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Lantern Theater Company Partners with the Fels Institute of Government to Present *In Conversation with Mark Blyth: George Bernard Shaw – Theater, Economics, and Social Justice* on Sept. 21, 2016, at 6 p.m.

Program Presented in Conjunction with the Lantern's Production of Shaw's Mrs. Warren's Profession, Onstage Now Through Oct. 9

PHILADELPHIA (September 12, 2016) – **Lantern Theater Company** and the **Fels Institute of Government** will partner to host political economist **Mark Blyth** for *George Bernard Shaw – Theater, Economics, and Social Justice* on **Wednesday, September 21, 2016, at 6 p.m.** on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. Presented in conjunction with the Lantern's current production of Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Blyth will explore the play's economic themes in this one-hour program moderated by Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**; an audience Q&A will follow. Members of the press are invited to attend. Admission is free to the general public, but reservations are requested by visiting www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**.

“Shaw was a master of making the political personal, of telling stories that wove the economic and social fabric of the times directly into one's personal experience, and laying bare the hypocrisy of the age,” said Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. “Mark Blyth is a master of making the seemingly opaque issues that govern our politics as clear as daylight, and the result is very disturbing. Shaw's characters were all in some way trapped by their economic circumstances; today, whole nations are trapped.”

George Bernard Shaw was an Irish playwright, polemicist, and early Socialist whose influence on Western theater, culture, and politics began in the 1880s and has extended beyond his death in 1950. He is best known today as a Nobel Prize-winning playwright, but he was also a dedicated advocate for socialism, feminism, and the environment. In 1895, he co-founded the London School of Economics with fellow members of the Fabian

Society for the betterment of society. Written in 1893 as a scathing indictment of social hypocrisy and the excesses of capitalism, *Mrs. Warren's Profession* explores provocative themes including the plight of the working poor and is more relevant than ever in our era of increasing economic inequality.

Mark Blyth is a political economist whose research focuses on how people cope with uncertainty, how randomness impacts complex systems, particularly economic systems, and why people continue to believe stupid economic ideas despite buckets of evidence to the contrary. He is the Eastman Professor of Political Economy at Brown University and holds a joint appointment from the Watson Institute for International Studies and the Department of Political Science. He previously taught at the Johns Hopkins University as well as being a visiting professor at Sciences Po (the former Paris Institute d'études politiques), the Copenhagen Business School, and the JFK Institute in Berlin. He did his graduate work at Columbia University in New York and his undergraduate work at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. He is the author of several books, including *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century*, *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea*, and *The Future of the Euro* with Matthias Matthijs. Dr. Blyth writes for both academic and popular publications, and his YouTube videos denouncing austerity fiscal policies of the past several years have gone viral.

Charles McMahon is artistic director of Lantern Theater Company, which he co-founded in 1994. McMahon has directed over 25 productions at the Lantern, including *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare (in 2016) and *New Jerusalem: The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656* by David Ives (in 2011 and 2012). He has been nominated twice for the Barrymore Award for Outstanding Direction of a Play. He wrote *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths*, which was produced by the Lantern in 2016, and he co-created with Sebastienne Mundheim *A Child's Christmas in Wales* based on the poem by Dylan Thomas; *Wales* was nominated for the 2014 Barrymore Award for Outstanding New Play/Musical. McMahon holds a BFA from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University.

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994, Lantern Theater Company enters its twenty-third season with a record number of subscribers, its largest-ever operating budget at \$1.3 million, and a growing community of theater artists engaged in its productions and audience enrichment events. In 2015, the Lantern launched the **Lantern Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative**, a pioneering program to increase the compensation of its contract theater artists by 50% over the prior season. 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 94 nominations and 19 awards. The Lantern's 2016/17 season continues with *An Iliad*, adapted from Homer by Lisa Peterson

and Denis O'Hare (November 10 – December 11, 2016), *Informed Consent* by Deborah Zoe Laufer (January 12 – February 12, 2017), *Coriolanus* by William Shakespeare (March 9 – April 16, 2016), and *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord* (June 1 – July 2, 2017). More information is online at www.lanterntheater.org.

About the Fels Institute of Government

Since 1937, the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania has pioneered the training and practice of public management. Today, Fels builds on its legacy of impact and innovation to prepare the world's next generation of public sector leaders. Fels equips its students with the skills, knowledge, and practical experience they need to be innovative and influential public leaders prepared to meet the evolving challenges of today's world. Fels students and alumni are at the forefront of solving pressing problems – locally, nationally, and globally. More information is online at www.fels.upenn.edu.

FACT SHEET
In Conversation with Mark Blyth:
George Bernard Shaw – Theater, Economics, and Social Justice

PRESENTED BY:

Lantern Theater Company and the Fels School of Government

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RSVP INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org

By Phone: (215) 829-0395

In Person: The Bodek Lounge in Houston Hall at the University of Pennsylvania, 3417 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

TICKET PRICING:

Admission is free, reservations requested

EVENT DATE:

Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at 6 p.m.

EVENT VENUE:

The Bodek Lounge in Houston Hall at the University of Pennsylvania, 3417 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION:

Parking is available at nearby lots and garages. Metered street parking is available during posted hours. The venue is also accessible by taxi and SEPTA.

SYNOPSIS:

Presented in partnership by Lantern Theater Company and the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government, this conversation will explore the economic themes of George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* with Brown University professor Mark Blyth, whose YouTube videos denouncing austerity fiscal policies of the past several years have gone viral. Dr. Blyth is the Eastman Professor of Political Economy at Brown University and the author of several books, including *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century* and *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea*. Lantern Theater Company Artistic Director Charles McMahan will moderate the conversation, which will be followed by an audience Q&A. Admission is free, but reservations are requested.