said Wernham and West.

Soulpepper’s limited edition *Spoon River* CD can be pre-ordered now at soulpepper.ca. Orders will ship by March 30. The digital album download will be available on March 25.

“I’m both excited and humbled to record *Spoon River*,” said Ross. “It’s a dream come true to send my work out into the world but I’m also thrilled for anyone who saw the show and asked for a recorded version, and for those who can take home the music after seeing the show for the very first time.”

The *Spoon River* recording will be made from live stage performances by the 2015 Soulpepper cast: **Soulpepper Founding Members Stuart Hughes and Diego Matamoros; Frank Cox-O’Connell; Mikaela Davies; Oliver Dennis; Raquel Duffy; Peter Fernandes; Katherine Gauthier; Hailey Gillis; Gordon Hecht; Richard Lam; Anthony MacMahon; Miranda Mulholland; Oyin Oladejo; Colin Palangio; Andrew Penner; Gregory Prest; Mike Ross; and Eliza-Jane Scott**. Through song, the cast of *Spoon River* narrate their characters’ own epitaphs, telling of life, love, loss and hard-earned truths, in an immersive portrait of early 20th-century rural America.

Soulpepper’s production of *Spoon River* returns to the stage from March 7 to March 28. Edgar Lee Masters’ seminal poems of the dead are brought to vibrant life in this celebrated and original musical adaptation.



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Tickets to Soulpepper productions at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts are available by calling the Young Centre Box Office at 416.866.8666 or by visiting [soulpepper.ca](http://soulpepper.ca).

Located in its multi-venue home the Young Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto's Distillery Historic District, Soulpepper is Toronto's largest theatre company. Founded and guided by artists, under the leadership of Artistic Director Albert Schultz and Executive Director Leslie Lester, Soulpepper has an integrated mission which includes: industry-leading youth outreach initiatives; the Soulpepper Academy, Canada's only multi-year paid professional training program for theatre artists of all disciplines; and a year-round diverse repertory season which is grounded in the classics and committed to the creation of new works, new forms, and innovative practices.

Soulpepper gratefully acknowledges annual operating support from the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts.

Support for all music programming is provided by the Slight Family through the Slight Family Music Program. Mike Ross is the inaugural Slight Family Director of Music.

Support for all audio programming is provided by the Wernham West Audio Program. Gregory J. Sinclair is the inaugural Wernham West Director of Audio Programming.

Lead support for the Soulpepper Academy is provided by the Michael and Karen Vukets Family Foundation, with additional support from the RBC Foundation and Hal Jackman Foundation and the Canada Arts Training Program at the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Soulpepper is grateful for the Major Sponsorship Support of:

TELUS – Lead Sponsor Youth Outreach

Scotiabank – Lead Sponsor Soulpepper Youth Academy

TD Bank – Lead Sponsor Stage Play and Studio Series

CIBC – Lead Sponsor Soulpepper Family Festival

SunLife – Lead Sponsor Rush Program

Support for Soulpepper Productions is provided by:

3Macs: *Bedroom Farce*

Gretchen Ross: *The Play's the Thing*

Middlefield: *A Moveable Musical Maritime Feast; American Pie - A Songbook Investigation; Route 66 - The Heartland*

Polar Securities: *Of Human Bondage*

Eli & Phil Taylor

Diane Blake + Stephen Smith: *The Dining Room*

Richard Rooney: *Marat/Sade*

Tickets for Soulpepper productions start at \$29.50. Tickets for the Soulpepper Concert Series start at \$22. Tickets for the Weekly Cabarets start at \$25 and Studio Series tickets start at \$30. \$24 tickets are available for Arts Workers. \$24 tickets for Soulpepper productions are also available for 21-30 year-olds at [stageplay.ca](http://stageplay.ca). StagePlay is sponsored by TD Bank Group. The \$24 Rush Ticket / \$5 Youth Rush program is sponsored by Sun Life Financial. Ticket prices include a Young Centre facility fee, service charge and HST. Pricing is subject to change.