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THE RETURN OF A FAVORITE AND EXPLORATION INTO NEW WATERS

Classical Theatre Company Announces 2018-2019 Mainstage Season

WHO: Classical Theatre Company
WHAT: 2017-2018 Mainstage Season
WHERE: Classical Theatre Company
4617 Montrose Blvd.
Houston, TX 77006
WHEN: October 2018 – April 2019
TICKETS: Range from \$10 - \$25
Available online at <https://classicaltheatre.org>

A 2016 winner of the prestigious National Theatre Company Grant Award by the American Theatre Wing, Classical Theatre Company (CTC) is proud to announce the lineup for its 2018-2019 Mainstage Season. As the only professional theatre company in the State of Texas that solely produces classical drama on a year-round basis, CTC only produces plays that are 100 or more years old.

CTC will be celebrating its eleventh season with a trio of plays that sees the return of a few characters and artists that haven't graced the CTC stage in several seasons plus the local professional premiere of Thomas Heywood's Renaissance drama, *The Fair Maid of the West*. "We're incredibly excited to have a few artists – both dead and alive – make their returns to the Classical Theatre Company in our upcoming season. Philip Lehl and Kalob Martinez are two incredibly talented artists who worked with CTC during our early seasons but had moved on to other projects in recent years. Philip will be directing and adapting Thomas Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West*, and Kalob – a master puppeteer – will be co-directing and performing in our puppet-driven production of *Peer Gynt*," says CTC Executive Artistic Director John Johnston. "The inimitable Arthur Conan Doyle and his most famous creation, Sherlock Holmes, also have a return engagement in the fall with *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. It will have been four seasons since CTC's only other foray with the Great Detective. All told, we have great variety planned for our schedule. It should be a real treat for our audiences."

The Return of Sherlock Holmes

By Arthur Conan Doyle

Directed by TBD

Adapted by Timothy Evers

John Johnston – Executive Artistic Director www.ClassicalTheatre.org



October 3 – October 21, 2018

Classical Theatre Company returns to the great Arthur Conan Doyle for the first time since the 2014-15 season's smash hit, *The Speckled Band: An Adventure of Sherlock Holmes*. Engaged to reprise their roles as the detective and Dr. Watson are CTC Executive Artistic Director John Johnston and CTC company artist Andrew Love. "I've been in many plays over my career, but I've never had the chance to play the same character in different plays," says Love. "I'm really looking forward to this challenge."

The production will be adapting a few of Doyle's short stories into one cohesive piece of theatre – all built around *The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton*. "Timothy adapted our previous Holmes play and we're over the moon to have him working on this production too," says Johnston. "His talent with and passion for the material make him perfectly suited for this script. One of the several things that will set this production apart from other Holmes plays is that we're really making this a story about and for Dr. Watson. He's the narrator in almost all of the Holmes stories, and too often that gets forgotten when it comes to these stories being portrayed. He's not a bumbling buffoon, he's a doctor and a war hero. Our goal will be to give him this play."

The CTC's previous run with Holmes is still the company's best-selling production, having garnered high praise from audiences and critics alike. Typically a director for the company, Johnston has previously appeared on the CTC stage as Holmes in *The Speckled Band: An Adventure of Sherlock Holmes* (2015), and as Jack in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2014).

The Fair Maid of the West

By Thomas Heywood

Directed by Philip Lehl

February 6 – February 24, 2019

Classical Theatre Company will venture into new waters with the lady pirate Bess Bridges in Thomas Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West*. This production will be a local professional premiere of Heywood's Renaissance drama on the high seas. To be directed by award-winning CTC Company Artist Philip Lehl, this play provides a rare opportunity for strong female characters in plays from this era. "I'm excited to direct this play because of the potent nature of the female protagonist," says Lehl. "Heywood was a contemporary of Shakespeare's and *Fair Maid* presents a great opportunity for audiences who like Shakespeare but are looking to enjoy a new story. It serves as a nice reminder that there are worthy playwrights from that time period besides Shakespeare."

This will be Lehl's first time directing for Classical Theatre Company, and his first CTC production since 2013's *The Merchant of Venice*. "We're thrilled to have Philip return to CTC after years of running his own company [4th Wall Theatre] and bring his remarkable artistry

John Johnston – Executive Artistic Director www.ClassicalTheatre.org



to our stage once again,” says CTC Executive Artistic Director John Johnston. “He has a real understanding of this material, and a drive to see it come to life in a creative and dynamic way.”

Peer Gynt

By Henrik Ibsen

Directed by John Johnston & Kalob Martinez

April 10 – April 28, 2019

Following the success of its three previous forays into the Norwegian master, Henrik Ibsen’s, plays – 2010’s *Ghosts* and 2016’s *A Doll’s House*, and 2018’s *An Enemy of the People* – Classical Theatre Company will again produce one of the great playwright’s works: *Peer Gynt*. Ibsen, known for his intense early dramas, dives right into the heart of what it is to be Norwegian in this folkloric Scandinavian odyssey. To be co-directed by CTC Executive Artistic Director John Johnston and former CTC Artistic Associate Kalob Martinez, *Peer Gynt* will be the company’s first venture into incorporating a strong presence of puppetry into a production.

“Kalob is a puppet master and he’s going to bring his expertise to *Peer Gynt*,” says Johnston. “This play has a multitude of characters – many of whom are drawn from Norwegian folklore and mythos. The central protagonist, Peer Gynt himself, is traditionally considered a personification of Norway or the Norwegian spirit himself.”

This tale follows Peer Gynt as he traverses from Norway to North Africa throughout the decades of his life. The play uses powerful romantic notions while still sowing the roots of modernism for which Ibsen was to become so well known.

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The Classical Theatre Company is dedicated to boldly re-envisioning classical drama on the stage, in the community, and in the classroom through engaging and enlightening plays - bringing them new life and relevance while maintaining the integrity that the works deserve.

For more information on any productions or the Classical Theatre Company, or to arrange interviews with Executive Artistic Director John Johnston, please email johnj@classicaltheatre.org.

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MORE INFORMATION: Classical Theatre Company

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