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#MoorLTC

## Lantern Theater Company Announces One-Week Extension of *AMERICAN MOOR* Through December 15, 2024

### Playwright Keith Hamilton Cobb in Philadelphia for Special Artist in Conversation Event on Monday, December 9, 2024

PHILADELPHIA (November 19, 2024) – **Lantern Theater Company** announced today that its acclaimed production of *American Moor* will extend its run **through Sunday, December 15, 2024**, to meet demand from audiences and student groups. The following public performances have been added:

**Wednesday, December 11 at 2 p.m.**

**Saturday, December 14 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 15 at 2 p.m.**

The Lantern also announced it will host **Artist in Conversation with Keith Hamilton Cobb** on **Monday, December 9, 2024**, from **4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**, presented in partnership with **The Brothers' Network**. This free program is open to the community and will take place at Culture Works at 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 300, in Center City Philadelphia. Registration is required at [lanterntheater.org/inconversation/](http://lanterntheater.org/inconversation/).

The Lantern's regional premiere of *American Moor* has played to mostly sold-out houses since its first performance on November 7. Led by guest director **Kash Goins**, *American Moor* features **Thane Madsen** in his Lantern debut and **Phillip Brown**, who returns to the Lantern stage following his Barrymore Award-winning performance in the 2022/23 season production of *The Royale*.

Hailed by *The Boston Globe* as a “deep-from-the-heart spellbinder” and “a blisteringly eloquent and penetrating meditation on the ever-urgent matter of race in America,” *American Moor* is Keith Hamilton Cobb’s excavation of Shakespeare’s power in a contemporary American context. An actor waits, preparing, pacing, going over his lines. The director is late. But the actor has been waiting for more than this single audition slot – he has been waiting to be truly seen and heard in the fullness of his experience and identity, and waiting for that fullness to be valued in the audition and rehearsal rooms in which he has spent his career. When the younger, white director arrives, we watch as the actor wrestles with his relationship to Othello, the frustrations and indignities faced by a Black classical actor who sees himself in *all* of Shakespeare’s canon, a process that he knows will not honor his lived experience, and his desire to tackle this towering, troublesome role anyway. The actor lets the audience into his innermost thoughts while also negotiating the tension between the director’s power and his own hard-earned authority – a tension that Othello himself must navigate. Shakespeare’s text and modern lyricism knit together in this vital, propulsive monologue play, holding up a mirror that reflects both 400 years of theater history and the current moment.

Performed across the United States and making its Philadelphia premiere with the Lantern’s production, *American Moor* has been added to the Folger Shakespeare Library’s permanent collection in recognition of its insistent and penetrating perspective on Shakespeare in a modern world. Originally conceived and written in 2012 with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, **Keith Hamilton Cobb** describes *American Moor* as “a play about race in America, but it is also a play about who gets to make art, who gets to play Shakespeare, about the qualitative decline of the American theatre, about actors and acting, and about the nature of unadulterated love.” A graduate of New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, Cobb brings a rich classical performance background to the writing, having performed roles including Laertes in *Hamlet*, Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, Tullus Aufidius in *Coriolanus*, and Oberon in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* on regional theater stages across the country – as well as numerous roles in television and in contemporary dramas.

“With *American Moor*, Keith Hamilton Cobb has created a work of profound and personal insight into the Shakespearian canon as well as a powerful statement about race in modern American society,” said Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. “In the course of auditioning for the role of Othello, a brilliant Black performer who has spent his professional life in deep dialog with the works of Shakespeare is repeatedly undercut by a well-meaning but callow and clueless white director. *American Moor* is a story told with caustic irony showing the many ways in which Black genius is routinely discarded in American power structures.”

“I see theater as a transformative medium, where the most tangible experiences are *felt* more than *seen*,” said *American Moor* director **Kash Goins**. “I so enjoy working with plays that allow opportunities to craft a world

that includes the audience. What Keith has offered us here is a literal smorgasbord of artistic possibilities. I look forward to sharing the journey that we take with this work with all who will sit with us and consume.”

Lantern Theater Company is delving into the world of *American Moor* on its **Lantern Searchlight blog**, available online at [lanterntheater.org/searchlight](https://www.lanterntheater.org/searchlight). Written by Lantern Resident Dramaturg **Meghan Winch**, upcoming articles include background on the play and its themes alongside behind-the-scenes conversations with the artists.

Tickets for all added performances of *American Moor* go on sale today and are available online at [www.lanterntheater.org](https://www.lanterntheater.org) or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Tickets are \$30 – \$47 for all performances; discounts are available for students, seniors 65 and up, U.S. military personnel, and groups of 10 or more. All performances take place at **St. Stephen’s Theater**, located at 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia.

## About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994 and now in its 31st season, Lantern Theater Company’s mission is to produce plays that investigate and illuminate what is essential in the human spirit and the spirit of the times. The Lantern serves the Greater Philadelphia region with award-winning productions and education programming, notably partnering with middle schools and high schools in the Philadelphia School District to provide in-classroom residencies in support of curricular learning. The Lantern became a national leader in streaming theater during the Covid health crisis, producing ten fully designed plays that were created and filmed in the company’s resident home at St. Stephen’s Theater, garnering coverage in national media including *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and reaching more than 30,000 people in 15 countries and all 50 states.

Following *American Moor*, the Lantern’s 2024/25 season will continue with William Shakespeare’s classic romantic comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*, directed by Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon (Press Opening: Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 7 p.m.)**; and *The 39 Steps*, **Patrick Barlow**’s rollicking adaptation of the classic **John Buchan** adventure novel and **Alfred Hitchcock** film, also directed by **McMahon (Press Opening: Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 7 p.m.)**. More information is available online at [www.lanterntheater.org](https://www.lanterntheater.org).

**Lantern Theater Company – 2024/25 Season**  
**FACT SHEET**  
*American Moor*

**WRITTEN BY:**

Keith Hamilton Cobb

**DIRECTED BY:**

Kash Goins

**CAST:**

Phillip Brown as An Actor  
Thane Madsen as A Director

**CREATIVE TEAM:**

Marie Laster, Scenic Designer  
Tiffany Bacon, Costume Designer  
Tydell Williams, Lighting Designer  
Adiah D. Hicks, Sound Designer  
Kimmika Williams-Witherspoon, Production Dramaturgy Consultant  
Rebecca Smith, Stage Manager  
Rasheed Booker, Assistant Director

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**TICKET INFORMATION:**

Online: [www.lanterntheater.org](http://www.lanterntheater.org)  
By Phone: (215) 829-0395

**TICKET PRICING:**

\$30 – \$47 / Students: \$25

**UPCOMING PERFORMANCES:**

Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 7 p.m.  
Thursday, November 21, 2024 at 7 p.m.  
Friday, November 22, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, November 23, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, November 23, 2024 at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, November 24, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 27, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 27, 2024 at 7 p.m.  
Friday, November 29, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, November 30, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, November 30, 2024 at 8 p.m. (James Baldwin Black Theater Night)  
Sunday, December 1, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, December 8, 2024 at 2 p.m.  
Wednesday, December 11 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, December 14 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, December 14 at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, December 15 at 2 p.m.

**CLOSING PERFORMANCE:**

Sunday, December 15 at 2 p.m.

**JAMES BALDWIN BLACK THEATER NIGHT on Saturday, November 30 at 8 p.m.**

Hosted by our Associate Producers at **The Brothers' Network**, this special performance of *American Moor* will be followed by a casual reception in the St. Stephen's Theater lobby. The Brothers' Network is based on the teachings, readings, writings, and philosophical framework of the iconic James Baldwin – one of the most celebrated playwrights, novelists, and advocates for equity and justice. In 2024, we celebrate 100 years of his life and his legacy as a thinker, purveyor of culture, and profound understanding of the human condition. Black Theater Night creates a safe space for theatergoers to be in community with each other, free from the white gaze. (Use promo code BALDWIN35 for \$35 tickets to this performance and post-show celebration. Offer cannot be combined with other offers or ticket discounts.)

**PLAY SYNOPSIS:**

An actor auditions for the title role in OTHELLO. From this simple scenario springs a rich and penetrating exploration of Shakespeare in a story told with wit, passion, and linguistic brilliance. The conflicting views of the actor and the director shine a revealing light on race and art in modern America, and bring a refreshing new perspective on the enduring power of Shakespeare's work.

**PERFORMANCE VENUE:**

St. Stephen's Theater at 923 Ludlow Street in Center City Philadelphia