



**Elysium and the Erwin Piscator Award Society
present the 26th Piscator Awards
to André Bishop and Barbara Goldsmith**

New York, February 2013 – On Tuesday, March 12, **Gregorij H. von Leitis**, Artistic Director of Elysium – between two continents, presents the **26th Annual Erwin Piscator Awards** at the prestigious Lotos Club New York, one of the oldest literary clubs in the US. **André Bishop**, Artistic Director of Lincoln Center Theater will receive the Erwin Piscator Award for his outstanding contributions to the American theatre and specifically for his tireless and ongoing efforts to develop new plays and present the work of fledgling American playwrights and young directors. Prior to coming to Lincoln Center Theater in 1992, André Bishop worked as Artistic Director of Playwrights Horizons. Under his direction, a number of memorable New York, US and world premieres have been produced. Mr. Bishop has won countless theater awards, including 11 "best production" Tony Awards and was recently inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame. The well-known American stage director **Bartlett Sher** will give the remarks on André Bishop. Among the most recent productions Mr. Sher directed are Rossini's *Le Comte Ory* and Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Metropolitan opera and *Golden Boy* by Clifford Odets at the Belasco Theater New York.

Barbara Goldsmith – author, historian, philanthropist and human rights activist – is the recipient of the Erwin Piscator Honorary Award 2013 in memory of Maria Ley Piscator. She will be honored for her extraordinary legacy as a writer and historian, for her exceptional philanthropic efforts and in particular for her commitment to human rights and freedom of expression through the founding of the “Barbara Goldsmith / PEN Freedom to Write Awards”. **Vartan Gregorian**, President of Carnegie Corporation, one of the biggest and oldest American foundations, will introduce Ms. Goldsmith. He has named Barbara Goldsmith as one of the ten most enlightened philanthropists in America.

Ms. Goldsmith' latest book *Obsessive Genius: The Inner World of Marie Curie* has been translated into twenty-one languages and is based on the workbooks, letters, and diaries of Marie Curie (which were recently released after being sealed for sixty years). Among other awards, this book won the prestigious prize from the American Institute of Physics and its thirteen affiliates as the best book on Physics written by a non-physicist. Goldsmith's previous award-winning books include *The Straw Man*, *Little Gloria . . . Happy At Last*, *Johnson v. Johnson*, and *Other Powers: The Age of Suffrage, Spiritualism and the Scandalous Victoria Woodhull*. In addition, Barbara Goldsmith was a founding editor of New York Magazine and has written for the New York Times and the New Yorker.

Barbara Goldsmith has led a crusade for human rights and freedom of expression. Twenty years ago she conceived the “Barbara Goldsmith/PEN Freedom to Write Awards,” that consistently turn the media spotlight on writers imprisoned for expressing their views and has invariably seen them released. Of the thirty-seven writers imprisoned, missing, or tortured at the time of her award, thirty-four were set free. The PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award was instrumental in starting the campaign that led to the Chinese writer Liu Xiaobo winning the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize.

Ms. Goldsmith is at the forefront of the effort to preserve our written heritage. She helped accomplish the Herculean task of organizing this country's most influential writers to insist that they be published on cost-comparable permanent paper (which lasts 300 years instead of disintegrating in 30) and spearheaded a landmark event in which forty of the nation's most influential trade-book publishers and 2,500 writers signed a Declaration that they would use only permanent paper, thus insuring our cultural heritage. Ms. Goldsmith has often testified before the congressional committees on the importance of writers' grants and on the preservation of our written heritage. She helped effect a \$20 million annual increase in the budget of the National Endowment of the Humanities for paper preservation. In 2010 the New York Public Library Services Center (a 126 square foot building with 220 workers) opened. It contains the state-of-the-art Barbara Goldsmith Preservation and Conservation Divisions.

Members of this year's Piscator Awards Committee include, among others: The playwright **Edward Albee**; the Academy-Award winning actresses **Ellen Burstyn** and **Lee Grant**; **Jürgen Flimm**, Artistic Director of the State Opera in Berlin / Germany; the German philanthropist and artist **Gabriele Henkel**; human rights activist **Kerry Kennedy**; the Artistic Director of the Bavarian State Theater in Munich **Martin Kušej**; **Judith Malina**, co-founder of the Living Theater and a student of Erwin Piscator; Maestro **Kurt Masur**; the Artistic Director of the Salzburg Festival **Alexander Pereira**; and the American avant-garde stage director and playwright **Robert Wilson**.

In 1985 Gregorij H. von Leitis founded the Erwin Piscator Award Society which has been presenting the Annual Erwin Piscator Award in honor of Piscator's tremendous contribution to the theatre and his lasting influence on stage-direction on both sides of the Atlantic ocean. **Erwin Piscator** (1893 – 1966), a pioneer of political and experimental theatre in Berlin in the 1920s, fled the Nazis and found exile in New York. In 1940 he founded the Dramatic Workshop at the New School for Social Research. Among his students there were Harry Belafonte, Marlon Brando, Arthur Miller, Tony Randall, Elaine Stritch, Tennessee Williams, and Shelley Winters. As the Artistic Director of the Freie Volksbühne Berlin (Free People's Theater) he directed four world premieres in the 1960s, which wrote theatre history: Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy* dealing with the silence of the catholic church and the pope in the face of the Holocaust, Heiner Kipparth's *In the Case of J. Robert Oppenheimer*, Peter Weiss' *The Investigation* about the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt, and Hans Hellmut Kirst's *Officers' Revolt* about the resistance of the 20th of July 1944.

Piscator was convinced that "art only achieves its purpose, when it contributes to the improvement of man." Since the first award ceremony the Annual Erwin Piscator Award has been presented to artists, who – like Piscator – use the arts to contribute to the improvement of man. The Honorary Erwin Piscator Award in memory of Maria Ley Piscator was instituted in 1996 to recognize the extraordinary support of the arts and culture by individuals and institutions

Founded on October 11, 1983 in New York City, **Elysium** fosters artistic and creative dialogue and mutual friendship between the United States of America and Europe. By means of theater / opera productions, readings, concerts, exhibitions and lectures Elysium fights against discrimination, racism and anti-Semitism.

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