



**Mailing Address**

Lantern Theater Company  
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**Theater Address**

Lantern Theater Company  
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**LANTERN THEATER COMPANY ANNOUNCES  
LANTERN THEATER ARTIST FAIR PAY INITIATIVE**

Lantern Theater Company announces a major new four-year initiative to increase significantly the compensation of theater artists working under contract, including directors, designers, actors and stage managers. Beginning with the 2015/16 season the Lantern will raise the pay of all these artists by 50% over last season's base rates.

This initiative will cost approximately ninety thousand dollars over the course of the 2015/16 season, and an estimated three hundred and sixty five to three hundred and eighty thousand dollars over the next four years. More than fifty local artists will benefit in the current season. Following the initial four year period where the initiative is funded by outside support, the Lantern plans to maintain this increased level of compensation as a self-sustaining part of its annual budget.

The launch of the Lantern Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative has been made possible by a major four-year grant from the Wyncote Foundation of two hundred thousand dollars, and new incremental commitments from the Board of Directors of Lantern Theater Company, including a personally meaningful contribution from their Artistic Director Charles McMahon.

These theater artists, many of whom are paid only a few hundred dollars per week at small and mid-size theater companies, are vital collaborators, helping to create the memorable and moving works seen by Philadelphia theater audiences every season. They receive too little recompense relative to their artistry, their training and their time and efforts. This Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative will change that game, not incrementally, but meaningfully.

According to McMahon, “The establishment of a permanent and growing talent pool of directors, designers and actors, has made Philadelphia a city where our artists are interwoven into the fabric of our community but too many find it impossible to remain in the field even as they reach the peak of their maturity as artists. Our performing artists are among Philadelphia’s hardest working citizens. By giving so much of themselves, these theater artists have helped to build this city into one of the country’s most vibrant performing arts communities. Until recently, the Lantern could only do so much to support them, but this initiative enables us to do something genuinely meaningful and to set an example that will benefit the broader community.”

This initiative has already attracted substantial support with about one-third of the initiative’s funding remaining to be raised. The Lantern is currently seeking support for the remaining funding with an emphasis on four year commitments. Says McMahon, “By announcing this through a public initiative, we are communicating the real cost of producing high quality theater in Philadelphia. We believe that by bringing more attention to artist pay and by crafting this solution that we will encourage the public to step up their support. We also hope that better pay will encourage these artists to remain in the field and to stay in Philadelphia where they make such enormous contributions to the region’s economy and quality of life. Connecting public contributions to better artist pay should inspire people who love and support live theater to understand how important and valued their support is.”

### **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. Since the inception of the Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre in 1995, Lantern Theater Company has received 88 nominations and 19 awards, including the 2009 Award for Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service. 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 [lanterntheater.org](http://lanterntheater.org).