



For immediate release
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People's Light Continues its Trademark Holiday Tradition with *Aladdin: A Musical Panto*

By Pete Pryor & Samantha Reading
Music & Lyrics by Michael Ogborn
Directed by Pete Pryor
November 15, 2017 – January 7, 2018

(Malvern, PA) People's Light invites you to level up your holiday at our annual panto, now the Main Line's favorite family celebration. This year, *Aladdin: A Musical Panto*, an adventure story infused with the adrenaline of video gaming, follows a young ne'er-do-well and his animal pals as they discover a mysterious lamp, rescue a princess, pilot a magic carpet, and save their village from an evil villain. Written by Samantha Reading and Pete Pryor, with music and lyrics by Michael Ogborn, *Aladdin* conquers the Leonard C. Haas Stage in Malvern from November 15, 2017-January 7, 2018. People's Light is located at 39 Conestoga Road, Malvern, PA 19355. For tickets, call 610.644.3500 or visit peopleslight.org.

"We had so much fun letting this genie out of the bottle!" says director Pete Pryor. "This season's *Aladdin* is sure to delight with new adventures, fresh faces, and those company stalwarts who have made our own brand of holiday hilarity a family tradition."

"Families all over the area have made our annual panto their go-to holiday experience," says Artistic Director Abigail Adams. "That inspires us to continue to connect these productions to people's everyday interests."

This year, it struck us how many features the panto shares with multi-player video gaming. Both offer intense, interactive experiences. Both immerse us in imagined worlds of high-energy adventure. Both invite us to care about the characters, and help them travel successfully toward their ultimate goals. And like gaming, the panto invites us to take a meaningful journey in community. We can share laughs and thrills and surprises with one another along the way.

Aladdin features panto veterans from the resident ensemble at People's Light. Mark Lazar continues as the Theatre's celebrated Dame, portraying Aladdin's mother, the Widow Twankey. Susan McKey plays the Nurse, and Christopher Patrick Mullen appears as the scheming Fu. Tom Teti plays the Genius of the Ring.

They're joined by returning guests and new talents. Frequent panto guest Kim Carson plays the Sultan. Camilo Estrada portrays Aladdin, and Samantha Funk appears as Princess Mai Tai. Zack Aguilar plays Morris the Mantis,

and Peter Danelski is Manny the Monkey. Nicholas L. Parker plays the Genie of the Lamp. Melissa Barnathan, Mike Dorsey, and Emily Kaye Lynn play Fu's three interns, while Adam Howard and Tori Lewis serve as swings, understudying all major roles in the production.

Co-author Pete Pryor directs. Co-author Samantha Reading assistant directs and choreographs. Thomas Fosnacht III serves as Music Director, aided by drummer Kanako Omae Neale. People's Light's Director of Design James F. Pyne, Jr. designs the set, and frequent guest Rosemarie McKelvey creates costumes. Company member Kate McSorley Fossner stage manages and Gina Pisasale dramaturgs.

BIOS

Pete Pryor *Co-Author/Director*

Associate Artistic Director and Company Member since 2010. People's Light: Director: *Moon Over Buffalo, Sleeping Beauty**, *The Three Musketeers (The Later Years)*, *Stella and Lou*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon**, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Cinderella*, *Aladdin**, *Noises Off*, *Mr. Hart & Mr. Brown*, *Treasure Island* (*co-author). Actor: *The Matchmaker*, *The Harassment of Iris Malloy*, *Richard III*, *The Three Musketeers (The Later Years)*, *Biloxi Blues*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Treasure Island*, *A Wrinkle in Time*. Pete has directed the last nine holiday pantos. His play *Beautiful Boy* was produced at People's Light in 2012. Theatre Includes: Wilma Theater, Arden Theatre, Act II Playhouse, The Philadelphia Theatre Co, Theatre Exile, Azuka, 1812 Productions, Montgomery Theatre, PA Shakespeare, Delaware Theatre Co, Cape May Stage, The Boarshead, and Pittsburgh City Theatre. Co-founder and former Producing Artistic Director of 1812 Productions. Resident artist/drama instructor at the Pathway School since 2005. Pete is a Lunt-Fontanne fellow and Independence Fellowship Artist and winner of four Barrymore Awards. Film/Television Includes: *Limitless*, *Lebanon Pa*, *Cellar*, *Backwards*, *Mayor Cupcake*, *Seduction of the Will*, *Hack*, *The In Crowd*, *NBFS*, *Surrender Dorothy*.

Samantha Reading *Co-Author/Assistant Director/Choreographer*

Company Member since 2010. People's Light: Director: *I and You*, *Richard III*, *Biloxi Blues*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Stargirl*, *Beautiful Boy*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Kidnapped*. Choreographer: *The Matchmaker*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon*, *Cinderella*, *Noises Off*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Aladdin*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Fight Director: *All My Sons*, *Fences*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Legacy of Light*. Playwright: Co-Author Musical Pantos *Sleeping Beauty*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon*, and *Aladdin*. Theatre Includes: Passage Theatre, McCarter Theatre, 1812 Productions, Arden Theatre Company, Lantern Theatre, Delaware Theatre Company, Delaware Shakespeare Festival, Act II Playhouse, Mauckingbird Theatre Company and Villanova Theatre. Samantha co-founded Dancing With The Students, a non-profit organization that offers ballroom dance instruction to 5th - 8th grade students in North Philadelphia, teaches at Drexel University, is a nine time Barrymore Nominee, and received the 2014 & 2015 Barrymore Award for Outstanding Choreography/Movement.

Zach Aguilar *Morris the Mantis*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: *Gypsy* (Arden Theatre), *Spamalot* (Resident Theatre Company), *Azul* (La Fabrica), *SkippyJonJones Snow What?!* (Theatreworks USA), *Kill Will* and *Taming of the Shrew* (Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre), *Other Tongues* (Philadelphia Women's Theatre Festival). Training: BFA Musical Theatre, University of the Arts.

Marissa Barnathan *Moesha the Intern*

People's Light: *The Three Musketeers (The Later Years)*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon*. Theatre Includes: *A Christmas Carol*, *Skippyjon Jones*, *Pinkalicious* (Walnut Street Theatre), *West Side Story*, *Romeo and*

Juliet (The Media Theatre), *Respect: A Musical Journey of Women* (Penn's Landing Playhouse), *Beehive*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *Footloose*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe* (The Eagle Theatre), *Fiddler on the Roof* (The Candlelight Theatre), *Burt and Me* (Delaware Theatre Company), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Prairie Fire Children's Theatre), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (St. Louis Shakespeare). Film/Television Includes: *Variety* (His and Her Films). Training: BA from Washington University in St. Louis; Shakespeare at the Globe Program; Walnut Street Theatre Apprenticeship. Website: www.marissabarnathan.com

Kim Carson *Sultan*

People's Light: *Sleeping Beauty*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon*, *Cinderella*, *Aladdin*, *The Master Builder*, and *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Theatre Includes: Walnut Street Theatre, Arden Theatre, Mauckingbird Theatre, Theatre Exile, John W Engeman, 59 E 59, Virginia Stage Co, Passage Theatre, NJ Rep, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Azuka Theatre. Website: www.kim-carson.com

Peter Danelski *Manny the Monkey*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Studio Theatre, Curio Theatre Company, 24 Hour Plays, among others. Theatre scholar with research and writing presented nationally, most recently at the 41st Comparative Drama Conference. Training: DeSales University, Trinity College Dublin, and a proud AmeriCorps alumnus after a year of service with Habitat for Humanity. Website: www.petedanelski.com

Mike Dorsey *Michael the Intern*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: Favorite local credits: *Evita* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), *Urinetown*, *Secret Garden*, *Road Show* (11th Hour Theatre Co.), *Forever Plaid* (Montgomery Theatre Co.), *Plaid Tidings*, *Vincent in Brixton* (Walnut St. Theatre), *Burt and Me* (Delaware Theatre Co.), *The Graduate* (Eagle Theatre), *Avenue Q* (Mazeppa). Website: www.mike-dorsey.com @mikedorseyyy

Camilo Estrada *Aladdin*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: Musical Theatre: Rolf in *The Tiny Mustache* (NYC workshop), Charley in *Merrily We Roll Along*, Charles Guiteau in *Assassins*, and Nikos in *Legally Blonde*. Opera: New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players, Pasek in *Přihody lišky Bystroušky*, Mercurio in *La Calisto*, Tenor in *Hydrogen Jukebox*, and Cecco in *Il Mondo Della Luna*. Training: BFA in Vocal Performance from Carnegie Mellon University. Website: www.camiloestrada.com

Samantha Funk *Mai Tai*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene and Disney Cruise Line. Training: BFA Musical Theater, Rider University. Website: @samfunkadelic

Adam Howard *Male Swing*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: Arden Theatre, PlayPenn, and Philadelphia Artists' Collective. Up next: *Ready Steady Yeti Go* (Azuka Theatre). Training: Recent graduate of The University of the Arts.

Mark Lazar *Widow Twankey*

Company Member since 1998. People's Light: *The Matchmaker*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Rainmaker*, *Master Builder*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Of Mice and Men*, *King Lear*, *The Foreigner*, *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily*, and all the pantos. Theatre Includes: Most recently *Ah Wilderness!* at East Lynne Theatre; North Carolina Shakespeare Festival (12 seasons; 10 *Christmas Carols* as Ebenezer Scrooge), Madison Repertory Theatre (10 seasons; Founding Member), American

Players Theatre, Milwaukee Rep and most of Wisconsin's other professional theatres. Also: Charlotte Rep, Festival Stage of Winston-Salem, New American, Cider Mill and East Lynn. Film/Television Includes: *Frame of Mind*, *Folkbooks* (PBS Award), *Shake Rag Alley*. Radio: Ebenezer Scrooge, Delaware Public Radio's annual theatrical broadcast of *A Christmas Carol*, 15 years Broadcaster (USA and International). National Tour: *Charlotte's Web*. Training: B.A. Theatre, Dean's List, University of Wisconsin.

Tori Lewis *Female Swing*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: *Les Misérables*, *Pericles*, *Hamlet*, *Rapunzel*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. BA from DeSales University.

Emily Kaye Lynn *Mel the Intern*

People's Light: *Sleeping Beauty*. Theatre Includes: *Sensitive Guys* (in prod., InterAct Theatre), *West Side Story* (Media Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet* (Compass Rose Theatre), *Flash of Time* (The Kimmel Center), *Cabaret* (Renaissance Theatre). They also performed for four years with the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire, where they served as Assistant Stunt Coordinator. Training: BFA in Musical Theatre, Shenandoah Conservatory, recognized with honors by five different international stage combat organizations. Soli Deo Gloria. Website: www.emilykayelynn.com

Susan McKey *The Nurse*

Company Member since 1988. People's Light: Susan has appeared in almost every holiday panto; most recent credits include *Sleeping Beauty*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Pride and Prejudice*. Other People's Light credits include *Legacy of Light*, *Master Builder*, *End Days*, *Playhouse Creatures*, *Book of Days*, *Splittin' the Raft*, *Skin of our Teeth*, to name only a few. Theatre Includes: *White Guy on the Bus* (Delaware Theatre Co/59E59 NYC), *Unnecessary Farce* (Act II Playhouse), *Time Stands Still* (Act II/Delaware Theatre Co), *How I Learned to Drive* (Theatre Horizon), Edward Albee's *At Home at the Zoo* (Philadelphia Theatre Company), *Lady from the Sea* (Lantern Theatre), *Tooth & Claw*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Henry V*, & *Goodnight Desdemona*, *Good Morning Juliet* – for which she won the first ever Barrymore Award for Best Supporting Actress (Arden Theatre). Susan is an avid quilter and native Cape Codder.

Christopher Patrick Mullen *Fu*

Company Member since 2005. People's Light: *Moon Over Buffalo*, *Richard III*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon*, *Cinderella*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Mr. Hart & Mr. Brown*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *Gossamer*, *King Lear*, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*, *Getting Near To Baby*, *Robinhood*, *Twelfth Night*, *Splittin The Raft*, *Jack & The Beanstalk*, *The Crucible*, *Fabulation*, *The Miser*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Adventures Of Pinocchio*, *Crow and Weasel*, *Hush: An Interview With America*, *The Tempest*, *Wind In The Willows*. Theatre Includes: *West Side Story* (1st National Tour); *The Runner Stumbles* (Off-Broadway revival); *The Whaleship Essex* (Vineyard Playhouse); *When You Comin Back*, *Red Ryder?* (Retro Productions); *Metamorphoses*, *Macbeth*, *A Little Night Music*, *Candide*, *Assassins*, and *The Stinky Cheeseman* (Arden Theatre); 26 productions with The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival including *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Pericles*, *Henry VIII*, *Dracula: The Journal of Jonathan Harker*, *Charley's Aunt*, *Hamlet*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, and *Macbeth*; *Amadeus* (Hedgerow Theatre); *The Pavilion* (Chester Theatre Co); *The Compleat Wrks of Wllm Shkspr* (abridged), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew* (Orlando Shakespeare Theatre). Film/Television Includes: *Law & Order*. Training: DeSales University; People's Light.

Nichalas L. Parker *Genie of the Lamp*

People's Light debut. Theatre Includes: *A Funny Thing Happened...*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Memphis* (Walnut Street Theatre). Training: Graduate of The University of the Arts.

Tom Teti *Genius of the Ring*

Company Member since the beginning, 1974. People's Light: Over 150 productions, most recently *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Three Musketeers (The Later Years)*, *Stella and Lou*, *Arthur and the Tale of the Red Dragon*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Cinderella*, and *Mark Twain: Sacred Cows Make the Best Hamburgers*. Theatre Includes: Most recently *The Gin Game* at Montgomery Theater, *Red* at Shadowland Theatre, *Tommy and Me* with Theatre Exile at Fringe Arts; Walnut Street Theatre, Wilma Theater, Hedgerow, Philadelphia Theater Company, Arden Theatre, Montgomery Theater, Act II Playhouse. Nationally: Kennedy Center, D.C.; City Theater, Pittsburgh; Humana Festival Actor's Theater, Louisville; Two River, Red Bank, NJ; Shadowland, Ellenville, NY; Odyssey Theatre LA. Film/Television Includes: *Homicide*, *Hack*, *Limitless*, *Condition Red*.

CONNECT, ENGAGE, INTERACT AT PEOPLE'S LIGHT

Join the cast for **AfterWORDS**, informal Q&As after Thursday evening performances (November 30, December 7, December 14, and January 4).

People's Light offers a **Relaxed Performance** of *Aladdin: A Musical Panto* on Sunday, December 31 at 2pm, which will also feature American Sign Language interpretation by Hands Up Productions. Our Relaxed Performances, generously sponsored this season by Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health, create a welcoming environment designed to include everyone and let you be who you are. We invite individuals with, but not limited to, Autism, ADD, ADHD, dementia, and sensory sensitivities to take part in the joy of theatre. For more information, contact the Box Office at 610.644.3500.

Enjoy prix fixe **Dinner & A Show** packages at the Farmhouse Bistro prior to select Wednesday through Sunday performances. Packages start at \$83. *That's a savings of up to 15% off the single ticket price.* Call the Box Office at 610.644.3500.

Located next to the Bistro is a full-service catering venue, **The Farmhouse at People's Light**, perfect for weddings, corporate events, and special celebrations. Contact the Sales Team at 610.647.1631 x156 or thefarmhouse@peopleslight.org.

TICKET INFORMATION

Aladdin: A Musical Panto previews begin on Wednesday, November 15 at 7pm and run through November 17 at 7 pm. The play opens on Saturday, November 18 and runs through Sunday, January 7.

Standard single tickets start at \$42. **For tickets, call the Box Office at 610.644.3500.** Special discounts are available for groups of 10 or more. **For more information or to purchase group tickets, call 610.647.1900 x111 or email benedict@peopleslight.org.**

\$29 **Community Night** tickets are available to the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday preview performances on November 15, 16, and 17 at 7pm.

1/2 price tickets are available to select **Access Nights**. To purchase these discount tickets, you must call the Box Office at 610.644.3500 or purchase online and provide the promo code **PLTACCESS**. If you are ordering tickets over the phone, you must mention the promotion for the discount to be applied. *Aladdin: A Musical Panto* Access Nights are Sunday, November 19 at 7pm, Tuesday, November 21 at 7pm, Thursday, November 30 at 7pm, Sunday, December 17 at 7pm, Friday, January 5 at 7pm, and Sunday, January 7 at 7pm.

Create your own subscription for the 2017-2018 season. Packages start at \$102. Productions include *Lights Out: Nat "King" Cole* (October 11 – December 3, 2017), *Aladdin: A Musical Panto* (November 15, 2017 – January 7, 2018), *Morning's at Seven* (January 10 – February 4, 2018), *The Diary of Anne Frank* (February 21 – March 31, 2018), *I Will Not Go Gently* (March 21 – April 15, 2018), *Romeo and Juliet: A Requiem* (April 25 – May 27, 2018),

Skeleton Crew (June 13 – July 8, 2018), and *Woody Sez: The Life and Music of Woody Guthrie* (August 1 – 26, 2018). Visit peopleslight.org or call 610-644-3500 to order.

Actors, prices, productions, performance dates and times are subject to change. Additional service charges will apply. Contact the Box Office for more details.

ABOUT PEOPLE'S LIGHT

Now in its 43rd season, People's Light, a professional, not-for-profit theatre in Chester County, Pennsylvania, makes plays drawn from many sources to entertain, inspire, and engage our community. We extend our mission of making and experiencing theatre through arts education programs that excite curiosity about, and deepen understanding of, the world around us. These plays and programs bring people together and provide opportunities for reflection, discovery, and celebration. Founded in 1974, we produce eight to nine plays each season, in two black box theatres with 340 and 160 seats respectively, mixing world premieres, contemporary plays, and fresh approaches to classic texts. Through two new play initiatives, New Play Frontiers and The Harmony Labs, People's Light currently has nine active play commissions. Of our 436 productions, over a third (166) have been world or regional premieres.

