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#BrechtLTC

Lantern Theater Company Presents the Philadelphia Premiere of Bertolt Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* Onstage September 5 – October 13, 2019

PHILADELPHIA (September 5, 2019) – **Lantern Theater Company** launches its 2019/20 season with the Philadelphia premiere of **Ralph Manheim**'s translation of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by **Bertolt Brecht**, which begins previews tonight. Focusing on a shady businessman's rise to power, Brecht wrote this brilliant drama on the eve of World War II as a parable about the rise of Hitler and fascism. Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon** directs a cast that includes **Anthony Lawton** as Arturo Ui, with **Mary Lee Bednarek**, **Charlie DelMarcelle**, **Julia Hopkins**, **Gregory Isaac**, **Jered McLenigan**, **David Pica**, **Brian Anthony Wilson**, and **Frank X**. Theater critics and members of the press are invited to request press comps for opening night on **Wednesday, September 11 at 7 p.m.** by contacting Anne Shuff at ashuff@lanterntheater.org. *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* runs Thursday, September 5 through Sunday, October 13, 2019; a complete schedule of performances and audience enrichment events is included in the fact sheet below.

"*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* was written at the height of Brecht's most creative period and embodies all those qualities that we admire in his work – it's muscular, direct, innovative, funny, and piercing," noted **Charles McMahon**, who helms the production. "This is a play I have long sought to direct, and this moment in American life seems especially apt for this play at this time."

Bertolt Brecht was born in 1898 in Bavaria. He achieved early artistic success in a number of genres, most notably with the 1928 premiere of *The Threepenny Opera*, a "play with music" by Brecht with music by Kurt Weill. Hitler's rise to power in Germany caused Brecht to seek exile, first in Finland and Denmark in the 1930s and then in the United States in 1941. He completed several of his most important plays during this period, including *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *The Good Woman of Szechwan*,

Galileo, and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Brecht's Marxism eventually made him a target of the House Un-American Activities Committee, before which he testified in 1947. He returned to Europe the very next day, finally settling in East Berlin where he and his partner, actress Helene Weigel, founded the famed Berliner Ensemble theatrical troupe.

As part of its **In Conversation Series** of fascinating discussions with theater artists and special guests, the Lantern will present two conversations that explore the work of Bertolt Brecht and the themes surrounding *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*:

- **In Conversation with Charles McMahon (Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 6:30 p.m.)**

Lantern Artistic Director and *Arturo Ui* director Charles McMahon will discuss gifted storyteller Bertolt Brecht, whom McMahon regards as one of the most mysterious and misunderstood of playwrights of the 20th century. Presented in partnership with the Free Library of Philadelphia, this FREE event will be hosted by the Philadelphia City Institute branch at 1905 Locust St.

- **In Conversation with Michael Brooks (Saturday, Oct. 5 at approximately 4:30 p.m.)**

This post-show discussion with retired English literature professor Michael Brooks will focus on Bertolt Brecht and mid-20th century theater in Europe and America. A scholar of Victorian fiction and drama, Brooks has written about how the interaction of economic and technological change on society is represented in literature. His works include *John Ruskin and Victorian Architecture*, *A Walking Tour of Manhattan: A Guidebook to Cast Iron Architecture* (with Margot Gayle), and *Subway City: Riding the Trains, Reading New York*, which traces the development of the subway from its inception, including how it has been represented in film and art. This In Conversation program immediately follows the 2 p.m. performance of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* and is free to the general public with ticket purchase. Charles McMahon will moderate.

Lantern Theater Company will delve further into the world of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* on its **Lantern Searchlight blog**, available online at lanterntheater.org/searchlight. Published articles will explore the life and theories of Bertolt Brecht, the world events and American gangster movies that inspired the play, backstage interviews with the artists, and more. New content will be added throughout the production's run.

Tickets for *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* 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. Lantern Theater Company's performance venue is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 923 Ludlow St. in Center City Philadelphia.

About the Cast and Creative Team

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui director **Charles McMahon** co-founded Lantern Theater Company in 1994 and serves as artistic director in addition to directing, writing, and acting for the company. He has directed all but one of the Lantern's annual Shakespeare productions, including recent productions of *Measure for Measure*, *The Tempest*, *Coriolanus*, and *As You Like It*. Other Lantern directing credits include *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry V*, *New Jerusalem*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *La Ronde* (also translator and adapter), *Richard III* (Barrymore Award), *The Comedy of Errors* (Barrymore nomination), *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Lear*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, and *A Doll's House*. His acting credits include reprising the role of Heisenberg in *Copenhagen*, and his writing credits include *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths* and co-creating an original adaptation of Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. Later this season, he will direct the Lantern's spring production of Shakespeare's *Othello*.

The talented ensemble includes several Lantern stage veterans: **Anthony Lawton** as Arturo Ui (recent Lantern credits include *Measure for Measure* and his highly-acclaimed original adaptation of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, which the Lantern will remount December 6 – 29, 2019), **Mary Lee Bednarek** as Dockdaisy/Betty Dullfeet/Ensemble (*The Craftsman* and *Coriolanus*), **Charlie DelMarcelle** as Givola/Ensemble (*Coriolanus*), **Gregory Isaac** as Butcher/Ensemble (*Betrayal* and *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson*, *Charles Dickens and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord*), **Jered McLenigan** as Giri/Ensemble (*Betrayal*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths*), **David Pica** as Flake/Ensemble (*Hapgood*, *Red Velvet*, and *36 Views*), and **Frank X** as Dogsborough/Ensemble (18th Lantern production over the past 20+ years). Recent Temple graduate **Julia Hopkins** and 2019 Barrymore Award nominee **Brian Anthony Wilson** will both make their Lantern mainstage debuts with this production.

The design team for *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* includes scenic designer **Nick Embree** (recent Lantern credits include *Minors*, *Hapgood*, and *Copenhagen*), costume designer **Natalia de la Torre** (*Hapgood*, *The Tempest*, and *An Iliad*), lighting designer **Drew Billiau** (*Measure for Measure*, *Coriolanus*, and *As You Like It*), and sound designer **Christopher Colucci** (co-creator of the Lantern's original adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* and sound for *Betrayal*, *Hapgood*, *The Heir Apparent*, and many others). **David Bardeen** will serve as assistant director.

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994, Lantern Theater Company is launching 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 Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, the Lantern's 2019/20 season continues with the Philadelphia premiere of *The Last Match* by Anna Ziegler (Nov. 7 – Dec. 15, 2019; **press opening is Wed., Nov. 13, 2019 at 7 p.m.**); the return of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, created by Anthony Lawton, Christopher Colucci, and Thom Weaver (expanded run dates of Dec. 6 – 29, 2019; **press opening is Sun., Dec. 8, 2019 at 2 p.m.**); the Philadelphia premiere of *The Vertical Hour* by David Hare (Jan. 9 – Feb. 16, 2020; **press opening is Wed., Jan. 15, 2020 at 7 p.m.**); *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, which is being 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 Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui

WRITTEN BY:
Bertolt Brecht

TRANSLATED BY:
Ralph Manheim

DIRECTED BY:
Charles McMahon

CAST:
Mary Lee Bednarek as Dockdaisy / Betty Dullfeet / Ensemble
Charlie DelMarcelle as Givola / Ensemble
Julia Hopkins as Ensemble
Gregory Isaac as Butcher / Ensemble
Anthony Lawton as Arturo Ui
Jered McLenigan as Giri / Ensemble
David Pica as Flake / Ensemble
Brian Anthony Wilson as Roma / Ensemble
Frank X as Dogsborough / Ensemble

PRODUCTION TEAM:
Nick Embree, Scenic Designer
Natalia de la Torre, Costume Designer
Drew Billiau, Lighting Designer
Christopher Colucci, Sound Designer
Rebecca Smith, AEA Stage Manager
David Bardeen, Assistant Director
Janet Embree, Production Manager

PRESS INFORMATION:
Anne Shuff, Finance & Communications Consultant
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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, September 5 – Sunday, October 13, 2019

PREVIEWS:
Thursday, September 5 at 7 p.m.
Friday, September 6 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, September 7 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, September 8 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, September 10 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT:

Wednesday, September 11 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. on September 17, September 24, October 1, October 8
Wednesday at 2 p.m. on September 18 [AIC], September 25 [AIC], October 2, October 9
Wednesday at 7 p.m. on September 18, October 25, October 2, October 9
Thursday at 7 p.m. on September 12, September 19, September 26, October 3, October 10
Friday at 8 p.m. on September 13, September 20 [PUB], September 27, October 4, October 11
Saturday at 2 p.m. on September 14, September 21, September 28, October 5, October 12
Saturday at 8 p.m. on September 14, September 21, September 28, October 5, October 12
Sunday at 2 p.m. on September 15 [AIC], September 22 [AIC], September 29, October 6, October 13

CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Sunday, October 13 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, September 15; Wednesday, September 18; Sunday, September 22; and Wednesday, September 25.
- **[PUB] Lantern Pub Night**
Lively conversation over complimentary pub drinks immediately follows the 8 p.m. performance on Friday, September 20.
- **In Conversation with Charles McMahon**
Join us Wednesday, October 2 at 6:30 p.m. as Lantern Artistic Director and *Arturo Ui* director Charles McMahon discusses the work of gifted storyteller Bertolt Brecht, whom McMahon regards as one of the most mysterious and misunderstood of playwrights of the 20th century. Presented in partnership with the Free Library of Philadelphia, this free event will be hosted by the Philadelphia City Institute branch at 1905 Locust St.
- **In Conversation with Michael Brooks**
Post-show discussion on Bertolt Brecht and mid-20th century theater in Europe and America with author and retired English literature professor Michael Brooks and moderated by Lantern Artistic Director Charles McMahon, will immediately follow the 2 p.m. performance on Saturday, October 5.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

A shady businessman turns to politics, using gangster instincts to grab and hold power. He rapidly learns how to sway a crowd using fear and false promises. Will the people reject his appeal or succumb to his demands? In the midst of a world war, Bertolt Brecht brought forth this brilliant drama that remains an insightful parable for our time.

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.