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**High-res cast photos available now at:**

[www.canarypromo.com/lantern](http://www.canarypromo.com/lantern)

**View the release online:** <http://bit.ly/JH8jvo>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****April 27, 2012**

**Lantern Theater Company Presents *The Island*  
By Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona  
Directed by Peter DeLaurier  
May 17 – June 10, 2012**

PHILADELPHIA – [Lantern Theater Company](http://www.lanterntheater.org) concludes its best-selling season in company history with *The Island*, a play by renowned South African collaborators **Athol Fugard, John Kani** and **Winston Ntshona**, directed by **Peter DeLaurier** and starring Philadelphia actors **Frank X** and **U.R.** A vivid portrayal of apartheid-era struggle and political oppression, *The Island* is a fitting bookend for a season which started with the provocative religious drama *New Jerusalem*. *The Island* will run from **May 17-June 10** (press opening: May 23, 7 p.m.). *[A full performance schedule follows in the fact sheet below.]*

*The Island* is Robben Island, South Africa's notorious prison, where John (Frank X) and Winston (U.R.) are political prisoners and cellmates. After absurdly grueling days laboring under the sun, they return to their dark cell to rehearse a makeshift performance of Sophocles' play *Antigone*. Rehearsals in the cramped cell will test their friendship and strain their resilience in this undeniably moving and surprisingly funny modern classic.

“This play is a hymn to the power of theater,” says director **Peter DeLaurier**. “These are two men imprisoned for trying to change a nation, creating theater in the void of their cell to escape the present moment and keep their spirits alive. They are rehearsing a play which harkens back to a story against injustice, and it is as important to these men to create this play for themselves as it is to perform it for the other inmates and speak truth to power.”

Tickets for *The Island* are \$20 – \$36 and are available online at [lanterntheater.org](http://lanterntheater.org) or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **215-829-0395**. \$10 student rush tickets are available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only. Additional discounts are available for seniors and groups of 10 or more. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Streets in Center City Philadelphia.

## About the Cast and Production Team

**Frank X (John)** and **U.R. (Winston)** are both critically acclaimed veterans of the Philadelphia theater scene. Recently seen on the Lantern stage as Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*, Frank X has performed on virtually every stage in the city and is a multiple-Barrymore Award nominee and winner (*Lonely Planet*, InterAct Theatre Company). Past Lantern Theater Company productions include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, “*Master Harold*”...and the boys, *King Lear*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Beyond Therapy* and *Death and The King’s Horseman*. Originally trained as a dancer and playwright, he has also worked with Arden Theatre Company, InterAct Theatre Company, Folger Shakespeare Theatre and Seattle Rep.

U.R. was last seen as Jerome Kisimbe in the Philadelphia Theatre Company’s production of *Ruined*. He received Barrymore Award nominations for his performances in *The Piano Lesson* and *Blue Door* at Arden Theatre Company. He has performed regionally from Rhode Island to Atlanta, Boston and New York in works such as *The 11th Year*, *American Buffalo*, *Highland Mist* (playwright) and *Spirit Porn* (playwright). U.R. has directed *Ivanov* with Neptune Rep in Colorado and *Othello* at Forest Rep in Connecticut. On television he has appeared in *Law and Order* (Det. Haliston), *Third Watch* (Smith) and *Hack* (Jason).

In 2009, **Peter DeLaurier** directed the Lantern’s production of Fugard’s *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*. A multiple Barrymore Award nominee and winner, DeLaurier recently directed the Lantern’s *Vigil* and performed in the title role of *Uncle Vanya*, both last season. He has previously been seen in *QED*, *Skylight* and *Underneath the Lintel*.

The design team for *The Island* includes costume designer **Natalia de la Torre** and composer/sound designer **Daniel Perelstein**. Perelstein has served as the audio engineer for six of the last seven Lantern productions, and recently created the sound designs and compositions for *Romeo and Juliet*. Husband and wife team, **Nick and Janet Embree** will develop scenic and lighting designs within the Lantern’s unique space, utilizing a theater-in-the-round approach for only the second time in company history.

## About the Playwrights

*The Island* was written through a unique improvisational collaboration between South African actors and playwrights **Athol Fugard**, **John Kani**, and **Winston Ntshona** with the Serpent Players in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

**Athol Fugard** is a South African playwright, actor, and director celebrating his 80th birthday this year. After dropping out of Cape Town University, Fugard worked for two years on a merchant ship in the Far East, the only white seaman aboard. Shortly after returning to South Africa, he began his first work as an actor and playwright, collaborating with both black and white theater artists. The company’s attacks on apartheid brought censure from the South African government. Some of his works, such as *Blood Knot* (1960), the first in his family trilogy, were initially banned in South Africa. Internationally acclaimed even as his work was banned at home, Fugard’s plays include *Boesman and Lena* (1969), *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* (1972) and *The Island* (1973), co-written with John Kani and Winston Ntshona, *A Lesson from Aloes* (1978), the semi-autobiographical work *Master Harold...and the boys* (1982), *The Road to Mecca* (1985), and *Playland* (1993). His post-apartheid plays, including *Valley Song* (1995), *The Captain’s Tiger* (1998), *Sorrows and Rejoicings* (2001), and *Exits and Entrances* (2004), create a portrait of the new South Africa, as well as address more personal themes. Athol Fugard has also written one novel, *Tsotsi* (1980). Adapted into an acclaimed film, *Tsotsi* earned the 2006 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. In 2011, Athol Fugard was honored with the Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre.

**John Kani** joined The Serpent Players, a theater company in Porte Elizabeth formed by Fugard, in 1965 and helped to create many plays performed to acclaim by the troupe. Many of these plays went unpublished due to their dangerously anti-apartheid themes and integrated casts. Early plays were followed by the more famous *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* and *The Island*, co-written with Fugard and Winston Ntshona. Kani also received an Olivier nomination (U.K.) for his role in *My Children, My Africa!* and a Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play, along with Winston Ntshona, for *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* and *The Island* (1975). Kani’s debut as a solo playwright came in 2002 with *Nothing but the Truth*, which takes place in post-apartheid South Africa and concerns the rift between blacks who stayed in South Africa to fight apartheid and those who emigrated. His extensive body of film work includes the recent *Coriolanus* (2011). Kani has been awarded an Obie for his extraordinary contribution to theater in the U.S and holds a Lifetime Achievement Award from SAFTA. Kani is chairman of the National Arts Council of South Africa.

**Winston Ntshona** has performed onstage and in film all over the world. In addition to his Tony Award-winning performances in *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* and *The Island*, Ntshona has appeared in the films *Blood Diamond* (2006), *Malunde* (2001), and *I Dreamed of Africa* (2000), as well as HBO's *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* (2008). Other acting credits include *The Wild Geese* and Sir Richard Attenborough's acclaimed *Gandhi*.

## 2012/13 Season

Lantern Theater Company will open its 2012/13 season with a limited engagement remount of *New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656* by David Ives, directed by Charles McMahon (September 4 – 23, 2012); followed by *The Liar* by David Ives, adapted from the comedy by Pierre Corneille, directed by Kathryn MacMillan (November 1 – 25, 2012); *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, by Martin McDonagh, directed by Kathryn MacMillan (January 10 – February 3, 2013); William Shakespeare's *Henry V*, directed by Charles McMahon (March 14 – April 14, 2013); and closing with the Philadelphia premiere of *Heroes* by Tom Stoppard, adapted from the comedy by Gerald Sibleyras, directed by M. Craig Getting (May 16 – June 9, 2013).

### *The Island* **FACTS**

<b>Performances:</b>		<b>Dates:</b> <i>The Island</i>
Thu, 5/17	7:00 p.m.	May 17 – June 10, 2012
Fri, 5/18	8:00 p.m.	Previews run May 17 – 22
Sat, 5/19	8:00 p.m.	<b>Opening night is Wednesday, May 23, 7:00 p.m.</b>
Sun, 5/20	2:00 p.m.	
Tue, 5/22	7:00 p.m.	<b>Theater:</b> Lantern Theater Company
<b>Wed, 5/23*</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	At St. Stephen's Theater
Thu, 5/24	7:00 p.m.	10th & Ludlow Streets
Fri, 5/25 DIC	8:00 p.m.	Philadelphia, PA 19107
Sat, 5/26	8:00 p.m.	<b>Prices:</b> Adults: \$20-\$36
Sun, 5/27 AIC	2:00 p.m.	Seniors: \$20-\$33
Wed, 5/30	2:00 p.m.	Students: \$10-\$26
Wed, 5/30	7:00 p.m.	\$10 student rush tickets available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only
Thu, 5/31	7:00 p.m.	
Fri, 6/1	8:00 p.m.	Special discounts are available for seniors and groups of 10 or more.
Sat, 6/2	8:00 p.m.	
Sun, 6/3	2:00 p.m.	
Wed, 6/6	7:00 p.m.	<b>Tickets:</b> <b>Phone:</b> (215) 829-0395
		<b>Online:</b> <a href="http://www.lanterntheater.org">www.lanterntheater.org</a>

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Thu, 6/7	7:00 p.m.
Fri, 6/8 ADIC	8:00 p.m.
Sat, 6/9	2:00 p.m.
Sat, 6/9	8:00 p.m.
Sun, 6/10	2:00 p.m.

**\*Opening Night**

DIC: 7 p.m., Directors: In  
Conversation

AIC: post-show, Artists: In  
Conversation

ADIC: 7 p.m., Artistic  
Director: In Conversation

***The Island***

By **Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona**

Directed by **Peter DeLaurier**

**Cast** (*in alphabetical order*)

**U.R.** Winston

**Frank X** John

**Production Team**

**Nick Embree** Scenic Designer

**Natalia de la Torre** Costume Designer

**Janet Embree** Lighting Designer

**Daniel Perelstein** Composer and Sound Designer

**Marla Burkholder** Dialect Coach

**Rebecca Smith** Stage Manager

**Sarah Mitteldorf** Assistant Director

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