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#ComedyLTC

Lantern Theater Company Closes 30th Anniversary Season with William Shakespeare's *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS*, Directed by Charles McMahon, May 16 – June 16, 2024

PHILADELPHIA (April 18, 2024) – **Lantern Theater Company** is thrilled to close its **30th anniversary season** with **The Comedy of Errors**, 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 of Lantern veterans, including **J Hernandez, Dave Johnson, Brian McCann, Lee Minora, Kishia Nixon, Campbell O'Hare, Matteo Scammell, and Zach Valdez**. *The Comedy of Errors* runs **Thursday, May 16 through Sunday, June 16, 2024**, at St. Stephen's Theater in Center City Philadelphia; a complete schedule of performances and audience enrichment events is included in the fact sheet below. Theater critics and members of the press planning coverage are invited to request press tickets for **opening night on Wednesday, May 22 at 7 p.m.** by contacting Anne Shuff at ashuff@lanterntheater.org.

William Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* is a farcical romp about mistaken identities, reunited families, love lost and won, and the differences between nature and nurture. In Ephesus, Antipholus and Dromio – a man and his servant from Syracuse – search for their respective twins, from whom they were separated by a shipwreck years earlier. Meanwhile, Antipholus' father arrives to conduct his own search and is promptly arrested, as Syracusans are unwelcome in Ephesus. To evade capture themselves, Antipholus and Dromio don local disguises, and hilarious hijinks ensue as we learn that the missing twins are indeed living in Ephesus and using the same names as their long-lost brothers. Romantic entanglements, legal disputes, money trouble, and mistaken identities spiral out of control as the twins are unwittingly drawn into each other's lives before one final hilarious twist reunites the family. *The Comedy of Errors* is a sparkingly comic confection, employing

slapstick, clowning, and delicious irony alongside Shakespeare's timeless poetry and wordplay to tell a madcap tale of identity, reunion, and learning (through force, if necessary) to be a better version of oneself.

“One of Shakespeare's earliest plays, *The Comedy of Errors* is the bold and confident work of a writer who already has mastered his craft,” said Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. “Taking as his source material a classical Roman play by the much-admired Plautus, Shakespeare hurls down the gauntlet before Thomas Greene and other snobbish university educated playwrights that held him in disdain. Freely adapting Plautus' story of twins separated at birth, Shakespeare adds a second set of twins, multiplying the possibilities for errors and mistaken identities, and making the plot infinitely more complicated as it barrels headlong to a conclusion that only a miracle could sort out. For daring narrative and sheer comic exuberance, none of the university set could come close.”

Lantern Theater Company will delve into *The Comedy of Errors* on its **Lantern Searchlight blog**, available online at lanterntheater.org/searchlight. Articles will be published throughout the production's run, exploring the evolution of Shakespeare's comedies, Shakespeare's siblings and shipwrecks and other plot devices, and the history of commedia dell'arte, as well as behind the scenes conversations with the artists and more.

Tickets for *The Comedy of Errors* are \$28 – \$45 and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Discounts are available for theatergoers under age 30, seniors 65 and up, U.S. military personnel, and groups of 10 or more. Performances of *The Comedy of Errors* will take place at **St. Stephen's Theater**, located at 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia. Face masks are welcome, but not required.

About the Lantern Artists

The Comedy of Errors 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 recent productions of *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Tempest*, and *Coriolanus*. Other Lantern directing credits include *Tartuffe*; *Travesties*; *The Plague*; *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*; *As You Like It*; *Henry V*; *New Jerusalem*, *The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *Hamlet*; *La Ronde* (also translator and adapter); *Richard III*; *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 *The Comedy of Errors* includes **J Hernandez** as Dromio of Syracuse (Lantern credits include *Twelfth Night*, *The Plague*, *The Tempest*, Friar Lawrence in the Lantern's annual education production of *Romeo and Juliet*), **Dave Johnson** as Antipholus of Syracuse (*Tartuffe*, *Travesties*, *The Tempest*, many others), **Brian McCann** as Aegeon/Angelo/Pinch (*Twelfth Night*, *The Gospel According To...*, Lord Capulet in the Lantern's annual education production of *Romeo and Juliet*), **Lee Minora** as Aemilia (*Tartuffe*, *Twelfth Night*, *Travesties*, *The Last Match*), **Kishia Nixon** as Adriana (*Fabulation, or The Re-Education of Undine*), **Campbell O'Hare** as Luciana (*Tartuffe*, *Travesties*, *Othello*), **Matteo Scammell** as Antipholus of Ephesus (*The Last Match*), and **Zach Valdez** as Dromio of Ephesus (*Fabulation, or The Re-Education of Undine*).

The creative team for *The Comedy of Errors* includes scenic designer **James F. Pyne, Jr.** (Lantern credits include *Twelfth Night*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *Me and the Devil*, *The Plague*), costume designer **Kelly Myers** (*Tartuffe*, *The Lifespan of a Fact*, *A Man for All Seasons*), lighting designer **Shon Causer** (*The Plague*, *Me and the Devil*, *The Gospel According To...*), sound designer **Christopher Colucci** (41st Lantern production, including *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, *Faith Healer*, *Tartuffe*, and *Twelfth Night*), and movement consultant **Eli Lynn** (Lantern debut). Actor **Dave Johnson** will serve as associate director and Lantern 2023/24 Season Education & Artistic Fellow **Talia Speak** will serve as assistant director, alongside longtime Lantern Stage Manager **Rebecca Smith**.

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 *The Comedy of Errors*, Lantern Theater Company's previously announced 2024/25 season will include four extraordinary plays from some of the world's best playwrights, past and present: *The Wanderers*, a funny, moving, and thoughtful drama by **Anna Ziegler**, directed by **Jesse Bernstein (Press Opening: Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 7 p.m.)**; *American Moor*, a poetic exploration of Shakespeare, race, and

America by **Keith Hamilton Cobb**, directed by **Kash Goins** (Press Opening: Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 7 p.m.); William Shakespeare's classic romantic comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*, directed by Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon** (Press Opening: Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 7 p.m.); and *The 39 Steps*, **Patrick Barlow**'s rollicking adaptation of the classic **John Buchan** adventure novel and **Alfred Hitchcock** film, also directed by **McMahon** (Press Opening: Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 7 p.m.). More information is available online at www.lanterntheater.org.

NOTE: This press release was updated April 26, 2024, to reflect a casting update.

Lantern Theater Company – 2023/24 Season
30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON
FACT SHEET
The Comedy of Errors

WRITTEN BY:

William Shakespeare

DIRECTED BY:

Charles McMahon

CAST:

J Hernandez as Dromio of Syracuse/Ensemble
Dave Johnson as Antipholus of Syracuse/Ensemble
Brian McCann as Aegeon/Angelo/Pinch
Lee Minora as Aemilia/Courtezan/Ensemble
Kishia Nixon as Adriana/Ensemble
Campbell O'Hare as Luciana/Ensemble
Matteo Scammell as Antipholus of Ephesus/Ensemble
Zach Valdez as Dromio of Ephesus/Ensemble

CREATIVE TEAM:

Charles McMahon, Director
James F. Pyne, Jr., Scenic Designer
Kelly Myers, Costume Designer
Shon Causer, Lighting Designer
Christopher Colucci, Sound Designer
Eli Lynn, Movement Consultant
Rebecca Smith, Stage Manager
Dave Johnson, Associate Director
Talia Speak, Assistant Director

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TICKET INFORMATION:

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

TICKET PRICING:

\$28 – \$45 / Under Age 30: \$25

PERFORMANCES:

Thursday, May 16 – Sunday, June 16, 2024

PREVIEWS:

Thursday, May 16 at 7 p.m.
Friday, May 17 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 18 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, May 19 at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, May 21 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING NIGHT PERFORMANCE:

Wednesday, May 22 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Wednesday at 2 p.m. on May 29 [AIC], June 5 [AIC], and June 12
Wednesday at 7 p.m. on May 29, June 5, and June 12
Thursday at 7 p.m. on May 23, May 30, June 6, and June 13
Friday at 8 p.m. on May 24, May 31, June 7, and June 14
Saturday at 2 p.m. on May 25, June 1, June 8, and June 15
Saturday at 8 p.m. on May 25, June 1, June 8, and June 15
Sunday at 2 p.m. on May 26 [AIC], June 2 [AIC], June 9, and June 16

CLOSING PERFORMANCE:

Sunday, June 16 at 2 p.m.

ARTISTS IN CONVERSATION [AIC]

Moderated post-show discussions with the cast immediately follow 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, May 26; Wednesday, May 29; Sunday, June 2; and Wednesday, June 5. Lantern Resident Dramaturg **Meghan Winch** will lead the discussions.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

Come see how the story of a bereaved merchant searching for his lost son in a hostile city turns into an unrivaled comedy of mistaken identities, twins separated at birth, and love lost and won. When all of Ephesus is thrown into chaos, only the genius of Shakespeare can put it right again.

HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS:

Face masks are welcome, but not required.

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

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