

A NUMBER
Caryl Churchill's Psychological Thriller
Is Third Installment in
CHESTER THEATRE COMPANY's
25th Anniversary Season

Running July 30 - August 10

CHESTER, MA (July 10, 2014) Chester Theatre Company will continue its 25th Anniversary Season with Caryl Churchill's **A NUMBER**. The production, which runs from July 30 through August 10 at the Chester Town Hall in Chester, MA, will feature CTC favorite Jay Stratton, joined by newcomer Larry John Meyers.

In **A NUMBER**, Bernard has made a shocking discovery: he is one of "a number" of clones that were created from the cells of an older brother he never knew he had. **A NUMBER** opens as Bernard seeks an explanation from his widowed father, Salter. But, in succeeding scenes so do two other "sons." Who is the original? Who are the clones? Why did the father have the clones made? **A NUMBER** is a fast-paced psychological thriller, a fascinating puzzle and a dark tale of a father's love for his son, from one of the great playwrights of our time.

The *London Evening Standard*, in honoring **A NUMBER** with its Best Play Award, hailed it as "An astonishing event...the first true play of the 21st century." *The New York Times* called it "Stunning.... a great event...a gripping dramatic consideration of what happens to identity in a world where people can be cloned." A Multi-Obie Award Winner, Caryl Churchill's other plays include *Cloud Nine*, *Top Girls*, *Fen*, *Serious Money*, and *Mad Forest*. Her latest play, *Love and Information* is currently an Off-Broadway hit.

According to CTC Artistic Director Byam Stevens, "Just as you might expect with a writer as original and groundbreaking as Caryl Churchill, **A NUMBER** is a hard play to categorize – it's a dark comedy, a psychological thriller and an exploration of pressing ethical questions on the cutting edge of medical technology. Funny and provocative, and thought-provoking -- the inimitable hallmarks of one of the pre-eminent playwrights of our time!"

Jay Stratton returns for his sixth appearance at CTC, (*Pride@Prejudice*, *The Dishwashers*, *Grace*, *Running*, *Two Rooms*) to play Salter's sons. Salter will be played by CTC newcomer Larry John Meyers, who collaborated previously with Stratton on a production of *Othello* in his native Pittsburgh. CTC Artistic Director Byam Stevens will direct.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Caryl Churchill (Playwright) is an incredibly prolific and award-winning playwright whose work frequently deals with feminist issues, the abuses of power, and sexual politics. Her many plays include: *Mad Forest*, *Love and Information*, *Downstairs*, *Having a Wonderful Time*, *Easy Death*, *Owners*, *Objections to Sex and Violence*, *Softcops*, *Serious Money* and *Icecream*. Churchill was educated at Oxford and has served as resident dramatist at London's Royal Court Theatre.

Byam Stevens (Director) has been the Artistic Director of CTC since 1998. His Off Broadway credits include: *Tea for Three*; *Lady Bird*, *Pat and Betty*, *The Dishwashers*; *The Bully Pulpit*,

starring Michael O. Smith as Teddy Roosevelt; the World Premiere of *Carbondale Dreams* by Steven Sater and the American Premiere of *Beef* by David Pownall. For CTC, he's directed the World Premieres of: *Arms On Fire*, *The Darlings*, *Home Fires Burning*, *The Plains of Ilion*, and *John and Teddy*. Other productions for CTC: *Wittenberg*, *Last Train to Nibroc*, *Two Rooms*, *An Almost Holy Picture*, *Valley Song*, *The Interrogation of Nathan Hale*, and the American Premiere of *Sixteen Words For Water*.

Larry John Meyers (Salter) Regional credits include La Mama (NYC), Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Rep, Dallas Theater Center, Florida Rep, Indianapolis Rep, Minneapolis' Children's Theater Company, PlayPenn, Syracuse Stage, and Weston Playhouse (Vermont). Pittsburgh resident actor and director for nearly thirty years: founding company member of City Theatre, Three Rivers Shakespeare Festival; many notable performances with Pittsburgh Public Theater, Pittsburgh Irish & Classical Theatre, Quantum Theatre, and the Pittsburgh Symphony, among others. Over thirty film and television credits including, "American Splendor," "Up Close & Personal," "Runaway Train," "Flashdance," and "Daddy Cool." Larry received his MFA in Acting from New York University's School of the Arts.

Jay Stratton (Salter's sons) is making his sixth appearance at CTC. Previously at Chester, Jay has appeared in *The Dishwashers*, *Pride@Prejudice*, *Two Rooms*, *Grace*, and *Running*, Jay was also the director of *See Rock City* in Chester's acclaimed *Nibroc Trilogy*. A New York-based actor, Jay has worked in television and film, Off-Broadway, and at regional theatres around the country. In New York, Jay has worked with theatres like Peccadillo, 59E59, The Pearl, and Red Bull. Recent regional projects include: *Venus and Fur* and *Bug* at Rep Theatre of St. Louis; *The Pavilion* and *Reckless* at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park; *Oedipus* at the Pittsburgh Public; *Pride and Prejudice* with the Denver Center; *Stones in His Pockets* at Hudson Stage Company; *Philadelphia Story* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* at Pioneer Theatre Company; and *Caesar and Cleopatra* at Playmakers Rep. Jay is a professor of Acting and Voice at Nassau College on Long Island.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets are available on CTC's website: www.chestertheatre.org, or by phone at 1-800-595-4TIX. To receive a brochure, contact the CTC office at 413-354-7770. CTC performances take place at Chester's Historic Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA. Performances are Wednesday through Saturday at 8:00pm, with matinees Thursdays and Sundays at 2:00pm. Tickets are \$30 for weekday performances (Wed-Fri), \$35 for weekend (Sat & Sun). Student, Chester Resident, and Saturday Night Rush tickets available; group rates for 10 or more are also available. For further information visit CTC's website at: www.chestertheatre.org.

About Chester Theatre Company

Chester Theatre Company, a professional theatre company located in the foothills of the Berkshires, produces 4 plays each summer, performed by top-flight actors, directors and designers from across the country. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Byam Stevens, CTC has earned a reputation for producing the best in contemporary theatre – 17 CTC productions have gone on to Off-Broadway, regional, national, and international engagements in the last 17 years. For further information go to CTC's website: www.chestertheatre.org.

A NUMBER's media sponsor is Esselon Café. CTC's season sponsor is the restaurant Roscoe's. Other corporate sponsors this season include Baystate Health, Harvest Moon Realty,

Morgan Stanley, New England Public Radio and Valley Advocate/Preview Magazine. CTC performances are supported, in part, by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Local Cultural Councils of Blandford, Chester, Huntington, Montgomery, Washington, Westfield and Worthington.

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