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C.S. LEWIS
THE
ScrewTape
LETTERS
at Mesa Arts Center

TWO PERFORMANCES ONLY!
Saturday, March 12

“Clever and Satirical”
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mesa, AZ - THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS, the provocative and wickedly funny theatrical adaptation of the C.S. Lewis novel about spiritual warfare from a demon’s point of view, debuts at Mesa Arts Center for two performances only. The production will appear at Mesa Arts Center Saturday, March 12 at 4 and 8 p.m. Tickets are available at Mesa Arts Center’s Box Office, at mesaartscenter.com or by calling 480-644-6500.

The National Tour of **THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS** kicked off after a hit nine-month run at the Westside Theatre in New York City where it entertained over 50,000 theatergoers. Prior to that, **THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS** was a sold-out hit in Chicago and Washington D. C. where it ran for a combined eight months.

THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS’ National Tour has delighted capacity audiences in 50 major cities including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Boston, Salt Lake City, Orlando, Seattle, Dallas and Houston. Over 500,000 have seen this production on tour, which continues to attract a national following.

Associated Press calls **THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS** “Devilishly funny!” *The Chicago Sun-Times* hails the production as “Smart, sizzling entertainment!” *The Boston Globe* raves that it is “Engrossing and Entertaining!” and *The Chicago Tribune* says **THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS** is “Very smart...richly rewarding...exuberant theatricality!”

THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS creates a topsy-turvy morally inverted universe set in an eerily stylish office in hell, where God is called the “Enemy” and the devil is referred to as “Our Father below.” The play follows His Abysmal Sublimity ScrewTape, Satan’s top psychiatrist (due to his

profound understanding of human nature), and his slavish creature-demon Toadpipe, as they train an apprentice demon, Wormwood, on how to ruin the life and damn the soul of an unsuspecting human on earth. Screwtape is played by award winning actor, Max McLean.

Along with *The Chronicles of Narnia* (including *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*), *The Great Divorce* and *Mere Christianity*, **THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS** is still one of Lewis' most popular and influential works. The book's piercing insight into human nature and the lucid and humorous way Lewis makes his readers squirm in self-recognition made it an immediate success. When first published in 1942 it brought worldwide fame to this little-known Oxford don including the cover of *Time Magazine*.

The idea for Screwtape first came to Lewis after listening to Hitler's Reichstag Speech on July 19, 1940, while it was simultaneously translated on BBC Radio. Lewis wrote "*I don't know if I'm weaker than other people, but it is a positive revelation to me how while the speech lasts it is impossible not to waver just a little... Statements which I know to be untrue all but convince me...if only the man says them unflinchingly.*"

Lewis dedicated it to his close friend J. R. R. Tolkien who had expressed to Lewis that delving too deeply into the craft of evil would have consequences. Lewis admitted as much when he wrote "Though I had never written anything more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment . . . though it was easy to twist one's mind into the diabolical attitude, it was not fun, or not for long. The work into which I had to project myself while I spoke through Screwtape was all dust, grit, thirst, and itch. Every trace of beauty, freshness, and geniality had to be excluded."

THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS is produced by New York City based Fellowship for Performing Arts. Max McLean serves as Artistic Director. Executive Producer and General Manager is Ken Denison of Aruba Productions. Scenic Design is by Cameron Anderson, Costumes by Michael Bevins, Lighting Design by Jesse Klug, and Original Music and Sound Design by John Gromada.

Mesa Arts Center is located at One East Main Street in downtown Mesa.

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About Mesa Arts Center

Mesa Arts Center, owned and operated by the City of Mesa, is a unique, architecturally stunning facility located in the heart of downtown Mesa. Arizona's largest multidisciplinary arts center is home to four theaters, five art galleries in the MCA Museum, and 14 art studios. Guests, patrons, and students come to Mesa Arts Center to enjoy the finest live entertainment, performances and festivals, world-class visual art exhibitions, and outstanding arts education classes. The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.