

**Mailing Address**

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Philadelphia, PA 19105-3428

**Theater Address**

Lantern Theater Company  
At St. Stephen's Theater  
10th & Ludlow Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

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**High-res cast photos available now at:**

[www.canarypromo.com/lantern](http://www.canarypromo.com/lantern)

View the release online: <http://bit.ly/111YhnI>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****March 26, 2014****Lantern Theater Company Presents Philadelphia Premiere of  
Athol Fugard's *The Train Driver*  
Directed by Matt Pfeiffer, April 10 – May 4, 2014**

PHILADELPHIA – [Lantern Theater Company](http://www.lanterntheater.org) closes their 20th anniversary subscription season with the Philadelphia premiere of *The Train Driver*, one of South African playwright Athol Fugard's newest plays. This will be the Lantern's fourth production of works by the 2011 Tony Award-winner for Lifetime Achievement, including "*Master Harold*"...and the boys in 2006, *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* in 2009 and *The Island* in 2012. Charles Isherwood of *The New York Times* described *The Train Driver* as "a moving portrait of a man coming to recognize the deep divisions that still plague his country, and makes a modest but eloquent addition to Mr. Fugard's oeuvre." Directed by **Matt Pfeiffer** and starring respected Philadelphia veteran actor **Peter DeLaurier** as Roelf and **Kirk Wendell Brown** in his Lantern debut as Simon, performances run **April 10 – May 4, 2014**. [Full schedule including special events is below]

Based on a shocking and surprisingly common true story of suicide by train in South Africa, *The Train Driver* is an emotional exploration of the legacy of apartheid. Roelf (DeLaurier), the title train driver, is haunted by the unpreventable role he played in a woman and her child's suicide, and his guilt compels him to find the woman's grave so he can say his peace to her. A meditation on grief, Roelf finds himself turning the corner from anger and suffering to empathy.

At its heart, *The Train Driver* is about understanding and reveals a playwright at the height of his power to move and inspire. Speaking to the *Los Angeles Times*, Athol Fugard said, "This is for me the whole; it's my truth and reconciliation. I think all of my writing life led up to the writing of *The Train Driver* because it deals with my own inherited blindness and guilt and all of what being a white South African in South Africa during those apartheid years meant."

Director Matt Pfeiffer also sees *The Train Driver* as an exploration of understanding someone else's reality. "I'm an optimistic person, I can't imagine hopelessness. Hopelessness as a reality of life is unexplainable to a person who lives in hope," says Pfeiffer. "What Fugard is able to do with this work is create a story that is beautifully written and poetic, using suffering as a raw material and raising it to extraordinary art in a way that renders the audience more alive, more human, more sympathetic in the process."

[The Train Driver](#) runs **April 10 – May 4, 2014 (press opening: Wednesday, April 16, 7 p.m.)**. Tickets are \$20 – \$38 and are available online at [lanterntheater.org](http://lanterntheater.org) or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. \$10 student rush tickets are available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only. Additional discounts are available for seniors, groups of 10 or more and U.S. military personnel. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Streets in Center City Philadelphia.

## About the Cast

**Peter DeLaurier** (Roelf) has directed *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* (2009), *Vigil* (2011) and *The Island* (2012) at the Lantern. As an actor, he has appeared on the Lantern stage many times, including roles in last season's *Heroes* and previously in *Uncle Vanya*, *QED*, *Skylight* and *Underneath the Lintel*, for which he won the 2004 Barrymore Award for Outstanding Actor in a Play. DeLaurier is an artistic associate and resident company member at People's Light & Theatre, where his credits include *Ghosts*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, *Sherlock Holmes & The Case of the Jersey Lily*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Holes*, *A Delicate Balance*, *In the Blood*, *Once in a Lifetime*, *Sister Carrie* and the international tour of *Kabuki Achilles*. He has received five Barrymore Award nominations, winning twice.

Making his Lantern debut, **Kirk Wendell Brown** (Simon) has been a professional actor and theater arts instructor for more than 20 years. His acting credits span theater, television, film, radio and industrials and include plays at Walnut Street Theatre, People's Light & Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival, the National Constitution Center, and most recently as Detective Babbitt in Steven Saylor's latest feature film, *Bodies*. Kirk moved to Philadelphia from his native Baltimore to accept the 1994-95 Dorothy Haas Acting Fellowship at Walnut Street Theatre. He also served as assistant administrator of the Walnut Street Theatre School and has produced and instructed theater curriculum for non-actors for programs as near as Princeton, New Jersey and as far as the College Elsa Triolet in France.

## About the Playwright

**Athol Fugard** is a legendary South African playwright, actor, and director and winner of the 2011 Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement. After dropping out of Cape Town University, Fugard worked for two years on a merchant ship in the Far East, the only white seaman aboard. Shortly after returning to South Africa, he began his first work as an actor and playwright, collaborating with both black and white theater artists. The company's attacks on apartheid brought censure from the South African government. Some of his works, such as *Blood Knot* (1960), the first in his family trilogy, were initially banned in South Africa. Internationally acclaimed even as his work was banned at home, Fugard's plays include *Boesman and Lena* (1969), *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* (1972) and *The Island* (1973), co-written with John Kani and Winston Ntshona, *A Lesson from Aloes* (1978), the semi-autobiographical work *Master Harold...and the boys* (1982), *The Road to Mecca* (1985), and *Playland* (1993). His post-apartheid plays, including *Valley Song* (1995), *The Captain's Tiger* (1998), *Sorrows and Rejoicings* (2001), and *Exits and Entrances* (2004), create a portrait of the new South Africa, as well as address more personal themes. Athol Fugard has also written one novel, *Tsotsi* (1980). Adapted into an acclaimed film, *Tsotsi* earned the 2006 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. *The Train Driver* premiered at the Fugard Theatre in Cape Town in 2010 and was directed by Fugard himself.

## 2014/15 Season

Lantern Theater Company will open its 2014/15 season with *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard, directed by Kathryn MacMillan (September 25 – November 2, 2014); followed by *Doubt: A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley, directed by Kathryn MacMillan and starring Mary Martello and Ben Dibble (January 15 – February 15, 2015); William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Charles McMahan (March 19 – April 26, 2015); and closing with an additional play, TBA.

***The Train Driver***  
**FACTS**

**Performances:**

Thu, 4/10	7 p.m.
Fri, 4/11	8 p.m.
Sat, 4/12	8 p.m.
Sun, 4/13	2 p.m.
Tue, 4/15	7 p.m.
<b>Wed, 4/16*</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
Thu, 4/17	7 p.m.
Fri, 4/18 DIC	8 p.m.
Sat, 4/19	8 p.m.
Sun, 4/20 AIC	2 p.m.
Wed, 4/23	2 p.m.
Wed, 4/23	7 p.m.
Thu, 4/24	7 p.m.
Fri, 4/25	8 p.m.
Sat, 4/26	8 p.m.
Sun, 4/27 AIC	2 p.m.
Wed, 4/30	7 p.m.
Thu, 5/1	7 p.m.
Fri, 5/2 OC	8 p.m.
Sat, 5/3 OC	2 p.m.
Sat, 5/3	8 p.m.
Sun, 5/4	2 p.m.

**\*Opening Night**

**Dates:** *The Train Driver*  
April 10 – May 4, 2014  
Previews run April 10 – 15  
**Opening night is Wednesday, April 16, 7 p.m.**

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**Prices:** Adults: \$20-\$38  
Students: \$10-\$28  
\$10 student rush tickets available 10 minutes  
before curtain with valid ID; cash only

Special discounts are available for seniors and  
groups of 10 or more.

**Tickets:** **Phone:** (215) 829-0395  
**Online:** [www.lanterntheater.org](http://www.lanterntheater.org)

***The Train Driver***  
Philadelphia Premiere  
By **Athol Fugard**  
Directed by **Matt Pfeiffer**

**Cast** (*in alphabetical order*)  
**Peter DeLaurier**                      Roelf Visagie  
**Kirk Wendell Brown**                Simon Hanabe

**Production Team**  
**Production Manager**                Meghan Jones  
**Scenic Designer**                      Lance Kniskern  
**Costume Designer**                    Katherine Fritz  
**Lighting Designer**                    Drew Billiau  
**Sound Designer**                        Christopher Colucci  
**Dialect Coach**                        Marla Burkholder  
**Stage Manager**                        Rebecca Smith  
**Assistant Director**                    Sarah Mitteldorf

AIC – post-show, Artists: In Conversation (FREE) | DIC – post-show, Directors: In Conversation (FREE) |  
OC – Open Captioned Performance