FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - August 1, 2010 (Minneapolis, Minnesota):

THEATRE PRO RATA TACKLES ONE OF SHAKESPEARE’S MOST CHALLENGING COMEDIES

Theatre Pro Rata will present William Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew at the Gremlin Theatre on Sept 11, 2010.

The merchant Baptista has two daughters, and decrees that Bianca—the younger and fairer of the two—cannot be married before her strong-willed sister, Katherina. The student Lucentio falls hard for Bianca, and convinces his friend Petruchio to woo the shrew and get her out of the way. Kate will have none of it. The battle of wits has begun.

Shrew is often described as a ‘problem play’ because of the misogynistic overtones. With a closer look, however, it’s clear that Kate’s submission is not all Shakespeare was writing about... he was writing about the complexities of interpersonal relationships and how the two main characters actually tame each other. With inspiration from dominant/submissive relationships and how a strong individual can still respectfully interplay with another strong individual, we are approaching the script from a place of liberation from unconventionality and the discovery of laughter and play as the two characters destroy their world in order to create a new one together.

Theatre Pro Rata (Latin for “in proportion”) was founded in 2000 and gained notoriety as a regular producer within the Minnesota Fringe Festival. Nine years later, Pro Rata now produces a three-show season, focused on artist-driven process and audience-engaging material. Recent accolades for Pro Rata include set design for Killer Joe (2008, City Pages), Julie Ann Nevill’s crossgender performance in The Life of Galileo (2009, Lavender Magazine) and overall production for Metamorphoses (2008, Lavender Magazine). The Taming of the Shrew will feature Resident Artist Amber Bjork as Kate and Pro Rata regular Grant Henderson as Petruchio. Theatre Pro Rata utilizes a unique sliding scale for all ticketing, allowing patrons to name their own price from $14 to $41, and features complimentary pre-show sensory tours for blind or hard-of-sight patrons (by appointment only).

Carin Bratlie (Director) is a Minneapolis-based freelance director and acting instructor. In addition to Artistic Director of Theatre Pro Rata, she has also directed for Theatre L’ Homme Dieu, the Great American History Theater, Theatre Unbound, Grand Marais Playhouse, Theatre of the Invisible Guests, Heritage Theater Company, St. Croix Valley Summer Theater, and Chameleon Theater Circle. She has assistant directed for the Guthrie Theater (Third, As You Like It, Top Girls), Outward Spiral, and the Great American History Theater. She teaches theater classes at the Guthrie and Youth Performance Company. She was a participant director at the Wesley Balk Opera/Music-Theater Institute in 2007 and received a B.A. from Concordia College in 1998.
Christine “Kit” Gordon (Dramaturg) has worked as a dramaturg in the Twin Cities since 1978, including long stints with Shakespeare in the Park and Mary Worth Theatre Company. She especially enjoys working on productions of Shakespeare. In her other life, she is an academic advisor in the University Honors Program at the University of Minnesota.

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Theatre Pro Rata is dedicated to creating text-based, actor-centered, process-driven theater; interested in how it’s done, not what kind it is. Ambitious and eclectic programming showcases everything from edgy black comedies (Killer Joe, 2008) to classics (Hamlet, 2005).