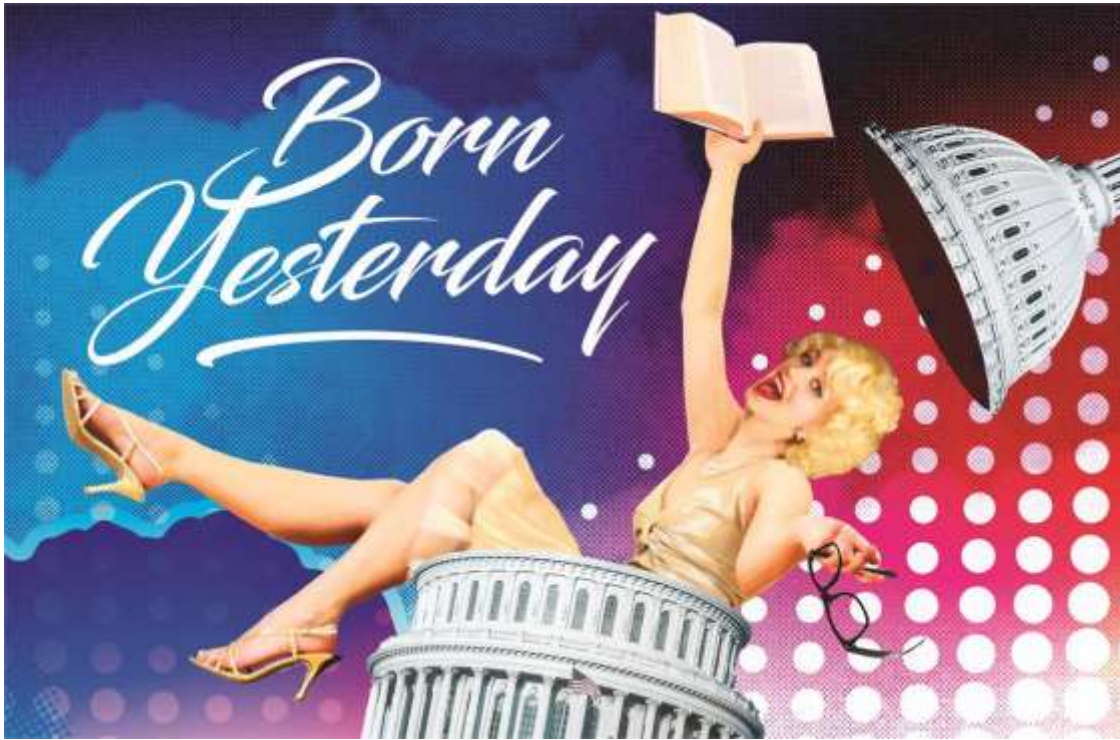


# ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS • MANAGING DIRECTOR LINDA DIGABRIELE



\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\*

January 12, 2017

**ASOLO REP CONTINUES ITS REP SEASON WITH**  
**BORN YESTERDAY; ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR PETER AMSTER**  
**HELMS THE CLASSIC AMERICAN COMEDY;**  
**OPENS FEBRUARY 10**

"As much fun as if born today."

— *Curtain Up*

**(SARASOTA, January 12, 2017)** — Asolo Repertory Theatre continues its 2016-17 season and the fifth and final year of its American Character Project with Academy Award®-winner Garson Kanin's irresistible girl-meets-world comedy **BORN YESTERDAY**. Directed by Asolo Rep favorite and Joseph Jefferson Award nominee Peter Amster, **BORN YESTERDAY** previews February 8 and 9, opens February 10 and runs in rotating rep through April 15 in the Mertz Theatre, located in the FSU Center for the Performing Arts.

Bombshell Billie Dawn has always gotten by on looks alone. But when she moves to Washington, D.C. with her corrupt boyfriend, junkyard magnate Harry Brock, he needs Billie to be more than just a pretty face. To help her fit in with the capital's upper echelon, Harry hires Paul Verrall, a young reporter, to educate Billie, but Paul ends up learning quite a bit from her in this classic comedy that reminds us all not to judge a book by its cover.

"**BORN YESTERDAY** is a tremendously witty, timely and clever play, but, above all, it is overflowing with joy," said Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards. "In a rep

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season that kicks off with two gripping political dramas, *The Great Society* and *The Originalist*, **BORN YESTERDAY**, under the helm of comic genius Peter Amster, will be nothing short of a delightfully funny and surprisingly touching theatrical experience.”

Broadway's Christina DeCicco stars as Billie Dawn. Ms. DeCicco starred as Eva Perón opposite Ricky Martin in the most recent Broadway revival of *Evita*, and Arachne in *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*. She also played Glinda in the national tour of *Wicked*. Chicago-based actor Norm Boucher, who previously appeared in *Hero: The Musical* and *Fannie Brice: America's Funny Girl* at Asolo Rep, plays Harry Brock. This season, Mr. Boucher also plays Mayor Richard J. Daley and General Earle Wheeler in *The Great Society* at Asolo Rep. Christopher Kelly plays reporter Paul Verrall. Mr. Kelly, who also portrays Robert McNamara, Rep. Wilbur Mills and Stanley Levison in *The Great Society* this season, recently appeared in *Pericles* at the Public Theater and the Drama Desk-nominated *Moby Dick* at the Ohio Theatre.

**BORN YESTERDAY** is one of the most famous plays by acclaimed American playwright, screenwriter and author Garson Kanin. His works for the stage also include *The Smile of the World*, *The Rat Race*, *The Live Wire*, and *Peccadillo*, which served as the inspiration for Joe DiPietro's *Living on Love*. Mr. Kanin co-wrote four screenplays with actress Ruth Gordon, including the Academy Award nominated *A Double Life*, *Adam's Rib*, and *Pat and Mike*. The original production of **BORN YESTERDAY** opened on Broadway in February 1946, with Judy Holliday as Billie Dawn. Both the play and the beloved 1950 film adaptation proved to be star vehicles for Ms. Holliday, who garnered an Academy Award for her performance.

Robert Perdziola, who was the set and costume designer for last season's stunning production of *Living on Love*, will design the set and costumes for **BORN YESTERDAY**, once again infusing the glamour that enchanted Asolo Rep audiences. Director Peter Amster helmed Asolo Rep's celebrated production of *Living on Love* last season. Throughout his nine seasons as an Associate Artist at Asolo Rep, he also directed *The Matchmaker*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *You Can't Take it With You*, *Fallen Angels*, *Deathtrap*, and more. He has directed all across the country, including at Steppenwolf, the Goodman, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Conservatory Theater, Syracuse Stage, American Repertory Theater and more.

“Garson Kanin crafted a play that succeeds in being both a romantic comedy and a great American cautionary tale,” said Director Peter Amster. “The comedy arises from its embrace of a Pygmalion-like transformation: Billie Dawn, the 'dumb blonde' (and one of the greatest comic inventions of the American stage), has been told to 'wise up' to the ways of D.C. by her rich thug of a boyfriend. But instead of becoming a lady like Eliza Doolittle, Billie becomes an informed, somewhat articulate citizen. What emerges from her newly acquired grammar of citizenship is a civics lesson for all of us: we, the people, *must* stay awake and engaged if America is to endure.”

**CAST**  
(In Order of Appearance)

JILLIAN COURTNEY.....Helen  
CHRISTOPHER KELLY\*.....Paul Verrall  
JACOB SHERBURNE.....Eddie Brock  
ROB GLAUZ.....Bellhop  
WYATT McNEIL.....Bellhop  
NORM BOUCHER\*.....Harry Brock  
MIKE PEREZ.....Assistant Manager  
CHRISTINA DeCICCO\*.....Billie Dawn  
ERIC HISSOM\*.....Ed Devery  
MICHAEL D. FISHER.....Barber  
JESSIE TAYLOR.....Manicurist  
BRANDON MALDONADO.....Bootblack/Waiter  
DON WALKER.....Senator Norval Hedges  
DENISE CORMIER\*.....Mrs. Hedges

\*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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**SELECTED CREATIVE TEAM MEMBERS**

Director.....Peter Amster  
Scenic and Costume Designer.....Robert Perdziola  
Lighting Designer.....Christopher Ostrom  
Sound Designer.....Matt Parker  
Fight Director.....Daniel Granke  
Hair/Wig & Make-up Designer.....Michelle Hart

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## **SELECTED ARTISTIC BIOS**

(In Alphabetical Order)

**PETER AMSTER** ASSOCIATE ARTIST, NINTH SEASON (Director, **BORN YESTERDAY**) returns to Asolo Rep where he directed *Living on Love*, *The Matchmaker*, *Vanya and Sonya and Masha and Spike*, *You Can't Take it With You*, *Fallen Angels*, *Deathtrap*, *The Perfume Shop*, *This Wonderful Life* and choreographed *1776*. In Chicago, he was nominated for Joseph Jefferson Awards for directing *Once on this Island*, *The World Goes Round*, *The Rothschilds* (Apple Tree Theatre), and *Pride and Prejudice* (Northlight Theatre). Other Chicago area theatres include Steppenwolf, the Goodman, the Court, Live Bait, Pegasus, and Route 66. Regional theatres include the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, ACT, Syracuse Stage, Geva Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Peninsula Players, Weston Playhouse, Maltz Jupiter Theatre, and Laguna Playhouse. Peter has directed and choreographed operas for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Skylight Opera in Milwaukee, and Light Opera Works in Evanston, IL.

**NORM BOUCHER\*** GUEST ARTIST, THIRD SEASON (Harry Brock, **BORN YESTERDAY**; Mayor Richard J. Daley/Gen. Earle Wheeler/Ensemble, *The Great Society*) is happy to return to Asolo Rep, where he appeared in *Hero: The Musical* and *Fannie Brice: America's Funny Girl*. Based in Chicago, he has worked at Theatre at the Center, Chicago Shakespeare, Goodman Theatre, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Marriott Lincolnshire, and Court Theatre. His TV credits include *Chicago PD*, *Chicago Fire*, *Early Edition*, and numerous commercials including two Super Bowl spots. He teaches voiceover at Acting Studio Chicago. He is grateful for his wife and best friend Nancy Jane Nelson.

**CHRISTINA DECICCO\*** GUEST ARTIST, FIRST SEASON (Billie Dawn, **BORN YESTERDAY**) On Broadway, Christina starred as Eva Perón opposite Ricky Martin in *Evita*, Arachne in *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark* and Sister Mary Robert (u/s) in *Sister Act*. She toured as Glinda in the Stephen Schwartz hit *Wicked* and starred Off-Broadway as Cindy Lou Huffington in the jukebox musical *The Marvelous Wonderettes*. Regionally, she has been seen as Elmire in *Tartuffe*; Maggie in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*; Gabriella in *Boeing, Boeing*; Barbara Rose in *War of the Roses*; Mary Poppins in *Mary Poppins*; Betty Schaefer in *Sunset Boulevard*; and Eponine in *Les Misérables*. BA Wagner

**CHRISTOPHER KELLY\*** GUEST ARTIST, FIRST SEASON (Paul Verrall, **BORN YESTERDAY**; Robert McNamara/Rep. Wilbur Mills/Stanley Levison/Ensemble, *The Great Society*) In New York, Mr. Kelly recently appeared in *Pericles* at the Public Theater and the Drama Desk-nominated *Moby Dick*. Across the U.S., his credits include the world premiere of *Pierre*, *Grace or the Art of Climbing*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, and *Hamlet* among seven seasons at the Denver Center Theatre Company; *Henry IV: Parts 1 & 2* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *Pericles* (California Shakespeare); *An Inspector Calls* (Pioneer Theatre); *In the Next Room* (Syracuse Stage); *Noises Off* (Cleveland Play House); *The Glass Menagerie* and *Amadeus* (Fulton Theatre). His film credits include *Damages* (FX) and *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* (CBS). MFA., NYU.

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## **PUBLIC PROGRAMMING**

### **The Scoop**

One hour prior to every performance of **BORN YESTERDAY**  
Asolo Rep's Mertz Theatre, orchestra level

Arrive one hour before curtain to hear the ideas and inspirations that contributed to the making of **BORN YESTERDAY**. (Opening Night, February 10, is excluded.)

### **Meet the Actors**

Sunday, February 19 at 2pm  
Asolo Rep's Mertz Theatre

Immediately following the 2pm matinee, ask questions and learn more from members of the cast in a facilitated discussion.

### **Inside Asolo Rep: *BORN YESTERDAY* and *THE LITTLE FOXES***

Thursday, February 23 at 11am  
Cook Theatre

Panel discussions are \$5; and free for all donors and Asolo Rep Guild Members

Get rare insights into the artistic process, hear directly from the people responsible for producing **BORN YESTERDAY** and **THE LITTLE FOXES**, and engage in stimulating discussion inspired by the plays' themes and issues.

**Inside Asolo Rep is sponsored by Hotel Indigo and the Observer**

### **OUT@AsoloRep: *BORN YESTERDAY***

Thursday, March 2 at 7pm; show starts at 8pm  
Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Contact Asolo Rep's Box Office for subscription and ticket information

Now in its seventh season, OUT@AsoloRep is Sarasota's premier cultural event connecting local Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities with fantastic theatre. Enjoy a pre-show reception and learn about participating LGBT organizations, gain personal insight into **BORN YESTERDAY** from the creative team and cast members, and mingle with the actors and other OUT attendees after the performance.

**OUT@AsoloRep is sponsored by U.S. Trust, Visit Sarasota County, Morton's Gourmet Market & Catering, and Community Foundation of Sarasota County - Our Sarasota Fund and McCauley Brown Fund.**

### **Tuesday Talkbacks**

Every Tuesday throughout the run  
Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Join us for an intimate post-show discussion with featured actors or guests following every Tuesday performance of **BORN YESTERDAY**.

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## **TICKETS**

Tickets for **BORN YESTERDAY** and the entire 2016-2017 Asolo Repertory Theatre season are on sale now. Tickets for **BORN YESTERDAY** start at \$26.

To purchase tickets, call 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388, visit [www.asolorep.org](http://www.asolorep.org), or visit the Asolo Repertory Theatre Box Office, located in the lobby of the theatre. Asolo Repertory Theatre is located at 5555 North Tamiami Trail in the Florida State University Center for the

Performing Arts. The Box Office is open Monday 10am – 5pm, Tuesday – Thursday 10am - 7:30pm, Friday – Saturday 10am – 8pm, and Sunday 10am – 2pm. The box office closes at 5pm when there are no evening performances and phone lines close one hour prior to the start of any performance. Season subscription packages are also available online and by visiting or calling the box office.

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## SPONSORS

Asolo Rep is able to present **BORN YESTERDAY** because of the generosity of its sponsors. Corporate sponsors for **BORN YESTERDAY** are Morton's Gourmet Market and Catering, Tidewell Hospice, ABC 7, and WUSF Public Media. Lead support for **BORN YESTERDAY** student access provided by Community Foundation of Sarasota County. Asolo Rep 2016-17 Major Season Sponsors are Florida State University, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, the Huisiking Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, Designing Women Boutique, Woman's Exchange, Inc., and Sunset Cadillac of Bradenton. Asolo Rep's artistic programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Asolo Rep is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

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## ABOUT ASOLO REP

Now in its 58th season, Asolo Repertory Theatre is recognized as one of the premier professional theatres in America and one of the largest in the Southeastern United States. One of the few select theatres in the nation that performs in true rotating repertory, Asolo Rep's highly skilled acting company and extensive craftsmanship bring to life this unique performance method that gives audiences the opportunity to see multiple productions in the span of a few days. Asolo Rep presents up to 15 productions each season including contemporary and classic works and provocative musical theatre experiences. A theatre district in and of itself, Asolo Rep is committed to expanding its reach into the community, furthering its collaboration with the best theatre artists working in the industry today and cultivating new artists through its affiliation with the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and Managing Director Linda DiGabriele, Asolo Rep's ambitious theatrical offerings and ground-breaking education and outreach programming engage audiences and ensure its lasting legacy for future generations.

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