



presents

THE LEHMAN TRILOGY

by **Stefano Massini**

Adapted by **Ben Power**

Translated from Italian by **Richard Dixon**

MARCH 13 – APRIL 6, 2025

Directed by **Charlie Flynn-McIver**

Starring

Adam Kampouris*

Philip Kershaw*

Willie Repoley*

Production Stage Manager Amelia Driscoll*

Assistant Stage Manager Lindsey A. Moss*

Scenic Design Michael Amico

Costume Design Kayren McKnight

Lighting Design Erin Bell

Sound Design Bailey Gafeney

Visual Media Design CJ Barnwell

Props Artist Sylvia J. Pierce

The Lehman Trilogy was first presented by the National Theatre and Neal Street Productions Ltd, that jointly commissioned the English adaptation of the original play, Lehman Trilogy, at the Lyttleton Theatre on Thursday 12th July 2018 and transferred to the Piccadilly Theatre, West End.

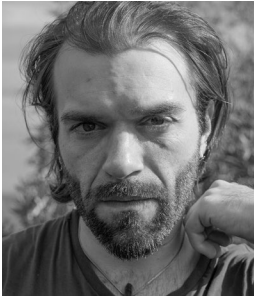
The National Theatre and Neal Street Productions Ltd presented the US premiere of The Lehman Trilogy on 27th March 2019 at the Park Avenue Armoury, New York and first presented the production on Broadway at the Nederlander Theatre on 14th October 2021.

“The Lehman Trilogy” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers
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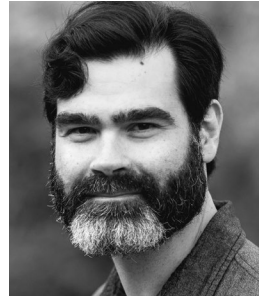
THE LEHMAN TRILOGY



Adam Kampouris*
MAYER LEHMAN



Philip Kershaw*
EMANUEL LEHMAN



Willie Repoley*
HENRY LEHMAN

*“We walk along the sheer ridge
where History becomes Legend
and News dwindles into Myth.
We don’t look for truth in fairy tales,
nor do we look for it in dreams.
And while all human beings can one day say
they were born, they lived, they died,
not all can say they’ve become a metaphor.
Transformation is everything.”*

— Epigraph from *The Lehman Trilogy*,
the novel by Stefano Massini

ABOUT THE PLAY

At 1:45am on September 15, 2008—after surviving the Civil War, two World Wars, and The Great Depression—without enough money to open for business that day—the fourth largest investment bank in the United States receives a final, fatal phone call from the Federal Reserve and declares bankruptcy, triggering the 2008 financial collapse and following recession.

In the coming weeks, playwright Stefano Massini found himself asking the question “how did we get where we are?” At one level, the answer is clear: Lehman Brothers suffered large losses on subprime mortgages threatening its solvency and the Federal Reserve made the decision to allow the bank to fail. But Massini’s question was bigger than numbers. “The Lehman brothers are emblematic, paradigmatic, of a much bigger historical phenomenon. I wrote [the play] because I was convinced that if we can understand man’s relationship with money, we, as individuals who must deal with money every day, can live our lives more fully.”

At an unknown time on September 11, 1844, Bavarian Jew Hejum Lehmann takes his first step onto American soil as Henry Lehman and settles in Montgomery, opening a dry goods store with his two brothers.

Massini’s play begins as gently and thoughtfully as life in the old country with the brothers doing things “just like back in Rimpar”: closing for Shabbat, hanging a mezuzah by the door, and sitting Shiva. As their business grows, profiting off enslaved people in the Alabama cotton industry, picking up pace as production increases and their reach widens, so does Massini’s script, with the story moving more and more quickly into the modern era of technological advances and riskier decisions, the organization evolving from tactile merchandise to underwriting and stocks futures. The Lehmans become a dynasty, a superpower, men who walk on air every day. We fly along with them as Massini’s writing spirals through the decades and generations until there is no more mezuzah by the door and no more Lehmans on the board of directors. Fully disconnected from its foundation, Lehman Brothers operates in a world where everything good is new and fast and rich, time is speeding by, and stocks are soaring with no time for tradition until—silence.

164 years of work, *gone* with a single phone call.


Massini is clear that this play is more than the story of a bank. His language—poetic and fiery—is a sharp foil to the coldness of cash and stock trackers. Is it an allegory? A historical account? A warning? As S. Mitra Kalita from *Time* says “The play reserves judgment, and rests on the audience’s imagination and, ultimately, internalization of being complicit in broken and unethical systems.” This is a story of humans and of survival. Of immigrants, of family, of faith, and of what happens when we lose sight of our roots. It is the story of capitalism, of consumerism, and of the birth and death of a superpower.

*It is the epic story of America itself and how we got where we are.
Enjoy the show.*

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

A timeline of events from the Lehmans' lives side by side with historical events throughout the play's 164 years.

Based on the work of Carla Steen, Resident Dramaturg, The Guthrie Theatre

- 
- 1844 | September 11:** 22 year old Henry Lehman arrives in New York from Rimpar, Bavaria.
 - 1844 |** Samuel Morse sends the first successful telegraph message.
 - 1850 |** Brothers Emanuel and Mayer join Henry in Alabama, and Lehman Brothers is founded.
 - 1850 |** U.S. population reaches 23 million people, including 3.2 million enslaved people. The Fugitive Slave act is passed.
 - 1854 |** Lehman Brothers focus has shifted to brokering cotton. They purchase a 14 year old enslaved girl named Martha.
 - 1856 |** The Treaty of Paris ends the Crimean War. Oscar Wilde is born.
 - 1855 |** Henry Lehman dies of yellow fever at age 33.
 - 1855 |** The first bridge spanning the Mississippi River is opened. The North Carolina General Assembly incorporates the Western North Carolina Railroad to open a line from Sailsbury to the Western part of the state.
 - 1858 |** Emanuel establishes an office in New York, Mayer marries Babette Newgass and in 1859, Emanuel marries Pauline Sondheim.
 - 1861 |** Emanuel's son Philip is born. Blockades severely restrict the movement of cotton during the Civil War. Mayer and Emanuel keep their business alive with cotton smuggled through the blockade.
 - 1861 |** Abraham Lincoln is inaugurated as president of the U.S. Within months, 11 slave states will secede and form the Confederate States of America. the Civil War begins in April.
 - 1868 |** Mayer moves to New York, as does the Lehman Brothers main office. In 1870, they will help found the New York Cotton Exchange.
 - 1865 |** The Civil War ends. Lincoln is assassinated.
 - 1873 | September 13:** "Black Friday" marks the end of a global expansion and triggers a years-long depression.
 - 1878 |** Mayer's son Herbert is born. He will go on to become a U.S. Senator and Governor of New York from 1933-1942.
 - 1878 |** Thomas Edison receives a patent for his phonograph.

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- 1880** | Philip joins the company. Lehman Brothers transitions to investment banking.
- 1887** | Lehman Brothers joins the New York Stock Exchange.
- 1924** | The first non-Lehman becomes a partner in the firm.
- 1929** | Lehman Brothers begins investments in aviation and radio. The company loses \$8 million in the market crash.
- 1947** | Philip Lehman dies at age 85.
- 1949** | Herbert is elected to the U.S. Senate.
- 1957** | Investments in the Digital Equipment Corporation takes Lehman Brothers into the computer age.
- 1969** | Bobby Lehman dies at age 77.
- 1973** | Pete Peterson joins Lehman Brothers. Ten years later, he leaves Lew Glucksman in charge.
- 1984** | Lew Glucksman sells Lehman Brothers to American Express.
- 1994** | The repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act enabled Lehman Brothers to expand greatly by offering both investment and commercial banking services, a move that would ultimately lead to its downfall.
- 2008** | September 15: Lehman Brothers declares bankruptcy. It will take 14 years to liquidate the company.
- 1880** | The Brooklyn Bridge is completed and opens in New York.
- 1892** | Ellis Island opens an immigration reception center.
- 1917** | The U.S. enters World War I.
- 1921** | The Tulsa Race Massacre occurs and is believed to be the worst single incident of racial violence in modern American history.
- 1929** | In October, the stock market crashes. The Great Depression begins.
- 1939** | World War II begins when Germany invades Poland. By the end of the war, over 6 million Jewish people and millions of others will have been killed.
- 1947** | *A Streetcar Named Desire* opens on Broadway with Bobby Lehman as an investor.
- 1954** | The U.S. Supreme Court rules that segregation in schools is illegal.
- 1969** | Neil Armstrong becomes the first person to walk on the moon.
- 1970** | The first Earth Day is observed.
- 1985** | Live Aid concerts raise over £50 million for famine relief in Ethiopia.
- 1989** | The fall of the Berlin Wall.
- 1994** | The North American Free Trade Agreement goes into effect.
- 2001** | The September 11 attacks occur killing nearly 3,000 people and severely damaging Lehman Brothers headquarters.
- 2008** | Barack Obama is elected as the 44th President of the United States.

THE LEHMAN TRILOGY: THE TIMELINE

This play is performed in three parts with two 10 minute intermissions.

PART ONE: THREE BROTHERS

The Traveler (1844)
The Shop (1847)
The Arm and the Potato (1850)
Hanukkah (1853)
Product (1854)
Shiva (1855)
Kish Kish (1865)
Something About New York (1860)
Survival (1861)
The Puppeteer (1867)

PART TWO: FATHERS & SONS

The Silent Brother (1878)
Wall Street (1881)
Trains (1884)
The Card Player (1887)
Herbert (1887)
A New Language (1891)
Shiva (1897)
Horses (1901)
Bobby
Sukkot (1919)
The Acrobat (1929)

PART THREE: THE IMMORTAL

Radio (1929)
Ruth (1929)
Black Skies (1929)
The Flood (1930)
A New Country (1939)
Shiva (1947)
The Instinctive Act (1965)
Babel
The Golden Calf (1963)
The Twist (1969)
Ping Pong (1983)

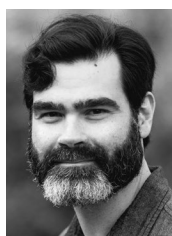
CAST BIOS



Adam Kampouris* (*Mayer Lehman*) was last seen in tandem with Lehman brother, Willie Repoley, in NC Stage Co.'s December production of *All is Calm*. A theatre artist, songwriter, and hiking guide originally from Haywood County, it has been a thrill returning to 15 Stage Lane to work on such a monumental play; he can't help but wonder if it is due to his own addiction to words... **NYC:** *Oresteia* (Classic Stage Co./Ashes Co.); *Twelfth Night: A Folk Musical* (Essential Theatre Group); *Cymbeline* (Wyrd Theatre Company), *Camino Real* (The Connelly), *Ward Six* (dir. Rory McGregor). **Regional:** *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night* (Philly Shakes); *The Ladies Man* (Creede Rep.); *The Illusion*, *X-mas Carol* (Triad Stage); *Romeo & Juliet* (NC Shakespeare Festival); *As You Like It* (NC Stage); *Live from WVU: It's a Wonderful Life* (Immediate Theatre Project: '17, '18, '19). This one is for the acorns.



Philip Kershaw* (*Emanuel Lehman*) is a multi-disciplinary artist who graduated from the University of Houston MFA Acting program after earning his undergraduate degrees at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is incredibly honored to be back at North Carolina Stage Company after previously appearing in *A Case for the Existence of God*, *Be Here Now* and *Witch*. He also directed last season's production of *Thurgood*. He has worked on regional productions for Peterborough Players, ZACH Theatre, Theatre Under the Stars, Rec Room Arts, Kitchen Theatre Company, Lean Ensemble Theater, the Houston Shakespeare Festival, A.D. Players, Adventure Theatre MTC, The Wheel Theatre Company, Unity Theatre, Dirt Dogs Theatre Co., The Ensemble Theatre, Penobscot Theatre Company, and Round House Theatre. More information about his work can be found on his website: www.philipkershaw.com.



Willie Repoley* (*Henry Lehman*) considers himself very lucky to have had an artistic home at NC Stage since their inaugural production in 2002, and is grateful in particular for the opportunity to explore this gloriously messy American myth/play. In 2004, he co-founded Immediate Theatre Project and The Redundant Theatre Company Theatre (the latter now, alas, defunct, unfortunately). He has also worked regionally at Flat Rock Playhouse and the former NC Shakespeare Festival. Film/TV includes *Genius: Aretha* with Cynthia Erivo, *First Man* with Ryan Gosling, and the locally produced feature *Quiet River*. As a student and trainee of renowned voice teacher Patsy Rodenburg, OBE, Willie coaches groups and individuals on authentic communication; please check out upcoming classes at www.willierepoley.com. Thanks especially to his family, without whom his art would be neither possible nor worthwhile.

PRODUCTION BIOS

Charlie Flynn-McIver (*Director*) is the artistic director and co-founder, with his wife, Angie Flynn-McIver, of NC Stage. He has appeared most recently in *Jeeves Intervenes*, *A Doll's House Part 2*, and *Stones in His Pockets* as well as NC Stage's world premieres of *Someone Else* and *Stalking the Bogeyman*. At Flat Rock Playhouse, he appeared in *The Odd Couple*, *12 Angry Men* and *The 39 Steps*. Some NC Stage credits include: *Hamlet*, *Loot*, *Art*, *All in the Timing*, *Chesapeake*, and *Macbeth*. National tour: *Wit* with Judith Light. Off Broadway: *Ice Island*, *the Wait for Shackleton*. Directing credits for NC Stage include: *The Book Club Play*, *The Understudy*, *R. Buckminster Fuller: The History (and Mystery) of the Universe*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Annapurna*, *4000 Miles*, *All is Calm*, *Rapture Blister Burn*, and *Other Desert Cities*. Charlie has a Bachelor of Music in Music Theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory of Music and an MFA in acting from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Stefano Massini (*Playwright*) is an internationally renowned novelist and playwright, the first Italian author to receive a Tony Award. He regularly contributes to the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*, and for several years he has served as artistic consultant at Piccolo Teatro di Milano — Teatro d'Europa. His works, including *The Lehman Trilogy*, have been translated into 30 languages, and his plays have been performed in more theatres around the world than those of any other living Italian writer, produced as far afield as Iran and Korea, and staged by directors such as Luca Ronconi and Sam Mendes. His most acclaimed works, beyond *The Lehman Trilogy*, include: *Intractable Woman*, a decades-long international success; *Ladies Football Club*, which premiered to wide acclaim in Spain; and *7 Minutes*, hailed by *Le Monde* as a “masterpiece” at the Comédie Française. He has won numerous Italian awards, including the Premio Vittorio Tondelli and the Premio Ubu, as well as the Tony Award, the Drama Guild Award and the Outer Critics Circle Award. *Qualcosa sui Lehman* (*The Lehman Trilogy*) was among the most acclaimed novels published in Italy in recent years and won the Selezione Campiello Prize, the Super Mondello Prize, the De Sica Prize, the Prix Médicis Essai and the Prix Meilleur Livre Étranger. In 2022 he completed his ten-year writing work on the birth of the atomic bomb in a play entitled *Manhattan Project*, already requested in many theatres around the world. His rewrite based on Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* will debut in 2024.

Ben Power (*Playwright/Adapter*) is a writer for theatre and the screen. For the last 12 years he has worked at the National Theatre as associate director and deputy artistic director and was responsible for the temporary theatre The Shed. Work for the screen includes *Munich: The Edge of War* and *The Hollow Crown* (BAFTA nominations for Best Single Drama and Best Mini-Series). Work for the stage includes adaptations of DH Lawrence's *Husbands & Sons*, Euripides' *Medea* and Ibsen's *Emperor & Galilean*, all for the National; *A Tender Thing* for the RSC and Complicite's *A Disappearing Number* (Olivier and Evening Standard Awards). He was associate

PRODUCTION BIOS

director of Headlong where he adapted Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and Marlowe's *Faustus*. He is currently creating a television series for Working Title and is published by Faber & Faber.

Michael Amico [*he/him*] (*Scenic Design*) is happy to be designing his first produced show for NC Stage. It was supposed to be *The Last Wide Open*, but Hurricane Helene got in the way. That show, and its set, is awaiting return this June. Prior to moving to North Carolina last year, he was the production manager at Palm Beach Dramaworks in West Palm Beach, Florida for 20 seasons. At Dramaworks he designed scenery for dozens of shows, including regional and world premieres. Favorite designs include: *American Buffalo*, *The Chairs*, *Talley's Folly*, *The Pitman Painters*, *Indecent*, *Woody Guthrie's American Song*, *Little Foxes*, *Night of the Iguana*, and *August: Osage County*.

Kayren Reynolds McKnight (*Costume Design*) lives, designs and sews in Asheville. You can see her work next in *Color Me Asheville* by Goodwill, *Death Comes to Play* presented by Sublime Theatre and Press, and *The Book of Will* opening the Montford Park Players season.

Erin Bell (*Lighting Design*) is a theatrical lighting designer and event photographer based in Durham, NC. Recent lighting design credits include *Akeelah and the Bee* (Raleigh Little Theatre), *A Christmas Carol* (Walltown Children's Theatre), *Dance Nation* (National Women's Theatre Festival), *Harold & Maude* (Theatre in the Park), and *could be worse* (real.live.people). Upcoming shows include *What We Leave Behind* (Theatre Raleigh).

CJ Barnwell [*he/him*] (*Visual Media Design*) is excited to bring his visual media design to The Lehman Trilogy at NC Stage. His past work in visual media includes *The Mountaintop* at West Virginia Public Theatre and TheatreSquared, *The Tempest* at Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, and *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* at TheatreSquared. At NC Stage, he has designed for a number of the Jeeves shows, *Brave New World*, and *Grounded*, as well as lighting this season's *All Is Calm*. As the founder of cjLights, CJ focuses on creating engaging visual designs that support storytelling. See more of his work at www.CJLights.com or follow him on Instagram @CJ_Lights.

Bailey Gafaney (*Sound Design*) has worked as a sound artist since 2021. Based in Atlanta, her credits include Horizon Theatre's *Designing Women*, Lambert-Smith Media's *Fela! the Musical* and *Mother of God*, and most recently Out of Hand Theatre's *How to Make a Home* for their Shows in Homes series. This will be Bailey's third production with North Carolina Stage Company, having previously designed sound for last season's productions of *Witch* and *Thurgood*.

PRODUCTION BIOS

Sylvia J. Pierce (*Props Artist*) is a life-long theatre enthusiast playing one of Ole King Cole's fiddlers at age 4. She pursued technical theatre in grad school, deciding she'd rather be a techie than a conceptual designer. Starting out professionally in Cambridge, MA in 1978, she worked her way South, through New York City, Atlanta and all over the US and abroad for the next two decades. Along the way she built and managed shows for theatre and broadcast television events, joined IATSE Local #4, built lots of sets, owned two companies, went on the road, and finally moved slightly north to Asheville. Finding that the mountains felt like home, she finally gave up her nomadic lifestyle and settled down. Now, she works and builds for local theatre companies and is enjoying this phase of her career.

Peter Chapman is author of *THE LAST OF THE IMPERIOUS RICH: LEHMAN BROTHERS, 1844-2008*, a leading reference on the history of the Lehman family.

Actors' Equity Association ("*Equity*"), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Carrie Day Production Manager

Susan Rennie Builder

Carrie Day Master Electrician

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Isaac Rockoff

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