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## HERITAGE THEATRE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2017 SEASON

**Charlottesville's Most Beloved Summer Theatre Tradition To Continue With Lineup To Include *Middletown*; *Woody Guthrie's American Song*; *Chapatti*; *Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*, and The Return of Bob Chapel Directing Sondheim's Classic *Company***

**Audiences of All Ages To Get Post-Season Treat With One-Man-Show By Internationally-Acclaimed Circus Star Barry Lubin And His Beloved "Grandma" Character of Big Apple Circus Fame**

**Auditions to Be Held On Saturday, February 25**

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – February 13, 2017** – This summer, Heritage Theatre Festival audiences can look forward to a season that combines exciting new discoveries, an American musical treasure, madcap mystery and one of the theatre world's most beloved modern musicals. And as if that is not enough, Heritage is throwing in a postseason treat in the form of a one-person-show by a circus legend who has brought his iconic act to all seven continents!

Heritage will kick off its 43<sup>rd</sup> year with playwright Will Eno's *Middletown*, a flippant-yet-poignant take on small town life in the most average of the average hamlets, where the population and elevation are both stable, and the main street is called – you guessed it – Main Street! Yet the more we see the townsfolk battle life's absurdities in their efforts to become "normal" human beings, the more we can see ourselves in those battles in a play that takes us a long way from Wilder's Grover's Corners, and often right to the heart of what it means to live and love in our world today.

*Middletown* will be presented in the Ruth Caplin Theatre from June 23 through July 1.

The resilience and tenacity of the human spirit comes to life in *Woody Guthrie's American Song*. This ensemble musical presents a collection of the legendary writer and performer's inspiring folk anthems, which were written in response to the trials of the depression era in America, yet continue to reflect all times and speak to all people. The show was conceived and adapted by Peter Glazer and features orchestrations and vocal arrangements by Jeff Waxman.

*Woody Guthrie's American Song* will be presented in the Culbreth Theatre from June 30-July 8.

Two late-in-life neighbors searching for homes for their respective pets find an unusual bond in *Chapatti*, a touching drama from Irish playwright Christian O'Reilly. The production will mark a reunion of another sort as recently-retired Drama faculty members Richard Warner and his wife Judith Reagan take the HTF stage together for the first time since the 1992 production of *A Moon for the Misbegotten*.

*Chapatti* will be presented from July 6-15 in the Helms Theatre.

There is nothing elementary about *Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*. The classic game is afoot, but the players may well outnumber the clues in Ludwig's madcap adventure featuring

five actors playing 40 characters. Join Holmes and Watson as they brave the desolate moors before the Baskerville family curse dooms its newest heir.

*Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* will be presented in the Ruth Caplin Theatre from July 22-29.

Robert Chapel, who retired in 2015 after 29 years at the Heritage helm, returns this summer to direct Stephen Sondheim's Tony Award-winning musical *Company*. Featuring such Sondheim classics as "The Ladies Who Lunch" and "Being Alive," *Company* tells the story of Robert, a confirmed bachelor who on the night of his 35<sup>th</sup> birthday begins contemplating his unmarried state. After a hilarious array of interactions with advice-giving married couples and temporary girlfriends, Robert finds himself questioning his commitment to bachelorhood. The show features music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by George Furth.

*Company* will be presented in Culbreth Theatre from July 28-August 4.

This year Heritage audiences are in for an extra dose of fun courtesy of Barry Lubin, an international circus star who has peddled his particular brand of hilarity as "Grandma," the iconic face of the Big Apple Circus, for 25 years. Inducted into the International Clown Hall of Fame in 2002, and the Sarasota Ring of Fame in 2012 (the highest honor in the American Circus), Barry was the recipient of the Lou Jacobs Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007. Last year he literally went where no clown has gone before when he became the first clown ever to have performed on all seven continents! In addition to performing his acclaimed show in the Ruth Caplin Theatre on August 4 & 5, Barry will also join UVA's acclaimed resident clown Tim Cunningham and some of his fellow merrymakers for a series of workshops on the art of clowning.

All shows are pending final acquisition of rights.

Auditions will be held for the 2017 Heritage Theatre Festival season on Saturday, February 25, 2017 between 9:30-4:00 in the UVA Drama Building at 109 Culbreth Road. Information on the auditions is available at [www.heritagetheatrefestival.org](http://www.heritagetheatrefestival.org). Those unable to attend this on-site audition may submit a video audition with headshot and resume by March 15 to: [heritage@virginia.edu](mailto:heritage@virginia.edu).

Heritage's 2016 season subscribers will receive information on how to renew their subscriptions for the 2017 season in early April. New subscription sales will begin April 17, and single tickets will go on sale June 9. For more information on the upcoming summer season and how you can support Heritage's efforts, visit [www.heritagetheatrefestival.org](http://www.heritagetheatrefestival.org).

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