

For further ticket information:
Lantern Theater Company Box Office
(215) 829-0395 or lanterntheater.org

For further press information:
Lauren Tuvell
(215) 829-9002 x106

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Lantern Theater Company Presents
Brand New Four-Part *In Conversation* Series
as part of their 2015/2016 Subscription Season

PHILADELPHIA – **Lantern Theater Company** will present a four-part *In Conversation* series as part of their 2015/2016 season. To better fulfill the company's mission, the Lantern will expand on previous seasons' *Scholars In Conversation* series, which typically involved three discussion events surrounding one production. The 2015/16 *In Conversation* series will consist of four one-night events on Monday evenings throughout the season, expanding on themes found in each of the mainstage productions.

The first *In Conversation* series event is **Storytelling and the Jewish Diaspora** and will be held on Monday, October 5th at 7pm. Panelists will use the stories of the characters in the first two productions of the 2015/16 season, ***Photograph 51*** and ***Underneath the Lintel***, as a basis to explore how Jewish characters face the challenges of planting roots. The discussion will be wide ranging, crossing recent history and ancient stories, to reveal their resilience in the face of discrimination and dispersal. In an effort to offer an informed discussion with varied perspectives, the company is excited to welcome a unique selection of participants. Moderated by **Dave Heller** (host of *SkyTalk* and *NewsWorks Tonight* on WHYY-FM), the event will feature panelists **Josh Perelman**, **Glen Berger**, and **Kathryn MacMillan**.

Josh Perelman is Chief Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Collections at the National Museum of American Jewish History, where he oversees the Museum's core exhibition, special exhibitions, and artifact collection. Dr. Perelman has a joint PhD in Jewish Studies and American History as well as twenty years of experience in museums and non-profit organizations.

Playwright Glen Berger penned *Underneath the Lintel*, which played over 450 performances Off-Broadway, has seen over 200 productions in the U.S. and worldwide, and has received several Best Play awards. Berger is also known for his plays *O Lovely Glowworm* (2005 Portland Drammy Award Winner for Best Script) and *Great Men Of Science, Nos. 21 & 22*

(1998 Ovation Award and 1998 L.A. Weekly Award for Best Play). He was also the co-bookwriter of the musical *Spider-Man Turn Off the Dark*. In television, Berger has won two Emmys (twelve Emmy Nominations), and has written over 150 episodes for children's television series including *Arthur*, *Time Warp Trio*, *Peep*, and *Fetch*, for which he was the head writer for all 5 years of its run. His non-fiction book *Song of Spider-Man* was published by Simon & Schuster in 2013, and called by the *Miami Herald* "one of the best literary works of this year."

Lantern Associate Artistic Director Kathryn MacMillan has helmed over a dozen Lantern productions, including the Philadelphia premiere of *The Hothouse*, for which she was nominated for the Barrymore Award for Excellence in Theatre for the Outstanding Direction of a Play in 2009, and the Philadelphia premiere of *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* by Martin McDonagh, which was named the best production in Philadelphia of the 2012/13 season by *Philadelphia Weekly*. This season she will direct both *Photograph 51* and *Underneath the Lintel*.

MacMillan says, "It is part of the Lantern's mission to not only present great theater, but to invite our audiences to participate in discussions on our work and its themes, and to engage with them about social and humanities issues. Our *In Conversation* series is vital to accomplishing this, as well as allowing us to partner with other cultural organizations, such as WHYY and the National Museum of American Jewish History, who share our goals of reaching our patrons very personally."

Other *In Conversation* topics for the 2015/16 season include:

- **Wild(e) Modern Celebrities**, an in-depth look at Oscar Wilde's cultivation of himself as a world celebrity and how we craft public personas in today's society, based on a theme of the world premiere production *Oscar Wilde: From The Depths*. Moderated by Kathryn MacMillan, panelists include **Tom Fitzgerald** and **Lorenzo Marquez** (better known as culture, style, and celebrity blog icons Tom & Lorenzo), **Dr. Marylu Hill** (Director, Villanova Center for Liberal Education and the Graduate Program in Liberal Studies), and **Charles McMahon**, Lantern Artistic Director and playwright of *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths*.
- **Rosalind's Escape and Why We Should Unplug**, an exploration of the positive effects of the main character's exile in *As You Like It* where we consider how, in the constantly plugged-in culture of the 21st century, we never have the chance to find ourselves. Panelists include **Mary Bly** (Shakespeare scholar and tenured professor at Fordham University) and a social media expert to be announced.
- **Art-World Movers and Shakers**, an examination of works of Asian art specific to Lantern's production of *36 Views*, the ethics of trading foreign works, and an insider's perspective on the secrets and surprises in the buying and selling of art. Panelists to be announced.

Each *In Conversation* event begins at 7pm and will last approximately an hour and a half, including the panel discussion and an audience question and answer session. Each event will be followed by a wine and dessert reception in the Lantern lobby, the cost of which is included in the price of the ticket.

2015/16 In Conversation Series

Storytelling and the Jewish Diaspora

Monday, October 5, 2015 at 7pm

Wild(e) Modern Celebrities

Monday, February 1, 2016 at 7pm

Rosalind's Escape and Why We Should Unplug

Monday, April 4, 2016 at 7pm

Art-World Movers and Shakers

Monday, June 20, 2016 at 7pm

Subscription to all four series events: \$50

Single tickets: \$15 for individuals; \$12 for Lantern subscribers

Tickets and information at www.lanterntheater.org or the Lantern box office (215-829-0395).

2015/16 Mainstage Season

Lantern Theater Company's 2015/16 season includes the Philadelphia Premiere of *Photograph 51* by **Anna Ziegler**, directed by Kathryn MacMillan and starring **Geneviève Perrier** (September 10 – October 11, 2015); a reimagined remount of *Underneath the Lintel* by Glen Berger, directed by Kathryn MacMillan and starring **Peter DeLaurier** in his Barrymore Award-winning role of The Librarian (November 5 – December 6, 2015); a World Premiere play entitled *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths* written by Lantern Artistic Director Charles McMahan and directed by **M. Craig Getting** (January 14 – February 14, 2016); **William Shakespeare's** timeless comedy *As You Like It*, directed by Charles McMahan (March 10 – April 10, 2016); and the Philadelphia Premiere of *36 Views* by **Naomi Iizuka**, directed by Peter DeLaurier and starring **Joanna Liao, Bi Jean Ngo** and **Joe Guzman** (May 26 – June 26, 2016).

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994, Lantern Theater Company is committed to an authentic and intimate exploration of the human spirit in its choice of classics, modern, and original works. The Lantern seeks to be a vibrant, contributing member of its community, exposing audiences to great theater, inviting participation in dialogue and discussion, educating audience members about artistic and social issues, and employing theatrical language and techniques to enrich learning in the classroom. The Lantern has received 88 Barrymore Award nominations, winning 15 times including the 2009 Barrymore Award for Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service for its innovative education program, *Illumination*. Lantern Theater Company has been in residence at St. Stephen's Theater at 10th & Ludlow Streets in Center City Philadelphia since 1996, managing the performance space and developing it into an affordable multi-purpose performing arts venue. For more information, please visit www.lanterntheater.org.