

# 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.*



## THEATRICAL SEASON 2018/19

### **C.S. Lewis Is Still Engaging Students**

**Brown University Production  
Launches FPA's Campus Initiative**



***The Screwtape Letters returns to New  
York along with A Man for All Seasons***

**From the Desk of Max McLean**

# A Man for *This*

*Tony & Oscar Winner Stands the Test of Time*



**With its theme of standing on moral ground** when it might cost you everything, Robert Bolt's play *A Man for All Seasons* is a play for this season, too.

This courageous, imaginative drama anchors Fellowship for Performing Arts' 2018-19 theatrical season, running Jan. 12-Feb. 24 at The Acorn Theatre on Theatre Row in New York.

"Bolt's work boils with court intrigue that reveals the grave risks one takes when speaking truth to unpredictable power," said Director Christa Scott-Reed. "I was surprised by how relevant and witty it is throughout. The dialogue is brisk, smart and, at times, even downright funny."

The "man" in *A Man for All Seasons* is Sir Thomas More, then Chancellor of England, who despite relentless political pressure, refused to recognize Henry VIII's divorce. Seeking the divorce prompted Henry to, also, split from the Roman Catholic Church. Through Parliament's Act of Supremacy, Henry was made Supreme Head of the new Church of England.

The play employs an everyman character called "The Common Man" to guide the audience through the political intrigue on stage. As we ex-

## A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS BY ROBERT BOLT



# Season

A person is walking on a large, stylized red rose graphic that is painted on a light-colored floor. The rose is oriented diagonally, with its stem pointing towards the bottom right. The person is walking away from the viewer, towards the top right of the frame. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights.

“MY ADMIRATION FOR  
MORE’S COURAGE IN  
CONTRAST TO EVERYONE  
ELSE **MADE ME**  
**TAKE A DEEP LOOK**  
**AT THE SHALLOUNESS**  
**OF MY OWN LIFE.”**

perience Sir Thomas pressured to the breaking point, The Common Man’s comments reveal the marked difference between a great man and ordinary mortals.

“Seeing the film while in college affected me deeply,” said FPA Artistic Director Max McLean. “My admiration for More’s courage in contrast to everyone else made me take a deep look at the shallowness of my own life. It was a factor in my conversion to Christianity shortly thereafter.

“I read recently that *A Man for All Seasons*, along with *Chariots of Fire*, is every atheist’s favorite Christian film,” Max said. “Given our mission of presenting theatre from a Christian worldview to engage a diverse audience, I think it’s a perfect choice for FPA’s fourth New York season.”

Others have agreed. *A Man for All Seasons* won Tony Awards for Best Play, Best Direction and Best Actor in a Leading Role. The film version won the Academy Award for Best Film and Best Screenplay.

*FPA’s pursuit of presenting Christian worldview theatre for diverse audiences rises from the support of our Fellowship Circle of patrons.*

FOR TIX | VISIT [FPATHEATRE.COM](http://FPATHEATRE.COM)

# C.S. LEWIS IS STILL ENGAGING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

## Campus Initiative Launches at



## BROWN



"It's little scary, we are nervous. Brown is not normally fertile ground for C.S. Lewis." So said Dr. Timothy Flanagan, faculty advisor for the Brown Inkling Society who invited FPA to the Brown campus.

This was before almost 400 students, faculty and friends experienced *C.S. Lewis Onstage: The Most Reluctant Convert* at Brown's Salomon Auditorium.

"Nothing like this has ever happened at Brown! This kind of attendance is really, really unique!" said Elizabeth Yeh, a senior who helped organize FPA's event at Brown.

Perhaps this shouldn't have been a surprise. In his years of teaching at Oxford and Cambridge, C.S. Lewis' lectures were so popular every desk would fill up and students would sit on the floor and in window sills to hear him.

It seems that not much has changed.

"Lewis has a unique capacity to speak from a Christian perspective and engage people from all faith positions in a win-some way," said Max McLean, FPA's Founder and Artistic Director.

Additional reactions from Brown students:

"Thought Provoking!" "Max did an amazing job!" "Brown is full of deep thinkers who shy away from religion."

"Students want experiential learning. They've got to see it, to feel it, to have a kind of ...back and forth," said Dr. Flanagan. "The fact that FPA brought this here, that is wonderful."

The Sept. 28 production at Brown marked the culmination of more than a year's effort to launch the

Campus Initiative and put Lewis' wit and wisdom before student audiences.

"This is a major new commitment for FPA," Max said. "It costs roughly \$40,000 to bring an event to campus. And given that the event is either provided to the student body for free or at a nominal \$5 charge requires major support. I'm grateful that our supporters have rallied behind the Campus Initiative to make this a reality."

"It exceeded my expectations," said Meghan McCarthy, an event organizer. "We had a great turnout, and the audience seemed very engaged. I saw many friends at the event who are not practicing Christians or even Christian at all. The production increased the scope of who we are able to reach."

"FPA's mission is to produce excellent theatre from a Christian perspective to engage a diverse audience," Max said. "I can't think of better example of that mission in action than staging C.S. Lewis' conversion journey in his own words for these thoughtful, engaged students."

Other universities FPA is currently working with include Princeton, UC Berkeley, Texas, Michigan State, Ohio State, Miami, Stanford, Virginia, UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke, Vanderbilt, Columbia, and Rutgers with more to come.

FPA's Fellowship Circle of supporters makes productions in the Campus Initiative and at leading theatrical venues across the country possible. Thank you for your partnership.

*Brown University students were eager to engage with Max McLean following the performance.*



**"ASTONISHING LUCIDITY...  
EVERY ATHEIST'S FAVORITE  
CHRISTIAN THINKER"**  
- CHICAGO TRIBUNE



# THE DEVIL & C.S. LEWIS

## Screwtape Returns to New York City

**F**ellowship for Performing Arts' international hit C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters* returns to New York to launch FPA's fourth theatrical season in the Big Apple.

With Broadway veteran Brent Harris in the title role, Lewis' sly, sardonic "Senior Tempter" in Hell plays The Acorn Theatre on Theatre Row Dec. 12-30. It marks the first *Screwtape* production in New York in two years. And it will tour extensively in 2019!

What explains the enduring appeal of what is, after all, a decidedly evil character?

Launched in 2006 and routinely in production nationally and overseas since 2010, *Screwtape* has been seen by more than 500,000 people and is the definition of a theatrical workhorse.

"Wherever we go, people want to know when *Screwtape* is coming back," said Max McLean, FPA's founder and artistic director.

A review of *Screwtape* by *The Wall Street Journal's* Terry Teachout gets at the core of the character's and the play's appeal.

Calling the production "wickedly witty," Teachout said, "It is, if I may say so, one hell of a good show. Lewis' topsy-turvy exercises in inverted moral theology were made to be played with lip-smacking relish!"

By turning everything upside down—God is the "enemy," the Devil is "our father below," *Screwtape's* desire for a sinner's condemnation becomes his "noble goal" in this negated universe—in doing so Lewis brings routine sins that often go unnoticed in our daily life into humorous, striking, and often frightening, clarity.

"*Screwtape* remains popular for the same reasons Lewis himself does," Max said. "Lewis died in 1963 and is selling more books today than ever. His insight into matters of faith, expressed with bracing clarity, wit and with no trace of condescension, make him what one theatre critic said is 'every atheist's favorite Christian thinker.'"

*The safest road  
to hell is  
the gradual one.*

— *Screwtape*



Brent Harris and Shiloh Goodin in C.S. Lewis  
*The Screwtape Letters*.

Additionally, excellence is a core value at FPA, and we strive to mount productions at the highest levels of artistic and technical quality our budgets allow.

Fortunately, *Screwtape* has held up on the technical side of things as well.

In our first sit-down production in New York, way back in 2010, the *New York Daily News* said, "The production with its imaginative set and snazzy lighting effects is highly seductive."

It's the same set we're using today.

"Our mission is to produce theatre from a Christian worldview that engages a diverse audience," Max said. "*The Screwtape Letters* was the perfect foundation for FPA to grow on, and the fact that audiences continue to find it so engaging and entertaining is a tremendous bonus."

Similarly, the foundation of support from our Fellowship Circle of donors enables FPA to keep *Screwtape* on stage and engaging imaginations. We're so grateful for it.



# The Common Thread

**W**hat is the common thread of such wildly different stories as *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Great Divorce*, *The Most Reluctant Convert*, *Shadowlands*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Paradise Lost* and *We Will Not Be Silent*.

What these works share, as produced by FPA, is that they all shed light on different aspects of the Christian worldview by engaging the moral imagination to a point where it causes audience members to evaluate their assumptions.

At its core, theatre is meant to wake people up.

And as we strive to “wake people up” we design each FPA production to express a theatrical aesthetic that puts forth a vision of Christianity that is imaginative, multi-layered, hopeful, humorous, plausible and convicting.

We do this by carefully selecting works that have the ability to attract and engage a diverse audience. Then we produce them at the highest level of excellence our budgets allow so that FPA can play in the great theatrical venues where such cultural works are normally presented.

Given the cultural sensitivity to Christianity’s exclusive truth claims, we must do our work in such a way that it can, as C.S. Lewis puts it, “steal past those watchful dragons” of stigmas and pre-conceived notions that prevent people from opening their hearts and minds to what is being presented.”

In his essay *Sometimes Fairy Stories May Best Say What Needs to Be Said*, Lewis wanted to know why talk of God or Christ tends to “turn people off,” to use a contemporary expression.

He wrote, “The whole subject was associated with lowered voices; almost as if it were something medicinal. But suppose that by casting all these things into an imaginary world, stripping them of their stained-glass, Sunday school associations, one could make them for the first time appear in their real potency? Could one not thus steal past those watchful dragons?”

Our production of *Shadowlands*, a beautiful love story, offers a taste of this. As Lewis’ late-in-life wife, Joy, lay dying, she recalls why she became a Christian. Through Lewis’ writings she could see “that this world is only a Shadowland, that real life is yet to come.” “I love your other worlds, Jack,” she says. “It is how I first fell in love with you before I met you.”

Art and story have always had a way to capture our imagination, to wake us up. Lewis, speaking about the culture, said, “If we believe that all is well in this present life, if we can imagine nothing more satisfactory than this present life, then we are under a dangerous illusion.”

The common thread woven around FPA’s mission and the stories we tell is the desire to awaken us from these “dangerous illusions” that bind us to the earth, that lock us into our own preconceptions. And then to point us to look beyond this world to the One who created it.

**Art and story have always  
had a way to capture our  
imagination, to wake us up.**



Scene from *The Great Divorce*.



PERFORMANCE CALENDAR Check [FPAtheatre.com](http://FPAtheatre.com) for times and venues.

# FPA THEATRICAL SEASON 2018/19

**THEATRE ROW**

NYC 410 W 42nd Street

**IMAGINE THIS!**

For details visit:  
[FPAtheatre.com/production/imagine-this](http://FPAtheatre.com/production/imagine-this)

DEC 6-8

**THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS**

DEC 12-30

**A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS**

JAN 12 - FEB 24

## C.S. LEWIS ON STAGE THE MOST RELUCTANT CONVERT

SEATTLE	NOV 18
AUSTIN	JAN 30-FEB 3
FT. LAUDERDALE	FEB 10
TAMPA	FEB 16-17
LOUISVILLE	MAR 8
CHARLOTTE	MAR 27-31
SAN ANTONIO	MAY 5

## C.S. LEWIS the *Screwtape* Letters

NASHVILLE	JAN 18-19
WASHINGTON D.C.	JAN 30-FEB 3
PITTSBURGH	FEB 15-16
DALLAS	FEB 23
HOUSTON	MAR 5-17
TULSA	MAR 28-31
KANSAS CITY	APR 12-13

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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