



**Elysium and the Erwin Piscator Award Society  
present the 28<sup>th</sup> Piscator Awards  
to John Guare, Robert J. Campbell and Cesare L. Santeramo**

New York, March 2015 – On Tuesday, March 24, **Gregorij H. von Leitis**, Artistic Director of Elysium – between two continents, presents the **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Erwin Piscator Awards** at the Lotos Club in New York - one of the most prestigious literary clubs in the US. **John Guare** will receive the Erwin Piscator Award his invaluable contributions to the American theatre as a truly original and innovative playwright who keeps pushing the boundaries of the theatre, disrupting the so-called “realistic theatre” to better reflect the chaotic state of the world. **Anne Cattaneo** will give the remarks on John Guare. Ms. Cattaneo is the dramaturg of Lincoln Center Theater and the creator and head of the Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab. She has worked widely as a dramaturg with directors such as Bartlett Sher, Robert Wilson, Jack O’Brien, JoAnne Akalaitis and others. Her own translations of 20<sup>th</sup> century German playwrights in clued Brecht’s *Galileo* and Botho Strauss’ *Big and Little*.

**Dr. Robert J. Campbell and Cesare L. Santeramo** are the joint recipients of the Erwin Piscator Honorary Award 2015 in memory of Maria Ley Piscator. The two philanthropists will be honored for their extraordinary life-long commitment to support the arts and culture and for their tireless efforts to help young singers in establishing their careers. **Luna Kaufman**, the first woman president of the New Jersey State Opera and chair emeritus of Seton Hall’s Sister Rose Thering Fund for Jewish-Christian and Holocaust Studies will introduce Mr. Campbell and Mr. Santeramo.

**John Guare**, born in New York in 1938, became known through plays that distanced themselves from traditional realistic theatre. Among his early plays are *Muzeeka* (awarded with an Obie), *The House of Blue Leaves* (which won the Obie and the Award of the New York Drama Critics Circle), and *Cop-Out*. His most famous play is *Six Degrees of Separation* which was premiered in 1990 and made into a film three years later. It’s a comedy of manners about an African-American confidence man who poses as the son of film star Sidney Poitier. Besides a cycle of plays about 19<sup>th</sup> century America (*Gardenia*, *Lydie Breeze*, *Women and Water*), Guare wrote the libretto for the successful musical *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and the screenplay for Louise Malle’s film *Atlantic City*, for which he was nominated for an Oscar. He is a founding member of the Eugene O’Neill Theatre in Waterford, Connecticut, and co-editor of the Lincoln Center Theater Review. He has taught in Yale, Princeton, Harvard, at New York University and Juilliard School.

**Dr. Robert J. Campbell** is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Cornell University Weill Medical College and has been on the faculty of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York University, and Fordham University Post-Graduate School. He has been a consultant to President Carter’s Commission on Mental Health. He is the editor of what is now called *Campbell’s Psychiatric Dictionary*. Of equal significance in Dr. Campbell’s life is his commitment to the arts and to the early training and support of young artists. He has been a donor to the Metropolitan Opera since 1948, and to the Metropolitan Museum of Art since 1955. He also was a member of the board of Opera Orchestra of New York from 1975 until 2007. He and Mr. Cesare Santeramo served for 19 years on the board of the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, have been on the board of the Ferro International Program for Operatic

Scholars and Students since 1995, and are major contributors to the Lucine Amara Verismo Opera of New Jersey, to the Teatro Grattaciello, and have underwritten a prize to a winner of the Opera Index vocal competition.

Singing has been a lifelong avocation of Cesare L. Santeramo. After an early retirement from his position as Director of Conference Management and Food Services at AT & T, Mr. Santeramo segued into charity work and doing what is possible to assist young aspiring artists to have an easier time than he had. In 1990, at the urging of Licia Albanese, Mr. Santeramo was elected to the board of the Puccini Foundation. He is presently on the board of Opera Index, Let There be Hope, and Polish Assistance of New York. He has adjudicated numerous vocal competitions for various organizations and has also worked privately with Licia Albanese and Anna Moffo in giving master classes.

Members of this year's Piscator Awards Committee include, among others: The playwright **Edward Albee**; the Artistic Director of Lincoln Center Theater in New York **André Bishop**; the Academy-Award winning actresses **Ellen Burstyn** and **Lee Grant**; the American author **E. L. Doctorow**; **Jürgen Flimm**, Artistic Director of the State Opera in Berlin; the president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York **Vartan Gregorian**; the American baritone **Thomas Hampson**; the German philanthropist and artist **Gabriele Henkel**; human rights activist **Kerry Kennedy**; **Judith Malina**, co-founder of the Living Theater and a student of Erwin Piscator; Maestro **Kurt Masur**; the Artistic Director of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan **Alexander Pereira**; the American directors **Bartlett Sher** and **Robert Wilson**; and the soprano **Deborah Voigt**.

In 1985 Gregorij H. von Leïtis founded the Erwin Piscator Award Society which has been presenting the Annual Erwin Piscator Award in honor of Piscator's tremendous contribution to the theater and his lasting influence on stage direction on both sides of the Atlantic ocean. **Erwin Piscator** (1893 – 1966), a pioneer of political and experimental theater 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 were Harry Belafonte, Marlon Brando, 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 theater history: Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy* dealing with the silence of the Catholic Church and the Pope in the face of the Holocaust; Heiner Kippar'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 on July 20, 1944.

Piscator was convinced that "art achieves its purpose only, 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 and opera productions, readings, concerts, exhibitions and lectures Elysium fights against discrimination, racism and anti-Semitism.

This year marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Dramatic Workshop at the New School. Commemorating this event, Elysium – between two continents, The Lahr von Leïtis Academy & Archive, and the New School University will organize a two-day-symposium at the beginning of October focusing on the life and legacy of Erwin Piscator and the relevance of Political Theater then and now.