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#VerticalHourLTC

Lantern Theater Company Presents the Philadelphia Premiere of David Hare's *The Vertical Hour*, Onstage January 9 – February 16, 2020

PHILADELPHIA (January 6, 2020) – **Lantern Theater Company** continues its 2019/20 season with the Philadelphia premiere of *The Vertical Hour*, renowned British playwright **David Hare's** rich and intellectually gripping play about a family trying to come together and the secrets that may keep them apart. Lantern resident director **Kathryn MacMillan** directs a cast that includes Lantern veterans **Geneviève Perrier, Joe Guzmán,** and **Marc LeVasseur** with newcomers **Sydney Banks** and **Ned Pryce**. Theater critics and members of the press are invited to request press comps for opening night on **Wednesday, January 15 at 7 p.m.** by contacting Anne Shuff at ashuff@lanterntheater.org. *The Vertical Hour* runs **Thursday, January 9 through Sunday, February 16, 2020**; a complete schedule of performances and audience enrichment events is included in the fact sheet below.

With *The Vertical Hour*, the Lantern returns to the work of playwright David Hare following critically acclaimed productions of *The Breath of Life* in 2010 and *Skylight* in 2008. Originally an actor, Hare has written extensively for stage, film, and television and is now considered one of the most accomplished living playwrights. Along with co-founding Portable Theatre Company and Joint Stock Theatre Group, he has served as resident dramatist at London's Royal Court Theatre and resident dramatist at the Nottingham Playhouse. His best known plays include *Plenty, Knuckle, Fanshen, Pravda: A Fleet Street Comedy, The Secret Rapture, Amy's View,* and *The Judas Kiss*. His film work includes Academy Award-nominated adapted screenplays for *The Hours* and *The Reader*. Hare has been the associate director of the National Theatre since 1984, and he was knighted in 1998.

“David Hare is one of the few playwrights that can make political themes the play's central argument, yet still make the play compelling as a simple human story,” noted Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. “His

particular talent as a playwright is to blend the personal with the political such that the two illuminate one another sharply. Ironically, much of what he thus illuminates are the openings of shadowy passages that lead to deeper mysteries about the causes of human action – and the clarity he brings to one theme of human obsession reveals deeper ambiguities underlying other personal dramas. This is the intellectual and moral arena that Hare illustrates so well. In so doing, he accomplishes what our theatrical art form does best: to bring us to a place of deeper empathy and humility with respect to ourselves and our neighbors, near and far.”

“Hare creates plays where there is always more going on beneath the surface,” said Lantern Resident Director **Kathryn MacMillan**, who helms this production. “As with all of his plays, *The Vertical Hour* deals with major social and political themes at an intimate, human scale – the scale of two people hashing it out, deciding what it means to live, and live right. These are plays that live vividly in the intimacy of the Lantern’s performance space.” MacMillan has directed more than 20 plays at the Lantern, including recent productions of *Betrayal*, *Don’t Dress for Dinner*, *Arcadia*, and *Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, as well as the Lantern’s 2010 production of Hare’s *The Breath of Life*. Her other directing credits include productions with Theatre Horizon, Delaware Theatre Company, InterAct Theatre Company, Inis Nua Theatre Company, Shakespeare in Clark Park, Commonwealth Classic Theatre Company, MBL Productions, and Tiny Dynamite, where she serves as producing artistic director.

Lantern Theater Company will delve into the themes of *The Vertical Hour* on its **Lantern Searchlight blog**, available online at lanterntheater.org/searchlight. Published articles will explore the life and work of David Hare, the tension of U.S. idealism vs. interventionism, the psychology of war correspondents, the political context of Post-Imperial Britain, and much more. New content will be added throughout the production’s run.

Tickets for *The Vertical Hour* start at \$28 and are available online at lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Discounts are available for students, seniors 65 and up, U.S. military personnel, and groups of 10 or more. All performances of *The Vertical Hour* will take place at the Lantern’s resident home at St. Stephen’s Theater, 923 Ludlow St. in Center City Philadelphia.

About the Cast and Creative Team

Geneviève Perrier takes on the role of American war correspondent-turned-professor Nadia Blye in *The Vertical Hour*, her eighth production at the Lantern. Her previous Lantern credits include *Betrayal* (Barrymore nomination), *Photograph 51* (Barrymore nomination), *A Child’s Christmas in Wales* (Barrymore Award for Outstanding Ensemble), *Private Lives* (Barrymore nomination), *The Lonesome West* (Barrymore nomination), *The Screwtape Letters*, and David Hare’s *Skylight*, for which she was honored with the 2008 Barrymore for

Outstanding Leading Actress in a Play. Perrier has also worked locally with Arden Theatre Company, Azuka Theatre, The Berserker Residents, Headlong, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, EgoPo Classic Theater, Theatre Exile, and Pig Iron Theatre Company.

Joe Guzmán returns to the Lantern for his twelfth production in the role of Oliver Lucas, a retired physician and father to Nadia's boyfriend, Philip. Guzmán's previous Lantern credits include *36 Views*, *Arcadia*, *Julius Caesar*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Doll's House*, *King Lear*, *Through the Looking Glass*, *Noonday Demons*, *Speed-The-Plow*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet*, and *Lovers and Executioners*, for which he received the 1999 Barrymore Award for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Play. Other local stage credits include productions with Quintessence Theatre Project, InterAct Theatre Company, People's Light, Act II Playhouse, The Wilma Theater, Passage Theatre Company, Arden Theatre Company, Theatre Horizon, and Philadelphia Theatre Company.

Marc LeVasseur returns to the Lantern stage for his third production as Philip Lucas. His previous Lantern credits include *Don't Dress for Dinner* and the title role in *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths*. Other local work includes productions with People's Light and Bristol Riverside Theatre. Based in New York, his Off-Broadway credits include productions with Metropolitan Playhouse, Red Bull Theatre, The Pearl, Titan Theatre Company, The Queens Players, The Flea Theater, and NY Classical.

Both newcomers to the Lantern mainstage, **Sydney Banks** (Terri Scholes) and **Ned Pryce** (Dennis Dutton) will appear as Nadia Blye's students. Banks is a recent University of the Arts graduate and has appeared locally with The Wilma Theater and On The Rocks at FringeArts. Pryce will reprise the role of Tybalt for the third year in the Lantern's annual production of *Romeo & Juliet* for high school audiences, which returns this spring. His other local stage credits include productions with Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, Theatre Exile, Delaware Shakespeare, Hedgerow Theatre, Commonwealth Classic Theatre Company, Iron Age Theatre, and New Freedom Theatre,

The talented design team for *The Vertical Hour* includes scenic designer **Meghan Jones** (recent Lantern credits include *Betrayal*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *The Craftsman*, and many others), costume designer **Alison Roberts** (*Minors* and *Don't Dress for Dinner*), lighting designer **Shannon Zura** (*Betrayal*, *The Craftsman*, and *An Iliad*), and sound designer **Larry D. Fowler, Jr.** (*Informed Consent* and *Photograph 51*). **Shannon Ryan** will serve as props master and **Leonard Kelly** is the dialect coach.

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994, Lantern Theater Company launched its 26th season with a growing patron base and community of theater artists engaged in its productions and audience enrichment events. The Lantern's innovative **Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative** was featured in *American Theatre* magazine as a leading national success story for increasing artist compensation through a combination of fundraising and higher ticket sales. The Lantern seeks to be a vibrant and contributing member of its community, exposing audiences to great theater, inviting participation in dialogue and discussion, engaging audience members on artistic and social issues, and employing theatrical language and techniques to enrich learning in the classroom. Since the inception of the Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre in 1995, the Lantern has been recognized with 106 nominations and 19 awards, including the 2009 Award for Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service. Following *The Vertical Hour*, the Lantern's 2019/20 season continues with ***Othello*** by William Shakespeare (March 12 – April 19, 2020; **press opening is Wed., March 18, 2020 at 7 p.m.**) and a world premiere adaptation of ***Molière's The Misanthrope*** by Peter DeLaurier, commissioned and developed through the Lantern's New Works Program (May 21 – June 28, 2020; **press opening is Wed., May 27, 2020 at 7 p.m.**). More information is available online at lanterntheater.org.

Lantern Theater Company – 2019/20 Season
FACT SHEET
The Vertical Hour

WRITTEN BY:

David Hare

DIRECTED BY:

Kathryn MacMillan

CAST:

Sydney Banks as Terri Scholes
Joe Guzmán as Oliver Lucas
Marc LeVasseur as Philip Lucas
Geneviève Perrier as Nadia Blye
Ned Pryce as Dennis Dutton

PRODUCTION TEAM:

Meghan Jones, Scenic Designer
Alison Roberts, Costume Designer
Shannon Zura, Lighting Designer
Larry D. Fowler, Jr., Sound Designer
Shannon Ryan, Props Master
Leonard Kelly, Dialect Coach
Rebecca Smith, AEA Stage Manager
Hannah Spear, Assistant Director
Janet Embree, Production Manager

PRESS INFORMATION:

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TICKET INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org
By Phone: (215) 829-0395
In Person: Lantern Box Office, 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia

TICKET PRICING:

\$28 and up

PERFORMANCES:

Thursday, January 9 – Sunday, February 16, 2020

PREVIEWS:

Thursday, January 9 at 7 p.m.
Friday, January 10 at 8 p.m.
Saturday, January 11 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, January 12 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, January 14 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT:

Wednesday, January 15 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. on January 21, January 28, February 4, and February 11

Wednesday at 2 p.m. on January 22 [AIC], January 29 [AIC], February 5, and February 12

Wednesday at 7 p.m. on January 22, January 29, February 5, and February 12

Thursday at 7 p.m. on January 16, January 23, January 30, February 6, and February 13

Friday at 8 p.m. on January 17, January 24 [PUB], January 31, February 7, and February 14

Saturday at 2 p.m. on January 18, January 25, February 1, February 8, and February 15

Saturday at 8 p.m. on January 18, January 25, February 1, February 8, and February 15

Sunday at 2 p.m. on January 19 [AIC], January 26 [AIC], February 2, February 9, and February 16

CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Sunday, February 16 at 2 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

▪ **[AIC] Artists in Conversation**

Moderated post-show discussions with the cast immediately follow 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, January 19; Wednesday, January 22; Sunday, January 26; and Wednesday, January 29. Lantern education director **M. Craig Getting** will moderate on Wednesdays and *The Vertical Hour* director **Kathryn MacMillan** will moderate on Sundays.

▪ **[PUB] Lantern Pub Night**

Lively conversation over complimentary pub drinks immediately follows the 8 p.m. performance on Friday, January 24.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

A brilliant and charismatic American war correspondent-turned-professor is set to marry into an accomplished British family. But is she too much of a renegade to fit in? In this Philadelphia premiere, renowned British playwright David Hare lays bare the shifting alliances of a family trying to come together and the past secrets that may keep them apart.

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

St. Stephen's Theater at 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION:

Ample parking is available at nearby lots and garages, including The Autopark at Jefferson (10th & Ludlow Streets) and Jefferson Hospital Parking Garage (10th & Chestnut Streets). Metered street parking is available during posted hours. The venue is also easily accessible by taxi, SEPTA buses and trains, and the PATCO Speedline.