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Lantern Theater Company Presents the Philadelphia Premiere of *36 Views* by Naomi Iizuka, May 26 – June 26, 2016

PHILADELPHIA (April 26, 2016) – **Lantern Theater Company** closes its 2015/16 season with the Philadelphia premiere of *36 Views* by award-winning playwright **Naomi Iizuka**. Directed by longtime Lantern artistic collaborator **Peter DeLaurier** and featuring scenic, sound, and projection design by **Jorge Cousineau**, *36 Views* runs **May 26 – June 26, 2016**. Theater critics and members of the press are invited to attend opening night on **Wednesday, June 1 at 7 p.m.** *[A full schedule of performances and related special events is included in the fact sheet below.]*

In *36 Views*, a rare and valuable work of art falls into the hands of ambitious art dealer Darius Wheeler (**Joe Guzmán**). Passion and turmoil overflow from the pages of this ancient Japanese pillow book, changing the lives of Wheeler and his colleague, the magnetic East Asian art specialist Setsuko Hearn (**Joanna Liao**). The mystery unfolds in a series of 36 scenes that expertly weave Eastern artistic traditions and Western theatrical conventions. *36 Views* constantly changes its point of view, revealing surprising perspectives on the worlds of art, commerce, and desire.

Inspired by “36 Views of Mt. Fuji,” the famous set of color woodblocks by 19th century Japanese artist Hokusai, *36 Views* echoes its namesake’s shifting perspectives and asks: is there one view that can capture the totality of its object, or is it only in the collection of viewpoints and their expressions that the truth can be identified? “It’s a play about how difficult it is to arrive at some fixed, unchanging truth about a human being, or a work of art, or a love affair,” explains playwright **Naomi Iizuka**. “What we thought was the truth changes. Our perceptions shift, and it’s complicated. People are complicated. Why they make certain choices is at times contradictory, and I wanted to build a play that captured in its actual form all those contradictions.”

“*36 Views* is a fascinating play that adds both mystery and clarity to the story through the layering on of multiple perspectives. As we learn more clearly the external motives of the characters, their essential identities become

more and more difficult to define,” says Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. “Our production will employ a bold mix of scenic, lighting, and projection design to underscore and counterpoint Iizuka’s brilliant text.”

Tickets for *36 Views* are \$24-\$39 and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Student tickets are \$15 in advance; \$10 student rush tickets are available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID. Discounts are available for theater industry professionals (\$10 in advance or at the door), seniors, groups of 10 or more, and U.S. military personnel. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Sts. in Center City Philadelphia.

About the Playwright

Naomi Iizuka is a graduate of Yale University and earned her MFA in Playwriting at the University of California at San Diego, where she now directs that program. Born in Japan to a Japanese father and a Latina mother, Iizuka spent her childhood living all over the globe, including time in Indonesia, the Netherlands, Washington, D.C. Iizuka’s other plays include *17 Reasons (Why)*, *Strike-Slip*, *Anon(ymous)*, and *War of the Worlds*, a collaboration with Anne Bogart and SITI Company. Her work has been produced at Actors Theatre of Louisville, Huntington Theatre Company, Soho Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, NYSF/Joseph Papp Public Theater, Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s “Next Wave Festival.” She is a recipient of the PEN/Laura Pels Award, a Joyce Foundation Award, a Rockefeller Foundation MAP grant, an NEA/TCG Artist-in-Residence grant, a McKnight Fellowship, a PEN Center USA West Award for Drama, Princeton University’s Hodder Fellowship, and a Jerome Fellowship.

About the Cast

The cast of *36 Views* includes several Lantern veterans: **Joe Guzmán** (*Arcadia*) as art dealer Darius Wheeler, **Joanna Liao** (*The Taming of the Shrew*) as East Asian art specialist Setsuko Hearn, **Stephen Novelli** (*A Skull in Connemara*) as Owen Matthiesen, and **Angela Smith** (*Arcadia*) as Elizabeth Newman Orr. Lantern newcomer **David Pica** appears in the role of John Bell. **Bi Jean Ngo** makes her Lantern stage debut as Claire Tsong, a restorer of Asian artifacts. Ngo is a founding member and creative director of **PAPA (Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists)**, and has served as a teaching artist in Lantern’s *Illumination* education and outreach program since 2012. She and the Lantern are participants in the Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships, funded by the William & Eva Fox Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group.

About the Creative Team

36 Views will be directed by longtime Lantern artistic collaborator and multiple Barrymore Award-winner **Peter DeLaurier**, whose previous Lantern directing credits include *The Island* and *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*, both

by Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona. DeLaurier's many Lantern performances include twice portraying The Librarian in *Underneath the Lintel* by Glenn Berger (2003 Barrymore Award for Outstanding Leading Actor in Play). He has also played physicist Richard Feynman in two acclaimed productions of Peter Parnell's *QED*, as well as *The Train Driver* by Athol Fugard, *Emma* as adapted by Michael Bloom from the novel by Jane Austen, *Heroes* by Tom Stoppard, *Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov, and *Skylight* by David Hare.

In addition to its sharp emotional and intellectual challenges, *36 Views* demands a unique set of visual effects as paintings appear, disappear, and transform before our eyes. **Jorge Cousineau** will make his Lantern debut as scenic, sound and projection designer. Philadelphia's foremost designer for projection and video, set, and sound, Cousineau has won multiple Barrymore Awards and a Lucille Lortel Award. He was a Pew Fellow in 2011 and was named *Philadelphia Weekly's* Theater Artist of the Year in 2010. His work has been seen and heard on stages throughout Philadelphia, including Arden Theatre Company, The Wilma Theater, Philadelphia Theatre Company, People's Light, 1812 Productions, and InterAct Theatre Company.

Rosemarie McKelvey is new to the Lantern and will serve as the production's costume designer. **Peter Escalada-Mastick** (*Underneath the Lintel*) is the lighting designer. **Flora Vassar** (*Oscar Wilde: From the Depths*) serves as props master and **Asaki Kuruma** serves as artistic consultant. Kuruma and director Peter DeLaurier will work with movement consultant **Michael Goldberg** for assistance in learning and designing the specific Kabuki movement and choreography necessary for the production. Goldberg is artistic associate at First Folio Theater in Oak Brook, Ill., where he has directed, choreographed fights and movement, and performed. He has studied Kabuki theatre and dance under Shozo Sato (Nakamura Kanzo IV) for over 20 years and has toured Japan and Europe performing in Sato's Kabuki plays as well as performing solo Kabuki dance.

Special Events

The themes of *36 Views* will be explored on **Monday, June 20 at 7 p.m.** with **Art Movers and Shakers**, the final installment of the Lantern's season-long **In Conversation Series**. In this examination of works of Asian art specific to *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, Lantern Associate Artistic Director **KC MacMillan** will moderate a panel that includes **Richard Cervantes**, department head for Asian arts and Oriental rugs & carpets for Freeman's auction house; **Frank Chance**, associate director of academics at the Center for East Asian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania; **Linda Chance**, associate chair of East Asian languages and civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania; and **Asaki Kuruma**, artistic consultant for *36 Views*. The discussion will be followed by an audience Q&A and a complimentary wine and dessert reception. Discussion and reception tickets are \$15 and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at (215) 829-0395. Theater critics and members of the press may reserve complimentary tickets for this event by contacting Jessica Doheny at jdoheny@lanterntheater.org or (215) 829-9002 x101.

Free events open to *36 Views* ticket holders include **Directors in Conversation**, a pre-show discussion with director Peter DeLaurier on **Friday, June 3 at 7 p.m.**; **Lantern Pub Night**, a post-show gathering in the Lantern lobby with complimentary beer, wine, and conversation immediately following the 8 p.m. performance on **Friday, June 3**; and **Artists in Conversation**, post-show discussions with the cast immediately following the 2 p.m. performances on **Sunday, June 5** and **Sunday, June 12**.

About Lantern Theater Company

Lantern Theater Company is currently producing its twenty-second season with a record number of subscribers, its largest-ever operating budget at \$1.3M, and a growing community of theater artists engaged in its productions and audience engagement events. The company recently launched the **Lantern Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative**, a pioneering program to increase the compensation of its contract theater artists by 50% beginning with the current season. Founded in 1994, the Lantern seeks to be a vibrant, 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 received 88 nominations and 19 awards, including the 2009 Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service Award for its innovative education program, *Illumination*. More information is online at www.lanterntheater.org.

FACT SHEET

36 VIEWS

WRITTEN BY:

Naomi Iizuka

DIRECTED BY:

Peter DeLaurier

CAST:

Joe Guzmán as Darius Wheeler

Joanna Liao as Setsuko Hearn

Bi Jean Ngo as Claire Tsong

Stephen Novelli as Owen Matthiesen

David Pica as John Bell

Angela Smith as Elizabeth Newman Orr

DESIGN TEAM:

Scenic, Sound & Projection Designer: Jorge Cousineau

Costume Designer: Rosemarie McKelvey

Lighting Designer: Peter Escalada-Mastick

Props Master: Flora Vassar

Artistic Consultant: Asaki Kuruma

Kabuki Movement Specialist: Michael Goldberg

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TICKET INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org

By Phone: (215) 829-0395

In Person: Lantern Box Office, 10th & Ludlow Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19107

TICKET PRICING:

Tickets range from \$24-39; Preview tickets are \$24

Opening night tickets are \$45 (limited availability)

Student, Senior Citizen, Military, and Group Discounts available

PREVIEWS:

Thursday, May 26 at 7 p.m.

Friday, May 27 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 28 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 29 at 2 p.m.

Tuesday, May 31 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING:

Wednesday, June 1 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. on June 7

Wednesday at 2 p.m. on June 8 and 22
Wednesday at 7 p.m. on June 8, 15, and 22
Thursday at 7 p.m. on June 2, 9, 16, and 23
Friday at 8 p.m. on June 3, 10, 17, and 24
Saturday at 2 p.m. on June 11 and 18
Saturday at 8 p.m. on June 4, 11, 18, and 25
Sunday at 2 p.m. on June 5, 12, 19, and 26

CLOSING:

Sunday, June 26 at 2 p.m.

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19107

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION:

Ample parking is available at nearby lots and garages, including The Autopark at Jefferson (10th & Ludlow Sts.) and LAZ Parking (10th & Chestnut Sts.). Metered street parking is available during posted hours. Venue is also accessible by taxi, SEPTA buses and trains, and the PATCO Highspeed line.

ACCESSIBILITY:

Open captioned performances on Friday, June 17 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, June 18 at 2 p.m.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

A rare and valuable work of art falls into the hands of ambitious art dealer Darius Wheeler. Passion and turmoil overflow from the pages of this ancient Japanese pillow book, changing the lives of Wheeler and his colleague, the magnetic East Asian art specialist Setsuko Hearn. The mystery unfolds in a series of 36 scenes that expertly weave Eastern artistic traditions and Western theatrical conventions. *36 Views* constantly changes its point of view, revealing surprising perspectives on the worlds of art, commerce, and desire.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Directors in Conversation

Friday, June 3 at 7 p.m.

Pre-show discussion with *36 Views* director Peter DeLaurier

Lantern Pub Night

Friday, June 3 following the 8 p.m. performance

Complimentary beer/wine and conversation in the Lantern lobby

Artists in Conversation

Following 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, June 5 and Sunday, June 12

Post-show discussions with the *36 Views* cast

In Conversation: Art World Movers and Shakers

Monday, June 20 at 7 p.m.

An examination of works of Asian art specific to *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. Lantern Associate Artistic Director KC MacMillan will moderate a panel that includes Richard Cervantes, department head for Asian arts and Oriental rugs & carpets for Freeman's auction house; Frank Chance, associate director of academics at the Center for East Asian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania; Linda Chance, associate chair of East Asian languages and civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania; and Asaki Kuruma, artistic consultant for the Lantern's production of *36 Views*.