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TWO YOUNG, ICONOCLASTIC WRITERS ON WORLD STAGE

TO APPEAR AT LA MAMA ON MARCH 11 AT 7 PM

Ukraine's Serhiy Zhadan and American poet Reginald Dwayne Betts

will read following opening night performance of

RADIO 477!

Serhiy Zhadan, one of Ukraine's most dynamic poets and novelists, and a key figure in his country's anti-war efforts, will be joined on stage by his American colleague Reginald Dwayne Betts at La MaMa (66 E 4 St.) following the opening night performance of the resurrected production of the long-lost Ukrainian jazz musical RADIO 477! on March 11 at 7 pm.

Mr. Zhadan has provided text and poetry to the new production of RADIO 477! – which has not been performed since it was destroyed by Stalin and his cronies during the dictator's purge of Ukraine in the 1920's. He began a gripping exchange of letters about 'war and words' with Mr. Betts, whose writing draws on his experience having become a poet during his imprisonment in the U.S. Mr. Betts is now a legal scholar and teaches literature and writing to the incarcerated.

That exchange between Messrs. Zhadan and Betts was facilitated by the noted Holocaust historian Timothy Snyder, and Marci Shore, a professor of intellectual history. Both are on the faculty of Yale University.

Zhadan is the author of numerous editions of poetry and several novels, and is the front man for a Ukrainian rock band. A popular figure credited with having helped change the course of Ukrainian writing with his young, experimental works starting in 1990, Serhiy Zhadan has also been instrumental in organizing his fellow writers and artists as they provide humanitarian aid to Ukrainians during the war.

For information about the March 11th event, visit www.lamama.org

FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT RADIO 477!, SEE BELOW

RADIO 477!, a new theatrical production about the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv in 1929 and today – in collaboration with the prominent Ukrainian literary figure Serhiy Zhadan – will debut at La MaMa's Ellen Stewart Theatre (66 E. 4 St. in Manhattan), with performances beginning March 10 through March 19, it has been announced by Mia Yoo, La MaMa's artistic director. Presented by La MaMa and Yara Arts Group, RADIO 477! is created by Yara Arts Group and Ukrainian artists, and blends jazz, poetry and dance: texts and lyrics by Mr. Zhadan, music by Anthony Coleman, directed by Virlana Tkacz. First preview March 10, 2023; press opening March 12.

RADIO 477! is inspired by the first jazz musical at Ukraine's Berezhil Theatre in 1929 -- HELLO, THIS IS RADIO 477! -- an avant-garde show about the culturally-thriving city at that time. Enormously popular with audiences, the musical was disliked by the Communist Party bosses,

who had it removed from the Berezil repertoire. The artists of Berezil Theatre, as well, eventually disappeared during Stalin's purges.

Considered long-lost and likely destroyed, in recent years director Tkacz discovered the conductor's score – with music by the late Ukrainian composer Yuliy Meitus -- and worked with Messrs. Coleman and Zhadan to create a new version, which draws connections between past and present attempts at cultural erasure.

"It's been a year since Russia invaded Ukraine. Yara started working on RADIO 477! in Kharkiv with Ukrainian artists in November 2021, but our plans to return in March were interrupted by the war. RADIO 477! sings about Ukraine today, our rediscovery of the past, and our future," says Yara Arts' Virlana Tkacz.

Like its 1929 counterpart, RADIO 477! features lively jazz music, exuberant dances, singing and stories about Ukraine's beloved city of Kharkiv, where Mr. Zhadan lives and has been a leader amongst his literary peers, providing humanitarian assistance to their fellow Ukrainians during wartime.

One of Ukraine's most beloved and influential poets, Zhadan has won numerous European literary awards and the Hannah Arendt Peace Prize. His work has been featured in many publications, including the New York Times. As well, Mr. Zhadan is the front man for the band Zhadan and the Dogs. His first volume of selected poetry, WHAT WE LIVE FOR, WHAT WE DIE FOR – translated by Virlana Tkacz and Wanda Phipps – was published by Yale University Press in 2019, and his second volume HOW FIRE DESCENDS is coming later this year.

Anthony Coleman is a preeminent jazz pianist-composer in the downtown New York scene. He will be joined during the RADIO 477! performances by Frank London (trumpet), Marty Ehrlich (clarinet), Erica Mancini (accordion), Paul Brantley (cello), Anna Abondolo/Hanna Dunton (bass) and James Paul Nadien (drums).

The stage performers in RADIO 477! include George Drance, Noah Firth, Silvana Gonzalez, Akiko Hiroshima, Bob Holman, Oksana Horban, Susan Hwang, Petro Ninovyski and Lesya Verba. Choreography is by Shigeko Sara Suga, set by Waldemart Klyuzko with Ievhen Kopiov, Light by Margaret Peebles, costumes by Keiko Obremski, sound by Marek Soltis and projections by Hao Bai.

Director Virlana Tkacz heads Yara Arts Group, founded in 1990 as a resident company of La MaMa. The company creates shows from poetry, music and historical material: to date, 25 of its 40 productions were inspired by material from Ukraine.

Performances of RADIO 477! – March 10-19 – are Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays at 7 pm; Sundays at 2 pm. Tickets are \$10-\$30. www.lamama.org

ABOUT LA MAMA

On February 9, LA MAMA re-opened its landmarked original theatre, 74A E. 4 St., with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and public preview of the newly-renovated space, following a 3-year, \$24 million makeover. La MaMa legend Andre De Shields was emcee. In January, the company launched a campaign to raise an additional \$250,000 matching grant from Harvey Fierstein,

who also began his career at the storied theater, under the tutelage of the late founder Ellen Stewart.

La MaMa is dedicated to the artist and all aspects of the theatre. La MaMa's 61st "Remake A World" Season believes in the power of art to bring sustainable change over time and transform our cultural narrative. At La MaMa, new work is created from a multiplicity of perspectives, experiences, and disciplines, influencing how we think about and experience art. The flexibility of our spaces, specifically the newly reimagined building at 74 East 4th Street (La MaMa's original permanent home), gives our local and remote communities access to expanded daytime programming. The digital tools embedded in the space allows artists to collaborate remotely, and audiences worldwide to participate in La MaMa's programming.

A recipient of the 2018 Regional Theater Tony Award, more than 30 Obie Awards and dozens of Drama Desk, Bessie, and Villager Awards, La MaMa has been a creative home for thousands of artists, and resident companies, many of whom have made lasting contributions to the arts, including Blue Man Group, Bette Midler, Ed Bullins, Ping Chong, Jackie Curtis, André De Shields, Adrienne Kennedy, Harvey Fierstein, Diane Lane, Playhouse of the Ridiculous, Tom Eyen, Pan Asian Rep, Spiderwoman Theater, Tadeusz Kantor, Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman, Mabou Mines, Meredith Monk, Peter Brook, David and Amy Sedaris, Julie Taymor, Kazuo Ohno, Tom O'Horgan, and Andy Warhol. La MaMa's vision of nurturing new artists and new work from all nations, cultures, races and identities remains as strong today as it was when Ellen Stewart first opened the doors in 1961.

www.lamama.org