



# The Lambs, Inc.

America's First Professional Theatrical Club – Established in 1874

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### The Lambs® Marks its 146th Founding Anniversary

Manhattan – December 2020

[The Lambs](#)® — America's first professional theatrical club and oldest professional theatrical organization — celebrates its 146th founding anniversary this month with festive online gatherings replacing in-person social events at our clubhouse in Midtown Manhattan amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Lambs was founded in Christmas Week 1874 in New York City, taking its name from an earlier theatrical club in London, England, that honored the essayist [Charles Lamb](#) and his sister, Mary, who during the early 1800s hosted actors and literati at their famed salon. The Lambs has occupied [14 clubhouses](#) in New York over the years, with the current clubhouse at 3 West 51st Street offering performance and rehearsal space, meeting rooms, recreational activities, and access to a private pub and restaurant.

A related organization, [The Lambs Foundation](#) (1943), is a 501(c)(3) charity that supports education in the arts and non-profit theater. Supported by bequests and donations, and manned by all volunteers, it has disbursed more than \$500,000 in grants over the last nine years.

The Lambs Foundation also controls the Club's valuable collection of theater memorabilia and artwork, including paintings and drawings by the likes of Lamb [Howard Chandler Christy](#) and Lamb [James Montgomery Flagg](#), and a theater broadside from the Theatre Royal in London dating to 1773. Over the past year, the Foundation has embarked on a conservation program to restore these historic works to their former glory.

With the Club's 146th anniversary fast approaching, and our 150th anniversary waiting in the wings, The Lambs has left an indelible mark in America's theatrical history, arts, and entertainment. A cursory look at the Club's history reveals:

-- Lambs were among the founders of the [Actors Fund of America](#) (1882) and include J. Lester Wallack, A.M. Palmer, and Daniel Frohman. Of the charity's first 12 chairmen, eight were Lambs. The Fund's current president and chief executive, Joseph Benincasa, celebrates 30 years as a Lamb next year.

[continued]

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**Marc Baron**

Shepherd

**Peter Kingsley**

Boy

**Elaine Marlowe**

Corresponding Secretary

**Eileen Lacy**

Recording Secretary

**Deborah Stone**

Treasurer

**Kevin Fitzpatrick**

Historian

**Bruce Brown**

Ex-Shepherd

### Directors

Margot Astrachan  
David Dow Bentley III  
John Bowes  
Peter Dizozza  
Alexandra Nader  
Richard J. Porter  
Sarah-Ann Rodgers  
Gus Rosenthal  
Davida Rothberg  
leslie Shreve  
Don Spiro  
Robert Tevis

### Immortal Lambs

Joseph S. Buhler  
Edwin Burke  
R.H. Burnside  
Richard L. Charles  
Tom Dillon  
William Gaxton  
Martin Gillen  
Scott Glascock  
John Golden  
Clay M. Greene  
Joseph R. Grismer  
Robert L. Hague  
William S. Hart  
DeWolff Hopper  
Charles H. Hoyt  
Frank W. Kitching  
Bert Lytell  
Thomas Meighan  
Henry Montague  
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-- Lambs were among the founders of [Actors' Equity Association](#) (1913). Of the 23 founding Equity council members, 22 were Lambs, as were its top three officers. The union name was coined by William Courtleigh, who served as a Lambs' Shepherd (president). During the [Actors Strike of 1919](#), the Club became a hotbed of union activity and was known as "Local One." Lamb Augustus Thomas, a popular Shepherd, was credited with bringing the warring sides together to end the strike.

-- The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers ([ASCAP](#)) began with meetings at The Lambs (1914). Six of the nine founders were Lambs, including Irving Berlin, Victor Herbert, and Gustave Kerker. The [ASCAP Foundation](#) was founded in 1975 by a bequest from Lamb Jack Norworth.

-- Ten founders of the Screen Actors' Guild ([SAG](#), 1933) were Lambs. Of the original 21 directors and officers, 10 were Lambs. Five have served as its president – and of the first 75 members, 36 were Lambs. The first president of the American Federation of Radio Artists (AFRA, 1937) was a Lamb, and five served as its president. When these unions merged into SAG-AFTRA (2012), three Lambs were board members and one served as national president. Two Lambs currently serve on the board.

-- [Paramount Pictures](#) (1912) and [United Artists](#) (1919) were founded by Lambs.

-- In recent years, The Lambs has been recognized by actor Ken Howard while president of SAG-AFTRA and by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Congressman Jerold Nadler, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, and even Pope John Paul II.

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