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#12thNightLTC

Lantern Theater Company Presents William Shakespeare's *TWELFTH NIGHT*, Directed by Charles McMahon, May 18 – June 18, 2023

PHILADELPHIA (May 8, 2023) – **Lantern Theater Company** concludes its 2022/23 season with *Twelfth Night*, part of the company's ongoing commitment to produce the timeless stories of **William Shakespeare** for both the general public and local school students. Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon** directs an ensemble cast that includes **Damon Bonetti, Charlie DelMarcelle, Tyler S. Elliott, J Hernandez, David Ingram, Joanna Liao, Brian McCann, Lee Minora, Melissa Rakiro, and Brian Anthony Wilson**. Featuring live original music composed by Barrymore Award-winner **Christopher Colucci**, the Lantern's production of *Twelfth Night* runs **Thursday, May 18 through Sunday, June 18, 2023**, at St. Stephen's Theater, the Lantern's resident venue; a complete schedule of performances and audience enrichment events is included in the fact sheet below. Theater critics and members of the press are cordially invited to request press tickets for **opening night on Wednesday, May 24 at 7 p.m.** by contacting Anne Shuff at ashuff@lanterntheater.org.

Twenty years ago, Lantern Theater Company made an artistic commitment to produce the work of William Shakespeare every season, recognizing that his plays have a unique place in our artistic heritage, that they impart essential human knowledge and experience to our own age, and that they promote empathy in audiences of all ages. At the Lantern, these works are presented clearly, creatively, and vividly – ensuring that Shakespeare's 400-year-old dialogue sounds perfectly current, crackling with the same urgency and excitement that its first audiences would have experienced in Elizabethan times. With this lively and musical production of *Twelfth Night*, the Lantern celebrates the return of Shakespeare to its mainstage following the Covid-19 pandemic.

One of Shakespeare's most beloved and complex romantic comedies, *Twelfth Night* explores art, gender, language, and love through the journey of its compelling heroine, Viola. A shipwreck separates her from her

twin brother Sebastian and leaves her in the unfamiliar Illyria, fearing him dead. Lost, Viola disguises herself as a boy, Cesario, to serve the Duke, Orsino. She soon falls in love with him, but he is in love with countess Olivia, who falls in love with Viola in her disguise. We meet a host of iconic characters amid one mind-bending twist after another, and Viola is challenged to find her identity, her lost family, and true love.

“The brilliant and ageless *Twelfth Night* is a comedy that lives at the edge of heartbreak right up until its magnificent conclusion,” said Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**, who helms the production.

“Shakespeare was a master of language and character development – and nowhere is this more apparent than in *Twelfth Night*, with its unforgettable dialogue and the immortal characters of Viola, Malvolio, Sir Toby Belch, and Feste the Jester. The Lantern’s production will recreate the Illyrian coast as a place of mystery and music, where impossible love strives to make itself real against all odds.”

Lantern Theater Company will delve into the world of *Twelfth Night* on its **Lantern Searchlight blog**, available online at lanterntheater.org/searchlight. Articles will be published throughout the production’s run, exploring the origins of *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare’s heroines and plot devices, behind the scenes interviews with the artists, and more.

Tickets for *Twelfth Night* are \$25 – \$42 and are available online at www.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. Performances of *Twelfth Night* will take place at **St. Stephen’s Theater**, located at 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia. Everyone other than the actors on stage must wear **properly fitted masks** while in our venue; more information is available at lanterntheater.org/health-and-safety.

About the Lantern Artists

Twelfth Night 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. McMahon has directed all but one of the Lantern’s annual Shakespeare productions, including *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Tempest*, and *Coriolanus*. Other Lantern directing credits include *Travesties*, *The Plague*, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *As You Like It*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry V*, *New Jerusalem*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Hamlet*, *La Ronde* (also translator and adapter), *Richard III*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Lear*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, and *A Doll’s House*. His acting credits include Heisenberg in the Lantern’s production of *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*.

The ensemble cast of *Twelfth Night* includes **Damon Bonetti** as Orsino (*Hapgood*, *Red Velvet*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*), **Charlie DelMarcelle** as Feste (*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *Coriolanus*), **Tyler S. Elliott**

as Sebastian (Romeo in the original/current cast of the Lantern's annual education production of *Romeo and Juliet*), **J Hernandez** as Sir Andrew (*The Plague, The Tempest, The Taming of the Shrew*, Friar Lawrence in the current cast of the Lantern's annual education production of *Romeo and Juliet*), **David Ingram** as Malvolio (*The Government Inspector*), **Joanna Liao** as Viola (*The Lifespan of a Fact, The Last Match, The Taming of the Shrew*), **Brian McCann** (*The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens & Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord; Coriolanus*, Lord Capulet in the original/current cast of the Lantern's annual education production of *Romeo and Juliet*), **Lee Minora** as Maria (*Travesties, The Last Match*), **Melissa Rakiro** (Juliet in the original cast of the Lantern's annual education production of *Romeo and Juliet*), and **Brian Anthony Wilson** as Sir Toby Belch (*The Royale, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*).

The *Twelfth Night* creative team includes scenic designer **James F. Pyne, Jr.** (Lantern credits include *A Man for All Seasons, Me and the Devil, The Plague, Othello*), costume designer **Marla Jurglanis** (*Travesties, Me and the Devil, Othello, The Heir Apparent*), lighting designer **Tydell Williams** (Lantern debut), and composer/sound designer **Christopher Colucci** (*Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol; Travesties; A Man for All Seasons; The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens & Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord; The Plague; Molly Sweeney*). **J. Alex Cordaro** will serve as fight director for *Twelfth Night*, his 24th production with the Lantern. **Rebecca Smith** is the stage manager.

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994 and concluding its 29th season with William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, 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 Greater Philadelphia region with award-winning productions and education programming, notably partnering with middle schools and high schools in the Philadelphia School District to provide in-classroom residencies in support of curricular learning. The Lantern became a national leader in streaming theater during the Covid-19 health crisis, producing ten fully designed plays that were created and filmed in the company's resident home at St. Stephen's Theater, garnering coverage in national media including *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and reaching more than 30,000 patrons in 15 countries and all 50 states.

Lantern Theater Company's recently announced 2023/24 season – which will mark the company's 30th anniversary of bringing great stories from great writers to Philadelphia and beyond – will showcase four brilliant plays from some of the world's best playwrights: **Molière's** comic masterpiece *Tartuffe*, directed by **Charles McMahon** (**Press Opening: Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 7 p.m.**); two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner **Lynn Nottage's** dramatic gem, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, directed by **Bianca LaVerne Jones** (**Press Opening: Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 7 p.m.**); *Faith Healer* from legendary Irish playwright **Brian Friel**, directed by longtime Lantern artistic collaborator **Peter DeLaurier** (**Press Opening: Wednesday,**

February 7, 2024, at 7 p.m.); and William Shakespeare's lyrical and hilarious *The Comedy of Errors*, also directed by McMahon (**Press Opening: Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at 7 p.m.**). The Lantern will also present its annual adaptation of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, a Philadelphia holiday tradition co-created by local theater artists **Anthony Lawton, Christopher Colucci, and Thom Weaver (Press Opening: Sunday, December 3, 2023, at 2 p.m.)**. More information is available online at www.lanterntheater.org.

Lantern Theater Company – 2022/23 Season
FACT SHEET
Twelfth Night

WRITTEN BY:

William Shakespeare

DIRECTED BY:

Charles McMahon

CAST:

Damon Bonetti as Orsino
Charlie DelMarcelle as Feste
Tyler S. Elliott as Sebastian
J Hernandez as Sir Andrew
David Ingram as Malvolio
Joanna Liao as Viola
Brian McCann as Antonio
Lee Minora as Maria
Melissa Rakiro as Olivia
Brian Anthony Wilson as Sir Toby Belch

CREATIVE TEAM:

James F. Pyne, Jr., Scenic Designer
Marla Jurglanis, Costume Designer
Tydell Williams, Lighting Designer
Christopher Colucci, Sound Designer & Original Music
J. Alex Cordaro, Fight Director
Rebecca Smith, Stage Manager

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TICKET INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org
By Phone: (215) 829-0395

TICKET PRICING:

\$25 – \$42

PERFORMANCES:

Thursday, May 18 – Sunday, June 18, 2023

PREVIEWS:

Thursday, May 18 at 7 p.m.
Friday, May 19 at 8 p.m.
Saturday, May 20 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, May 21 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, May 23 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT:

Wednesday, May 24 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Wednesday at 2 p.m. on May 31 [AIC], June 7 [AIC], and June 14

Wednesday at 7 p.m. on May 31, June 7, and June 14

Thursday at 7 p.m. on May 25, June 1, June 8, and June 15

Friday at 8 p.m. on May 26, June 2, and June 16 (no performance June 9)

Saturday at 2 p.m. on May 27, June 3, June 10, and June 17

Saturday at 8 p.m. on May 27, June 3, June 10, and June 17

Sunday at 2 p.m. on May 28 [AIC], June 4 [AIC], June 11, and June 18

CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Sunday, June 18 at 2 p.m.

ARTISTS IN CONVERSATION [AIC]

Moderated post-show discussions with the cast immediately follow 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, May 28; Wednesday, May 31; Sunday, June 4; and Wednesday, June 7. Lantern resident dramaturg **Meghan Winch** will lead the discussions.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

As Shakespeare's most fascinating comic heroine, Viola turns personal tragedy and loss into a life-changing experience for herself and those she comes to love. Yes, there will be a storm, twins, mistaken identities, and – above all – music, the food of love. Join us for an enchanting and poetic journey of discovery.

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

St. Stephen's Theater at 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia

COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS:

During *Twelfth Night*, everyone other than the actors on stage must wear properly fitted masks while in our venue. We are grateful for your cooperation with these safety measures that help protect our unmasked performers in our intimate performance space, while also helping to avoid performance cancellations and meeting Actors' Equity Association Covid testing requirements. More detailed information is available at lanterntheater.org/health-and-safety.