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LINCOLN CENTER THEATER ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP

LEAR deBESSONET
NAMED
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

BARTLETT SHER
ASSUMES THE NEW ROLE OF
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

**ANDRÉ BISHOP CONCLUDES HIS 33-YEAR TENURE
AT THE END OF THE 2024-2025 SEASON,
MARKING LCT'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY**

NEW YORK – September 10, 2024 – Lincoln Center Theater’s Board of Directors (**Kewsong Lee**, Chair) announced today that **Lear deBessonnet** will be LCT’s new Artistic Director. In addition, LCT Resident Director **Bartlett Sher** will assume the new role of Executive Producer. André Bishop will conclude his 33-year tenure in June 2025 in conjunction with the close of Lincoln Center Theater’s 40th anniversary season.

“It is the deepest honor of my professional life to serve as the next Artistic Director of Lincoln Center Theater, following the astonishing legacy of André Bishop,” said deBessonnet. “From the moment I first stepped onto the campus at Lincoln Center, I felt a sense of awe and magic. From thrilling, important new plays and new musicals to exquisite revivals and revelatory explorations of the classics, I have experienced LCT as a place where intellectual rigor can live alongside wonder, imagination, and beauty. I believe the theater is a space for the creation and restoration of

community - and it is my intention in this job is to be of service to the mission and boundless possibilities of LCT, to our city, and to the field. I am thrilled to work alongside my dear friend Bartlett Sher, whose artistry and vision have profoundly affected my work as a director, and the extraordinary board and staff of Lincoln Center Theater to lead this theater into its next chapter of great success.”

“Lincoln Center Theater is one of the most important theaters in America, and it has been led brilliantly by André Bishop leaving a legacy of exceptional quality and enormous strength,” said Sher. “At the same time, theater has never been more important to our culture for building discourse, engagement and community. Our magnificent theater spaces combined with our fantastic staff have led to profound and lasting work in the heart of New York and our nation. Lear deBessonet is an incredible artist and leader and I am deeply honored to collaborate with her as she guides Lincoln Center Theater into a transformative future.”

“Lincoln Center Theater has thrived throughout our forty-year history because of our incredible programming, gifted leadership and talented staff,” said Kewsong Lee, LCT Board Chair. “After a comprehensive search, we are thrilled to name Lear as our new Artistic Director and look forward to her leadership in taking LCT into the future. Having been with us for 20 years, Bart’s impact on LCT is unparalleled, and his extensive experiences throughout the industry will be invaluable as this organization moves into its next era of growth.” Lee further added, “On behalf of the Board, let me thank from the bottom of our hearts our beloved André Bishop. He is truly special, and we are grateful for his artistry and leadership. LCT would not be where we are without him. Our mission continues to be bringing exceptional theater to life, and Lear and Bart will do just that at LCT, as both have had enormous success in introducing new and innovative productions, refreshing and reimagining classic works, and energizing and captivating audiences around the world.”

“I am sad to be leaving, but incredibly grateful for the many happy years I spent at our wonderful theater,” said Producing Artistic Director André Bishop. “Lear and Bart are gifted and intelligent artists, and I am confident that Lincoln Center Theater will continue to grow and flourish.”

deBessonet and Sher will work together to define the vision for the future of Lincoln Center Theater. As Artistic Director, deBessonet will be responsible for all programming and season planning; cultivating and maintaining relationships with artists; and oversight and day to day operating of the staff and organization. As Executive Producer, Sher will be responsible for the oversight of strategic priorities such as the development of international partnerships, brand expansion, as well as the expansion of fundraising and LCT’s resources. Together, they will forge a new and powerful vision for Lincoln Center Theater while continuing to honor its rich, extraordinary history as a home for artists. deBessonet and Sher will assume their roles on July 1, 2025; they will both report directly to the Chair of the LCT Board, and each will join the Board as ex-officio members.

Isaacson Miller assisted in the search process, which was wide-reaching, inclusive and international in scope. It followed a yearlong strategic planning initiative undertaken by the Board and staff that involved extensive discussions on the direction and long-term aspirations of the institution and the leadership priorities required to continue building LCT.

As previously announced last Fall, André Bishop will continue to lead LCT through its current 40th anniversary season before stepping down following an esteemed 33-year tenure as Artistic Director.

He first joined LCT as Artistic Director in January 1992, and he was appointed Producing Artistic Director of Lincoln Center Theater in July 2013. Under his stewardship, LCT flourished as a premier cultural institution, presenting a wide array of award-winning productions, expanding its footprint, and amplifying its educational and community programs. A 2012 Theater Hall of Fame inductee, Bishop has won numerous theater awards, including 15 Tony Awards for Lincoln Center Theater productions.

Lincoln Center Theater's current 40th Anniversary season includes *McNeal*, a new play by Ayad Akhtar, directed by Bartlett Sher, and starring Robert Downey Jr. in his Broadway debut, which is currently in previews ahead of a Monday, September 30 opening night at the Vivian Beaumont Theater; *The Blood Quilt* by Katori Hall, directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz, which will begin previews on Wednesday, October 30 ahead of a Thursday, November 21 opening night at the Mitze E. Newhouse Theater; Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts*, featuring a new version by Mark O'Rowe and directed by Jack O'Brien, which will begin previews on Thursday, February 13 ahead of an opening night on Monday, March 10 at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater; *Floyd Collins*, featuring music and lyrics by Adam Guettel and book, additional lyrics and direction by Tina Landau, which will begin previews on Thursday, March 27 ahead of an opening night on Monday, April 21 at the Vivian Beaumont Theater, as well as an additional LCT3 production to be announced. Throughout its celebrated history, Lincoln Center Theater has been the recipient of 85 Tony Awards, 89 Drama Desk Awards, 71 Outer Critics Circle Awards and 30 OBIE Awards.

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LEAR DEBESSONET is a Tony-nominated director and current Artistic Director of Encores! at New York City Center. Notable productions during her tenure at Encores include her direction of *Once Upon a Mattress* (currently on Broadway), *Into the Woods* (Broadway, National Tour), and *Oliver!* along with last season's *Jelly's Last Jam* and *Titanic*. She directed and executive produced "Annie Live!" for NBC, and is the Founder of Public Works at the Public Theater where she served as Resident Director from 2012-2020. At the Public, she directed 200-person pageant productions of *Hercules*, *The Odyssey*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest* along with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Shakespeare in the Park, *Good Person of Szechuan* (with the Foundry), *Miss You Like Hell*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. She is a passionate advocate for the power of arts in communities, and her TED Talk "What's possible when the arts belong to everybody" has been viewed around the world. She served as Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Arts for Everybody: an ambitious national arts and health project bringing together mayors, community health centers, and local artists in 18 cities and towns across America. She received the Drama League Founders Award and Best Director of a Musical Award, an Obie Award for Direction, the Ammerman Award, Lilly Award, and multiple Drama Desk, Lortel, and Outer Critics Circle nominations.

BARTLETT SHER is a Tony award-winner who has been described by *The New York Times* as one of America's "most original and exciting directors." His production of Aaron Sorkin's adaptation of *To Kill a Mockingbird* is the best-selling American play in Broadway history. His productions have been nominated for over 90 Tony Awards. His other work on Broadway and in the West End includes *Pictures from Home*, *My Fair Lady*, the 2017 Tony-winning Best Play *Oslo*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The King and I*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Golden Boy*, *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *South Pacific*, *Awake and Sing!*, and *The Light in the Piazza*. He has been a resident director at Lincoln Center Theater since 2008, where

he recently directed *Lerner & Lowe's Camelot* and *Corruption*. Bart has also directed several operas, including *Rigoletto* (Berlin, Metropolitan Opera); *Roméo et Juliette* (Metropolitan Opera, Salzburg, Milan, Chicago); *Faust* (Baden Baden); *Two Boys* (ENO, Metropolitan Opera); *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Baden Baden, Metropolitan Opera), *Otello*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Le Comte Ory*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Metropolitan Opera); *Mourning Becomes Electra* (Seattle Opera, City Opera). He will direct the world premiere of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* for the Met in their 2025-2026 season. His film of *Oslo* (HBO, 2021) was nominated for two Emmy Awards and won a Critics Choice Award. Bart recently mounted a hit revival of *Kiss Me, Kate* at the Barbican in London. His upcoming work includes a stage adaptation of the movie-musical *La La Land*.

LINCOLN CENTER THEATER is one of the nation's renowned not-for-profit theaters. Now celebrating its 40th season, LCT has produced over 200 plays and musicals at the Vivian Beaumont, Mitzi E. Newhouse, and Claire Tow theaters at Lincoln Center and other theaters on and off-Broadway, as well as touring productions nationally and around the world. LCT encourages emerging artists through play readings, workshops, and LCT3, which is devoted to producing the work of the next generation of playwrights, directors, and designers. *Open Stages*, LCT's education program, reaches thousands of public-school students annually with curriculum-related projects, tickets to LCT productions, and a Shakespeare Program. The theater is also the publisher of the Lincoln Center Theater Review, which explores subjects related to its productions.