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#XmasCarolLTC

Lantern Theater Company Continues 30th Anniversary Season with the Return of *CHARLES DICKENS' A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, December 2 – 27, 2023

**Original Adaptation by Anthony Lawton, Christopher Colucci, and Thom Weaver Also
Reimagined for Film and Streaming on Demand December 15, 2023 – January 7, 2024**

PHILADELPHIA (November 27, 2023) – **Lantern Theater Company** is continues its **30th anniversary season** 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 playwright and actor 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 Wall Street Journal* as "electrifying" and by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as "a 95-minute masterpiece...brilliantly performed and staged," Lawton's heartwarming adaptation has captured the hearts of theater critics and audiences alike, inspiring a new Philadelphia holiday tradition **now in its sixth consecutive year**.

Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol runs **Saturday, December 2 through Wednesday, December 27, 2023, at The Proscenium Theatre at The Drake**; a complete schedule of performances is included in the fact sheet below. Theater critics and members of the press planning coverage are invited to request press tickets for the opening performance on **Sunday, December 3 at 2 p.m.** by contacting Anne Shuff at ashuff@lanterntheater.org. For audience members who prefer to watch from home, the Lantern will also stream a fully designed and edited film version of *A Christmas Carol* from December 15, 2023 – January 7, 2024.

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 when it seems about to clasp him in its grip for all time. We are thrilled to again present this original adaptation 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 deeper 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, *A Christmas Carol* in the nexus between Victorian economics and literature, the fascinating circumstances surrounding the writing of this holiday classic, and more.

Tickets for the stage production of *Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol* are \$30 – \$35 and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Performances will take place at **The Proscenium Theatre at The Drake**, located at 302 S. Hicks St. in Center City Philadelphia. Face masks are welcome, but not required. Tickets for the streaming version of *A Christmas Carol* are \$30 per household/device and will be available at www.lanterntheater.org beginning December 15, 2023.

About the Lantern 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 performance. 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 *Philadelphia City Paper* as the city'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 James Joyce in *Travesties*, Thomas Cromwell in *A Man for All Seasons*, Dr. Rieux in *The Plague*, Mr. Rice in *Molly Sweeney*, and the title role in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. His work at other theaters includes 1812 Productions, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Arden Theatre Company, Walnut Street Theatre, The Wilma Theater, 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 35+ Lantern credits include the currently running *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* by Lynn Nottage and recent productions *Tartuffe*, *Twelfth Night*, *Travesties*, and *A Man for All Seasons*. Other sound design work this season includes *Noises Off* at Delaware Theatre Company and *Camp Siegfried* at Theatre Exile, and upcoming productions of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* at Walnut Street Theatre, *The Last Yiddish Speaker* at InterAct Theatre Company, *The Flatlanders* at 1812 Productions, *The Lehman Trilogy* at Arden Theatre Company, and *The Comedy of Errors* at the Lantern. Colucci holds a BA in philosophy and theology from Eastern University and 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 celebrating its 30th anniversary during the 2023/24 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 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 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 people in 15 countries and all 50 states.

Following *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol* and the currently running **Crumbs from the Table of Joy** by Lynn Nottage (now through December 10, 2023), Lantern Theater Company's 30th anniversary season continues with **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**, directed by Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon (Press Opening: Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at 7 p.m.)**. More information is available online at **www.lanterntheater.org**.

Lantern Theater Company – 2023/24 Season
30TH ANNIVERSARY 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

Maya Nguyen-Haberneski, Stage Manager

PRESS INFORMATION:

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TICKET INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org

By Phone: (215) 829-0395

TICKET PRICING:

\$30 – \$35

PERFORMANCES:

Saturday, December 2 – Wednesday, December 27, 2023

PREVIEWS:

Saturday, December 2, 2023 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT PERFORMANCE:

Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 2 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Saturday, December 9, 2023 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Saturday, December 16, 2023 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 17, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Friday, December 22, 2023 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 23, 2023 - 12PM

Tuesday, December 26, 2023 at 2 p.m.

Wednesday, December 27, 2023 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Wednesday, December 27, 2023 at 7 p.m.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

In this wonderfully clear and direct telling of Charles Dickens' beloved novella, acclaimed playwright and actor Anthony Lawton brings the story vividly to life as only live 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 for its sixth year, this heartwarming adaptation has captured the hearts of theater critics and audiences alike, inspiring a new Philadelphia holiday tradition.

HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS:

Face masks are welcome, but not required

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

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