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#XmasLTC

Lantern Theater Company Returns to Live Performance with Holiday Production of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, On Stage December 3 – 30, 2021

Original Adaptation by Anthony Lawton, Christopher Colucci, and Thom Weaver Also Reimagined for Film and Streaming on Demand December 14, 2021 – January 2, 2022

PHILADELPHIA (December 3, 2021) – **Lantern Theater Company** is thrilled to welcome back audiences with a remount of its original adaptation of **Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol**, commissioned and developed through the **Lantern's New Play Program** and co-created by Philadelphia theater artists **Anthony Lawton, Christopher Colucci, and Thom Weaver**. In this wonderfully clear and direct telling of Dickens' beloved novella, acclaimed actor and playwright Anthony Lawton brings the story boldly to life with drama and frankness, in a manner Dickens himself would recognize from his dramatic readings during his own lifetime. Lawton's compelling solo performance brings each character to life in this timeless story of a miser's miraculous redemption from a life of bitterness, greed, and isolation. Hailed by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as "a 95-minute masterpiece... brilliantly performed and staged" and back by popular demand for the 2021 holiday season, Lawton's heartwarming adaptation has captured the hearts of theater critics and audiences alike and inspired a new annual tradition in Philadelphia.

Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol will be performed **live at The Proscenium Theatre at The Drake Friday, December 3 – Thursday, December 30, 2021**. To ensure a safe and comfortable return to live performances, all audience members 12 years of age and older will be required to present **proof of full Covid-19 vaccination** and a **corresponding photo ID** before entering the theater. All audience members are required to wear **masks at all times** while inside the theater

building. For audience members who are unable to enjoy theater live in person or who prefer to watch from home, the Lantern will also be **streaming a fully designed and edited film version** of *A Christmas Carol* from **December 14, 2021 – January 2, 2022**. Tickets and information for both the live and digital productions are available online at www.lanterntheater.org.

Written in 1843, Dickens' holiday classic is famous for its ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future who help Scrooge see the error of his ways. But Dickens originally envisioned *A Christmas Carol* as a social justice pamphlet denouncing child labor and poverty entitled *An Appeal to the People of England, on behalf of the Poor Man's Child*. England in the 1840s was a time of rapid industrialization, massive population growth, and widening gulfs between the rich and the poor. Throughout his life, Dickens was highly sensitive to and outspoken about social issues, particularly those involving children and economic inequality.

"There are some stories so woven into the mythos of a culture that it seems impossible to imagine a time before they existed," said Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. "*A Christmas Carol* is one of those stories. Stripped of holiday clichés, it is a devastating story, laying bare all the ugly forces that separate and isolate human beings from one another, turning life into a solitary torment. It is also a joyous story of one person's release from that torment just at the moment when it seems about to clasp him in its grip for all time. We are thrilled to return to live performance to again present this original adaption of *A Christmas Carol* – a unique version in which you will hear the simple power of the words and the characters told in a clear and simple human voice."

Lantern Theater Company will delve into the themes of *A Christmas Carol* on its **Lantern Searchlight blog**, available online at lanterntheater.org/searchlight. Published articles explore the world of Charles Dickens, the fascinating circumstances surrounding the writing of this holiday classic, *A Christmas Carol* in the nexus between Victorian economics and literature, and more.

Tickets for the live production of *A Christmas Carol* are \$22 – \$30 and are available online at lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Discounts are available for students (discount code STUDENT19), U.S. military personnel (discount code BLUESTAR5), and groups of 10 or more. All performances of *A Christmas Carol* will take place at The Proscenium Theatre at The Drake, located at 302 S. Hicks St. in Center City Philadelphia.

Tickets for *A Christmas Carol DIGITAL* are **\$20 per household/device** and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Closed captioning is available. Ticket buyers will receive an email confirmation with a private ticket access link, which will

provide on-demand access to *A Christmas Carol* for one viewing during the December 14, 2021 – January 2, 2022 streaming period. The production can be viewed on most internet-connected devices with email/web browser access, including desktops, laptops, tablets, smartphones, and select smart TVs. A **Digital Dickens Pass is also available for \$35**, which includes one streaming ticket for *A Christmas Carol DIGITAL* and *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens & Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord* by Scott Carter (streaming now through December 19, 2021).

About the Artists

Anthony Lawton (Co-Creator and the Storyteller) shows his mastery of theatrical narrative as he plays all of *A Christmas Carol's* roles in this solo tour de force. Lawton is well known to Philadelphia audiences for his original works for the stage – including *The Foocy*, which had its world premiere production at the Lantern in 2005 and earned five Barrymore nominations including Best New Play, and *The Light Princess*, which premiered at Arden Theatre Company and earned eight 2017 Barrymore nominations including Best New Play and two wins. Lawton has also created original adaptations of Shel Silverstein's *The Devil and Billy Markham* and C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce*, which he has performed at the Lantern and across the U.S. under the aegis of his Mirror Theatre Company, earning him praise from *City Paper* as Philadelphia's "Best One-Man Theatre." As an actor, Lawton's local and regional stage credits include numerous stage and digital productions with the Lantern, most recently as Dr. Rieux in *The Plague*, Mr. Rice in *Molly Sweeney*, and the title role in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht. His work at other theaters includes Arden Theatre Company, Walnut Street Theatre, The Wilma Theater, 1812 Productions, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, and theaters across the U.S. His film and television credits include *Unbreakable*, *Invincible*, *Law Abiding Citizen*, *Silver Linings Playbook*, *Hack*, and *Cold Case*. Lawton holds a BA in great books from the University of Notre Dame and an MFA in acting from Temple University.

Christopher Colucci (Co-Creator and Sound Designer) is an eight-time Barrymore Award-winning sound designer, composer, and musician whose 25+ Lantern credits include recent digital productions of *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens & Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord*, *The Plague*, and *Molly Sweeney*, and upcoming mainstage productions of *A Man for All Seasons* and *Travesties*. Other recent work includes sound design for *Two Outta Three* with 1812 Productions, video design for InterAct Theatre Company's *The Chinese Lady*, and sound design/mixing for *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* at The Wilma Theater. Colucci holds an MA in philosophy from Western Kentucky University.

Thom Weaver (Co-Creator and Scenic/Lighting Designer) is an award-winning designer whose work has been honored with six Barrymore Awards, two Jeff Awards, and two AUDELCO Awards. His work has been seen locally at the Lantern, The Wilma Theater, Arden Theatre Company, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Theatre Exile, New Paradise Laboratories, and Walnut Street Theatre, and regionally at NYSF/The Public Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Primary Stages, Signature Theatre (NY), Center Stage, Huntington Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Syracuse Stage, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Shakespeare Theatre, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Folger Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Roundhouse Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Hangar Theatre, Spoleto Festival, City Theatre, Pittsburgh Public Theater, and Yale Repertory Theatre. He is also co-founder of Die-Cast with Brenna Geffers and a member of Wingspace, an organization of theater artists that fosters conversations on design, strengthening community, and furthering activism in the field. Weaver holds a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University and an MFA from the Yale School of Drama.

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994 and now in its 28th season, Lantern Theater Company's mission is to produce plays that investigate and illuminate what is essential in the human spirit and the spirit of the times. The Lantern serves the Philadelphia region with artistic and educational programming, notably partnering with middle schools and high schools in the Philadelphia School District to provide in-classroom residencies in support of curricular learning. Throughout the Covid-19 health crisis, the Lantern has continued to provide artistic programming on both a free and paid basis, including readings of Shakespeare plays in spring 2020; filmed versions of digital productions of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol* in December 2020 and *Molly Sweeney* by Brian Friel in January-March 2021; and this spring's Plays from the Lantern Archives series, which included professionally filmed and edited versions of its 2017 world premiere production of *The Craftsman* by Bruce Graham and three recent Shakespeare productions: *Measure for Measure* (2019), *The Tempest* (2018), and *Coriolanus* (2017).

In addition to **Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol**, the Lantern's current artistic programming continues with the newly filmed digital premiere of **The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens & Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord** by Scott Carter, directed by Armina LaManna and streaming on demand through December 19, 2021; and the world premiere digital production of **Me and the Devil**, co-written and directed by Steve H. Broadnax III and streaming on demand now through February 27, 2022. In its recently announced 2021/22 Mainstage Season, the Lantern will return to live performance with the Philadelphia premiere of two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner Lynn Nottage's satirical **Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine**, the Philadelphia professional

premiere of Robert Bolt's award-winning classic **A Man for All Seasons**, Tom Stoppard's Tony Award-winning comic masterpiece **Travesties**, and a fourth play to be announced in January 2022.

More information about the Lantern is available online at **www.lanterntheater.org**.

Lantern Theater Company –2021/22 Season
FACT SHEET
Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol

ORIGINAL ADAPTATION BY:

Anthony Lawton

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

Christopher Colucci and Thom Weaver

CAST:

Anthony Lawton as the Storyteller

CREATIVE TEAM:

Anthony Lawton, Co-Creator

Christopher Colucci, Co-Creator and Sound Designer

Thom Weaver, Co-Creator and Scenic/Lighting Designer

Kierceton Keller, Costume Designer

Hannah Spear, Stage Manager

PRESS INFORMATION:

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TICKET INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org

By Phone: (215) 829-0395

LIVE ON STAGE – DATES:

Friday, December 3 – Sunday, December 30, 2021

LIVE ON STAGE – TICKET PRICING:

\$22 and up

LIVE ON STAGE – PERFORMANCE VENUE:

The Proscenium Theatre at The Drake, 302 S. Hicks Street in Center City Philadelphia

LIVE ON STAGE – PREVIEWS:

Friday, December 3 at 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 4 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

LIVE ON STAGE – OPENING:

Sunday, December 5 at 2 p.m.

LIVE ON STAGE – REGULAR RUN:

Tuesday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on December 21 and December 28

Wednesday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on December 22 and December 29

Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. on December 8 and December 15

Thursday at 2 p.m. on December 23 and December 30

Thursday at 7 p.m. on December 9, December 16, December 23, and December 30

Friday at 7 p.m. on December 10 and December 17

Saturday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on December 11 and December 18
Sunday at 12 p.m. and 4 p.m. on December 12, December 19, and December 26

LIVE ON STAGE – CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Thursday, December 30 at 7 p.m.

DIGITAL PRODUCTION – STREAMING ON DEMAND:

December 14, 2021 – January 2, 2022

DIGITAL PRODUCTION – TICKET PRICING:

\$20 per household/device

\$35 Digital Dickens Pass, which includes access to *A Christmas Carol* and *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens & Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord*

Closed captioning is available for all streaming productions

PLAY SYNOPSIS for LISTING EDITORS:

We are thrilled to welcome back audiences with this wonderfully clear and direct telling of Charles Dickens' novella, in which acclaimed playwright and actor Anthony Lawton brings the story boldly to life as only theater can. Come rediscover Dickens' timeless story of a miser's miraculous redemption from a life of bitterness, greed, and isolation. Back by popular demand, this heartwarming adaptation captured the hearts of theater critics and audiences alike, inspiring a new Philadelphia holiday tradition. Best enjoyed by ages 9-99.