

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

COMMUNICATING THE MISSION OF FELLOWSHIP FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Gifts from Fellowship Circle members provide FPA the means to produce compelling theatre from a Christian worldview that engages a diverse audience.

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THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS Jan 6-24

MARTIN LUTHER ON TRIAL Feb 4-14

C.S. LEWIS ONSTAGE: THE MOST RELUCTANT CONVERT Dec 13, 14, 20 and 21, and Feb 18-21

FPAtheatre.com

The curtain rises on FPA's New York season



A triumphant return, a world premiere and a Broadway director. . . all this and more is on tap as the curtain rises on Fellowship for Performing Arts' first full theatrical season, launching in November in the world capital of theatre—New York City.

FPA's season features the New York debut of *C.S. Lewis' The Great Divorce*, the return of *The Screwtape Letters* and the premiere of two new works—a lab production of *Martin Luther on Trial* and a special presentation of *C.S. Lewis Onstage: The Most Reluctant Convert* with Max McLean playing C.S. Lewis.

"It's particularly exciting to introduce new works that engage the imagination from a Christian worldview to New York's theatre scene," says FPA Founder and Artistic Director Max McLean. "We expect discerning, demanding audiences—both from New York and from visitors across the country. We're motivated by the challenge, and we hope many of our Fellowship Circle of supporters will make the trip to New York and be part of our season."

Performances for all shows will be at The Pearl Theatre, at 555 W. 42nd Street, just steps from New York's famed Theatre Row. After months of planning, the details are set:



The Great Divorce Nov. 13 - Jan. 3

The season kicks off with 51 performances of *C.S. Lewis' The Great Divorce*. Based on Lewis' fantasy novel, the play takes audiences on a journey from the hellish Grey Town to the outskirts of heaven. One character—a stand-in for Lewis—witnesses angelic spirits offer the Grey Town's dismal inhabitants a chance to stay in that glorious place. But will they?

"We've toured *The Great Divorce* nationally for two years," McLean says. "And we've substantially reworked the script. We're thrilled to give this revamped work its New York debut."



The Screwtape Letters Jan. 6 - 24

Following years of touring with extended, sold-out runs in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, *The Screwtape Letters* played nine successful months Off Broadway in 2010. Critics ranging from *The New York Times* to *Christianity Today* raved about the show.

Now, one of Lewis' best-known characters—*Screwtape*, a senior tempter in hell—returns to the stage for 22 performances.

Continued on back

It began with ‘Hi, friends...’

FPA’s theatre from a Christian worldview helps one couple forge new friendships.

Jamie Kuiper and his wife, Becky, wanted to reach out to new friends in their Grand Rapids, Mich., neighborhood—get to know them better in a casual, non-threatening environment. There was just one problem: winter.

“You can’t do a cookout,” Jamie says with a smile. “C.S. Lewis’ *The Great Divorce* was coming to town, and we knew about the quality of FPA productions from *The Screwtape Letters*. Then we got an idea.”

It began with an email to three couples that started with these words, “Hi, friends . . .”

The Kuipers simply reached out to neighborhood acquaintances without knowing where they stood in terms of faith or belief. But they had an offer hard to turn down—food, friendship . . . and theatre.

Over the course of three months, the four couples shared one evening a month together, having a meal and discussing the novel *The Great Divorce*, which they all read.

Then, when the show arrived, they saw it together and discussed it afterward. The theatrical experience stirred their moral imaginations, and the conversation quickly became frank and personal.

“One of our neighbors said, ‘The hard-bitten ghost reminds me a lot of me. How did Lewis capture that so well?’” Jamie recalls.

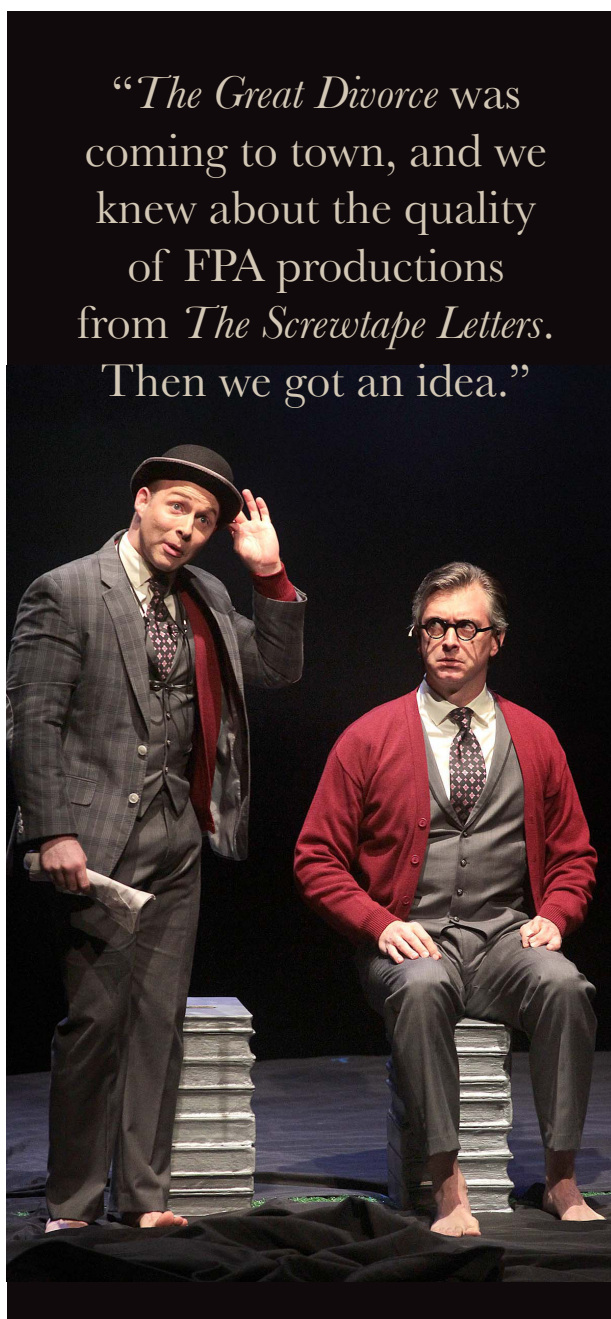
It was the shared experience and the impact of live theatre from a Christian worldview opened that door.

“How else do you get there with someone you don’t know that well?” Jamie asks. “It got us talking. There is just no other context to have those kinds of conversations with people you don’t know that well. Art is more approachable than church for many people, and this was a great way for us to share our story and hear our neighbors’ stories.”

Forging friendships, sharing stories, awakening the yearning for eternity in every heart—this is what FPA is about. And the icing on the cake? “We had a ton of fun doing it,” Jamie says.

Fellowship for Performing Arts is committed to presenting excellent theatre in top performance venues for all the Jamies and Beckys out there seeking a trusted place to take friends and deepen relationships.

Our Fellowship Circle of supporters makes this possible, and for that, we’re grateful. ■



MAKING A DIFFERENCE BY DESIGN

In recent years, the generosity of Fellowship for Performing Arts' Fellowship Circle of supporters has allowed us to take two live shows on the road simultaneously, to develop exciting new works and to launch our first full theatrical season in New York.

"Our Fellowship Circle partners make it clear that theatre from a Christian worldview is important to them," says Max McLean, FPA founder and artistic director.



"As a supporter of FPA, I was pleased to discover their charitable gift annuity

program. This win-win plan provides immediate support for FPA, and a tax write off and lifetime income for donors. Yet another great way to support an effective and entertaining ministry!" Diane Aaron

As a result, we continue to explore ways that Circle members can support that mission, among them—designed philanthropy.

"Designed philanthropy offers increased flexibility and benefit to FPA supporters," says Assistant to the President for Philanthropy Marshall Pennell.

Designed philanthropy is a gift an individual makes either during his or her lifetime or through an estate that is part of an overall financial plan. It can consist of such assets as securities, art, real estate or other real property;

the proceeds of life insurance or a retirement account; or assets given through the donor's will.

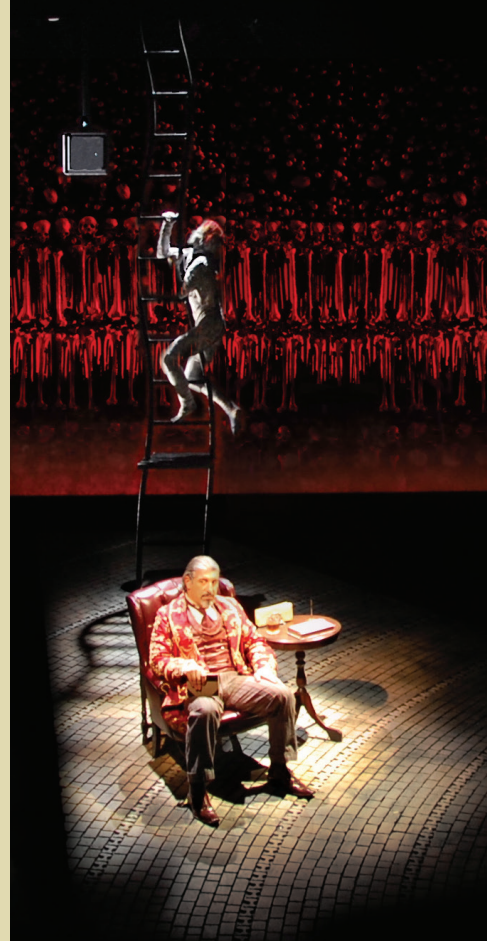
In general, there are three kinds of designed gifts—assets other than cash, a trust or an estate.

Some designed gifts—such as life trusts—transfer an asset to FPA but allow donors to receive income from it for as long as they live. Designed philanthropy also can offer a variety of tax benefits to donors. "As a supporter of FPA, I was pleased to discover their charitable gift annuity program," Fellowship Circle member Diane Aaron said. "This win-win plan provides immediate support for FPA, and a tax write off and lifetime income for donors. Yet another great way to support an effective and entertaining ministry!"

Talk to FPA Managing Director Christine Metzger about the many advantages of designed philanthropy. Email Christine@FPAtheatre.com, or call her at 212-582-2920. ■



With designed philanthropy, donors continue to help FPA make a difference in our culture.



There are three kinds of designed gifts—assets other than cash, a trust or an estate.



Two notes came in the mail recently. In the first a woman shared how much *The Screwtape Letters* “challenged my thinking.” The second came from a couple who had taken friends to *The Great Divorce*. She commented on how inspiring it was and how it made a “profound impact on us.”

These notes are a delight to read. They also reinforce a core premise that guides our work. Engaging the moral imagination touches something in us that connects with what C. S. Lewis calls “cosmic logos.” Or what St. Paul refers to as “God’s invisible qualities and divine nature” that each of us has inherently. Touching that place within each of us that connects to the supernatural world drives our work.

This thought came to me while researching the script for *C.S. Lewis Onstage: The Most Reluctant Convert*. Lewis was a vigorous debunker of Christianity in his late teens and 20s. “There is no proof for any religion and Christianity is not even the best,” he wrote to a friend.

That view began to change after his close friend Owen Barfield converted to theism.

The play will go into more detail about this, but in short, Barfield convinced Lewis that if the atheistic view is true, if science teaches us that our minds are merely chance arrangements of atoms on skulls, there

must be some mistake. If that is so, how can we trust what the sciences tell us about our mind?

It was here that Lewis began to give up his long-held atheism. He wrote, “Mind and imagination must be more than biochemistry. It must be a real participation with cosmic logos. Rock bottom reality had to be intelligent.”

I recount this scene from *The Most Reluctant Convert* because it reveals that art and theatre in the service of great ideas hint at the

deeper structures of reality. Good theatre reminds us that life is purposeful and meaningful; that we are not merely chance arrangements of atoms in skulls. Great art points to an even Greater Artist; a God who brings us out of ourselves to make a “profound impact on us”; who engages our imagination in a way that “challenges our thinking and inspires us.”

This is what really excites me about our work. With your help, Fellowship for Performing will continue to engage people to see beyond the here and now and to point the way to the One who “has set eternity in our hearts.” ■



Christa Scott-Reed in a scene from C.S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce*.

Curtain Rises in NYC

Continued from front



Martin Luther on Trial Feb. 4 - 14

FPA's first original play looks at one of history's most controversial characters—Martin Luther. And there are only 10 performances.

“This is a fantasy where St. Peter presides, Satan is the prosecutor and witnesses range from St. Paul, Hitler and Freud to Pope Francis,” McLean says. “And we’re thrilled to have Broadway veteran director Michael Parva at the helm of this premiere lab production.”



C.S. Lewis Onstage: The Most Reluctant Convert Dec. 13, 14 and 20, 21. Feb. 18 - 21

As a special bonus for FPA's first season—Max McLean takes the stage as C.S. Lewis . . . but only for nine performances. Adapted from his writings, *The Most Reluctant Convert* takes audiences on Lewis' journey from atheism to faith.

“I hope as many Fellowship Circle members as possible can see the shows,” McLean says. “But you’re already in the theatre with us. It’s your support that makes this season possible.” ■

Please make your tax-deductible gift to FPA using the enclosed card. With any gift of \$1,000 or more, your name will be included in our playbill as a member of FPA's Fellowship Circle. (See insert for level details.)

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