

THE PUBLIC THEATER

Presents

OSKAR EUSTIS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

PATRICK WILLINGHAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THE ALLY

By **ITAMAR MOSES**
Directed by **LILA NEUGEBAUER**

With **CHERISE BOOTHE, ELIJAH JONES, MICHAEL KHALID KARADSHEH,
JOY OSMANSKI, JOSH RADNOR, BEN ROSENFELD, MADELINE WEINSTEIN**

Scenic Design **LAEL JELLINEK**
Costume Design **SARITA FELLOWS**
Lighting Design **REZA BEHJAT**
Sound Design **BRAY POOR**
Prop Manager **CLAIRE M. KAVANAH**
Dramaturg **SARAH LUNNIE**
Casting **JORDAN THALER, KATE MURRAY**
Production Stage Manager **ROXANA KHAN**
Line Producer **EMMA MCSHARRY**
Company Manager **GRACE CHARIYA**
Production Manager **CRISTINA AYÓN-VIESCA**

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Resident Director
SAHEEM ALI

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Director of Artistic Programs
FREEDOME BRADLEY-BALLENTINE

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**HEIDI GRIFFITHS,
JORDAN THALER**

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Artistic Planning
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JEREMY ADAMS

Director of Production
PETER DEAN

THE LUESTHER T. MERTZ LEGACY TRUST provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

**THE
PUBLIC.**

COMPANY

(in alphabetical order)

NakiaCHERISE BOOTHE
Baron ELIJAH JONES
FaridMICHAEL KHALID KARADSHEH
GwenJOY OSMANSKI
Asaf JOSH RADNOR
Reuven BEN ROSENFELD
Rachel MADELINE WEINSTEIN

SETTING

The campus of an American university.
September and early October of 2023.

Stage ManagerJENN ELYSE JACOBS

THERE WILL BE ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION.



The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all electronic devices such as cellular phones, beepers and watches. The use of cell phones in the theatre is prohibited by New York City law.

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A NOTE FROM OSKAR EUSTIS

Dear Friends,

THE ALLY takes place on a college campus and engages on a deep level with issues that are facing universities and colleges across the country: what free speech means, what points of view are acceptable and which are beyond the pale, how we can engage in civil dialogue in a time of such stark polarization, and what impact do colleges have on the communities around them. In dramatizing these issues, among them police violence against Black communities and the Israel/Palestine conflict, our brilliant playwright, Itamar Moses, places them within some of the most incendiary and difficult arguments of our moment. What emerges is a play that will evoke strong and contradictory opinions in an audience.

The theater is a safe space in the most literal sense of that term: no one is going to be physically harmed during this performance in the Anspacher. But it is most decidedly not a safe space if by that term we mean a space where everyone will feel comfortable and no one will feel angry, saddened, or offended. It can't be that kind of space. The theater depends on conflict—the form itself refuses the idea of a single truth. It's why I believe that theater is the ultimate democratic art form—just like citizens in a democracy, the theater demands that we listen to and share opposing viewpoints, and that from that conflict, a greater truth will emerge. What each character holds as their belief system in **THE ALLY** should not be confused for the message of the play. There is no spokesperson for the author in this play. Rather, **Itamar has dived into some of the most difficult topics of our time and asks us to patiently listen to all sides.** That act—the act of listening to views we oppose—is the most radical act this play demands. And if we can't do that in the theater, where can we?

The great Greek tragedies were understood to be lessons in citizenship, venues where painful conflicts could be acted out, "played." The word "play" does not imply that the questions weren't serious: it implies that the theater is a place where we can play out our conflicts, our fears, and our desires, without fear of the consequences that might follow in the real world. **At its best, the theater allows us to get some distance from our own position, empathize with the feelings of others, and break the habits of thought and belief that keep us at each other's throats in the world outside the theater.**

I hope **THE ALLY** provides you with this opportunity.

Itamar's masterful play has been brought to life by one of our greatest directors, Lila Neugebauer. I can't believe this is her first show at The Public, given how much I admire her. She has assembled an amazing group of actors and designers to bring this play to life. Their rehearsal room has been one of the most thoughtful and serious rooms I have ever witnessed. I am grateful to the entire group for their courage, dedication, and talent.



OSKAR EUSTIS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE PUBLIC THEATER

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

THE PUBLIC THEATER continues the work of its visionary founder Joe Papp as a civic institution engaging, both on stage and off, with some of the most important ideas and social issues of today. Conceived over 60 years ago as one of the nation's first nonprofit theatres, The Public has long operated on the principles that theatre is an essential cultural force and that art and culture belong to everyone. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, The Public's wide breadth of programming includes an annual season of new work at its landmark home at Astor Place, Free Shakespeare in the Park at The Delacorte Theater in Central Park, the Mobile Unit touring throughout New York City's five boroughs, Public Lab, Public Works, Public Shakespeare Initiative and Joe's Pub. Since premiering *Hair* in 1967, The Public continues to create the canon of American theatre and is currently represented on Broadway by the Tony Award-winning musical *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda and the upcoming spring 2024 productions of *Suffs* and *Hell's Kitchen*. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 60 Tony Awards, 190 Obie Awards, 57 Drama Desk Awards, 61 Lortel Awards, 36 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 65 AUDELCO Awards, 6 Antonyo Awards and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. publictheater.org

CHERISE BOOTHE she/her (*Nakia*). Obie Award recipient for *Fabulation Or, the Re-Education of Undine* (Signature) and *Milk*

Like Sugar (Playwrights Horizons/WP/La Jolla Playhouse). NY: *Ruined* (Goodman/MTC), *Father Comes Home From the Wars* (Parts 1, 2 & 3) (Public Theater Lab). Regional: *Barbecue* (Geffen, NAACP Best Ensemble Cast), *Familiar* (Yale Rep). Film: *Ricki and the Flash* (opposite Meryl Streep), 42. TV: "Dispatches From Elsewhere," "The Good Doctor," "Westworld" and "Law & Order: SVU." MFA from NYU Graduate Acting.

ELIJAH JONES he/him/his (*Baron*). The Public: *Richard II* (Free Shakespeare on the Radio with WNYC). Off-Broadway: *Confederates* (Signature Theatre, AUDELCO Award for Outstanding Ensemble). Regional: *Bonez* (People's Light). Jones can currently be seen starring opposite Tom Holland, Sasha Lane and Amanda Seyfried in Apple TV+'s "The Crowded Room." Education: Juilliard, Penn State.

MICHAEL KHALID KARADSHEH he/him/his (*Farid*). New York: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *The Most Oppressed of All* (Target Margin Theater). Regional: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare on the Sound), *Tomorrow Will Be Sunday* (Chautauqua Theatre Company), *Sabra Falling* (In the Heart of the Beast). Film/TV: "Everything's Trash" (Freeform). Graduate of Columbia University MFA Acting.

JOY OSMANSKI (*Gwen*) is thrilled to make her debut at The Public. Osmanski has worked regionally at the Mark Taper, La Jolla Playhouse and San Jose Rep. Recent TV work includes roles in the DC series "Stargirl,"

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

FOX's "Duncanville" and Taylor Sheridan's "1923." She has narrated over 160 titles on Audible and is a multiple Earphones Award winner. MFA grad from the acting program at UCSD. Thank you C+C+S+W!

JOSH RADNOR (*Asaf*). Broadway: *Disgraced*, *The Graduate*. Off-Broadway: Richard Greenberg's *The Babylon Line* (Lincoln Center), Manhattan Theatre Club, Vineyard Theatre. Film: wrote, directed and starred in *Liberal Arts* (Sundance 2012) opposite Elizabeth Olsen, Richard Jenkins and Allison Janney and *happythankyoumoreplease* (Sundance Audience Award 2010); *Social Animals*; *Afternoon Delight*. Upcoming film: *All Happy Families*, *3 Birthdays*. TV: "Fleishman Is in Trouble," "Hunters," "Centaurworld," "Rise," "Mercy Street," "How I Met Your Mother," "Grey's Anatomy," "Six Feet Under," "ER." Music: *Eulogy: Volumes 1 & 2*, *One More Then I'll Let You Go*.

BEN ROSENFELD (*Reuven*) can most recently be seen in Amazon's "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel." Additional screen credits include "Mrs. America" (FX); "Twin Peaks" (Showtime); *Mark, Mary & Some Other People*; *Mickey and the Bear*; *6 Years* (Netflix); "Boardwalk Empire" (HBO); and *A Most Violent Year* (A24). On stage, Rosenfeld starred in Atlantic's *Through a Glass Darkly*, *Cornelia Street*, *On the Shore of the Wide World*, MCC's *The Nether*, Lincoln Center's *Carousel* and Roundabout's *Love, Love, Love*.

MADELINE WEINSTEIN (*Rachel*). Broadway: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*; *The Real Thing* directed by Sam Gold. Additional

theatre includes Simon Stone's *Medea* (BAM) and the world premiere of Tracy Letts' *Mary Page Marlowe* directed by Anna D. Shapiro (Steppenwolf). Film: *Between the Temples* (upcoming selection Sundance 2024), *Beach Rats* (official selection Sundance 2017), *Alex Strangelove*, *Queen of Glory* and *Hair Wolf* (winner Jury Award U.S. Fiction short film Sundance 2018). TV: "Mare of Easttown."

ITAMAR MOSES (*Playwright*). Plays: *Outrage*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *The Four of Us*, *Celebrity Row*, *Back Back Back*, *Yellowjackets*, *Completeness*, *The Whistleblower* and the short play collection *Love/Stories*. Musicals: *Nobody Loves You*, *Fortress of Solitude*, *The Band's Visit*, *Dead Outlaw* and *An American Tail*. Awards: Tony, Lortel, Drama Critics Circle, Outer Critics Circle, Obie and Portland, San Diego, Dallas and Bay Area Theatre Critics Circles. Television: "Men of a Certain Age," "Boardwalk Empire" and "The Affair." MFA: dramatic writing at NYU. Proud member of the Dramatists' Guild and the Writer's Guild of America.

LILA NEUGEBAUER (*Director*). Broadway: Kenneth Lonergan's *The Waverly Gallery*, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *Appropriate*. Recent Off-Broadway: Simon Stephens' *Morning Sun* (MTC), Tracy Letts' *Mary Page Marlowe* (Second Stage), Annie Baker's *The Antipodes*, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *Everybody*, Edward Albee's *Homelife/The Zoo Story* (Signature Theatre), Sarah DeLappe's *The Wolves*, Zoe Kazan's *After the Blast* (Lincoln Center). As co-artistic director of *The Mad Ones: Mrs. Murray's Menagerie* (Ars Nova) and *Miles for*

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Mary (Playwrights Horizons), among others. TV: "Maid," "The Last Thing He Told Me," "The Sex Lives of College Girls," "Room 104." Neugebauer's directorial feature debut *Causeway*, starring Jennifer Lawrence and Brian Tyree Henry (Oscar nomination), is available on Apple TV+. Obie, Drama Desk and Princess Grace Award recipient.

LAEL JELLINEK they/them (*Scenic Design*). The Public: *Buzzer*, *Sea Wall/A Life*. Broadway: *Oklahoma!* (Tony and Drama Desk nominations, Obie Award); *Sea Wall/A Life*; *Marvin's Room*. Off-Broadway: *The Antipodes*, *Everybody* (Signature); *The Best We Could* (MTC); *Mary Jane* (NYTW); *Rags Parkland...* (Ars Nova); *The Wolves* (LCT); *Heroes...* (Playwrights Horizons); *A Life* (Playwrights, Lortel and Hewes Awards); *Small Mouth Sounds* (Ars Nova, Signature, national tour); The Debate Society; The Mad Ones. Regional opera credits. Obie for Sustained Excellence in Design.

SARITA FELLOWS (*Costume Design*) was born in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Recent works: *Death of a Salesman* (Broadway); *Drinking in America* (Minetta Lane); *Theater of the Mind* (Denver Center); *Elyria* (Atlantic); *Blues for an Alabama Sky* and *Sweat* (Guthrie); *Joy and Pandemic* (Huntington); *A Bright Room Called Day* (The Public); *Fefu and Her Friends* (A.C.T.); *Odyssey* (Acting Theater). Fellows has worked with choreographers such as Liz Lerman and Edisa Weeks. MFA: Tisch School of Design.

REZA BEHJAT (*Lighting Design*) is an Obie Award-winning lighting designer for live performances. Off-Broadway: 59E59, MCC Theater, Redbull Theater, Audible, The Public, Playwrights Horizons, Atlantic Theater, Ars Nova, NAATCO, Waterwell. Regional: Seattle Rep, Steppenwolf, Berkeley Rep, Guthrie Theater, Hudson Valley Shakespeare, Milwaukee Rep, Wilma Theater, Arizona Theater Company, Actors Theatre, Geva Theater, Long Warf, Alabama Shakespeare. Awards: Obie Award for *English* and *Wish You Were Here* and Knight of Illumination Award for *Nina Simone: Four Women*.

BRAY POOR (*Sound Design*). Broadway: *Appropriate*, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's*

Window, Take Me Out, True West, The Glass Menagerie, The Real Thing, in the next room, American Plan. Off-Broadway: productions at Playwrights Horizons, NYTW, Soho Rep, MTC, Second Stage, Signature, The Public, Atlantic and others. Regionally, all over the country, as well as productions in Europe and Latin America; art residency for two years in Mexico. Lortel, Drama Desk nominations, Obie for Sustained Excellence in Sound.

CLAIRE M. KAVANAH (*Prop Manager*). The Public: *Hell's Kitchen*, *Comedy of Errors* (Mobile Unit), *The Harder They Come*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Fat Ham*, *Girl From the North Country*, *The Michaels*, *Mojada*, *Eve's Song*, *Miss You Like Hell*, *Fire in Dreamland*, *Illyria*, *Hamlet*, *Gently Down the Stream*, *Privacy*, *The Gabriels*, *Eclipsed*. Working Theater: *The Block*, *Cherry Smoke*, *La Ruta*. Select artisan work: *SpongeBob SquarePants*, *Moulin Rouge!*, *Hand to God*. Broadway production props supervisor: *Girl From the North Country*, *Fat Ham*.

ROXANA KHAN she/her (*Production Stage Manager*). The Public: *The Tempest*, *Kings*. Off Broadway: *A Bright New Boise* (Signature Theatre); *Where the Mountain Meets the Sea* (Manhattan Theatre Club); *Epiphany*, *Greater Clements* (Lincoln Center Theater); *Mies Julie*, *The Dance of Death* (Classic Stage); *Pride and Prejudice* (Primary Stages). Regional: American Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Westport Country Playhouse, Actors Theatre of Louisville, South Coast Repertory and others.

JENN ELYSE JACOBS (*Stage Manager*). Broadway: *The Lion King*, *Moulin Rouge!*, *SIX*, *The Prom*, *School of Rock*. National tours: *The Book of Mormon*, *Ain't Too Proud*, LCT's *The King & I*, *The Color Purple*. Off-Broadway: Second Stage Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Keen Company, *The Old Man and the Old Moon* (PigPen Theatre Co./The New Victory Theater). Regional: La Jolla Playhouse, Williamstown Theatre Festival. BFA from the University of Michigan.

Information in "Who's Who in the Cast" is provided by the production. Where opinions are expressed, they are those of the players, not necessarily those of PLAYBILL Magazine.

STAFF FOR THE ALLY

Assistant Director Mirirai Sithole
 Writer's Assistant Fernando Buzzar de Toled Segall
 Voice & Text Coach Julie Congress
 Voice Coach for Josh Radnor Deborah Hecht
 Associate Scenic Designer Ant Ma
 Associate Costume Designer Amanda Roberge
 Associate Lighting Designer Colleen Doherty
 Associate Sound Designer Nathan Rubio
 Assistant Company Manager Autumn Knight
 Assistant Production Manager Jessica Nekritz
 Production Assistant Molly Foy
 Prop Manager Claire M. Kavanah
 Assistant Prop Manager Mary Flynn
 Hair Consultation Nikya Mathis
 Production Audio Herbie
 A1 Bryson Ezell
 Sub A1 Melissa Valencia
 Audio Crew Stephen Curry, Ken Goodwin, Andrew Hienz
 Costume Coordinator Jules DeSchryver
 Seasonal Lead Stitcher Miranda Beck-Bird
 Costume Crew Griffin Patria
 Costume Crafts Sharone Malka
 Wardrobe Supervisor Helisoa Randriamanana
 Dresser Max J Kelly
 Production Electrician Liz Andrews
 Head Electrician Hayes Wolfe
 Lighting Programmer Maryam Sweirki
 Light Board Operator Dana Spataru
 Electricians Erin Bulman, Darcy Burke, Avalon Cole,
 Juan Coronado, Parker Damm, James Dewhurst,
 Ethan Feil, Olivia Grasso, Evan Gómez, River Knight,
 Miller Koppang, Terysa Malootian, Julia Mansur,
 Jack Meister, Jesus Santiago, Natalie Shipley,
 Juniper Stuart, Archer Swietek
 Prop Runner Riley Hutchison
 Prop Carpenter Milo Robinson
 Charge Artist Hugh Morris-Stan

Scenery Special Projects Meb Griffin
 Lead Carpenter Courtney Kupferschmidt
 Scenery Construction & Load-In Crew Kevin Abrams,
 Anna Biggerstaff, Brandon Brumm, Jamiel Burkhart,
 Kris DeGirolamo, KJ Diaz, Aqil Huggins,
 Beckett Mullen, Jay Savana, Cliona Smith, Justin Tristan
 Lead Scenic Artist Jacob Caire
 Scenic Artists Kendall Davila, Anna Fredrick,
 Steven Kendall
 Deck Carpenter Howard Moncada
 Assistant Logistics Technician Andrew Anderson
 General Production Crew Lee Mellillo,
 Joanie Tripodi-Kaminsky

CREDITS

Sound equipment provided by Masque Sound. Men's hair by Tommy Kurzman.

SPECIAL THANKS

Harkness Dance Center, Starbright Floral Design

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Voice Associate Julie Congress
Shakespeare Scholars in Residence James Shapiro,
Ayanna Thompson

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Julian Mesri, AriDiY Nox, Else C. Went

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Music Manager/Audio Shop Foreperson Sean Kraft
Audio Office Administrator Carrie Miller Freeman
Props Supervisor Rebecca David
Assistant Props Supervisor Corinne Gologursky
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Juan Lara Valentini
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 Yating Sun, Rose Viets

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 Samantha Streit, Makaio Toft, Steele Whitney,
 Ella Wickham, Emily Yarmey

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 Aracelis Mendez-Leon, Leandro Mota,
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 Cindy Tsai, Aylin Akira Aspiazu

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A NOTE

FROM ITAMAR MOSES

I have a friend, a theater director, whose one of many mantras is that the best way to physically realize a challenging scene is to, as he puts it, “stage the problem.” Whatever seems to make putting something on its feet difficult or even impossible is, in other words, the very thing that needs to be foregrounded, the element around which the whole thing needs to pivot. Take the obstacle and make it necessary.

There's a writing equivalent of this principle, of course, and when I find myself struggling with a scene because of something fundamental that seems to make it impossible to write, I can hear my friend's voice in my head, saying: “Maybe that's what the scene is about.”

I have notes on my laptop for the play that would become *THE ALLY* going back at least seven or eight years. **It wasn't any one particular event or incident, global or domestic, that got my wheels turning so much as any number of events, the arguments that followed, and my own reluctance to take part in them.**

This was during a period of my life when I still thought an effective use of my time was to argue with people about politics on social media (the kinds of arguments I'm talking about never take place in person). I would engage daily with strangers on email listservs or friends of friends in Facebook comment threads on the subject of gun control or Hillary Clinton's Senate record. But on certain topics I would go mute; the arguments would continue, and I would read along but say nothing.

It was not lost on me that the topics on which I fell silent were not ones that had little to do with me but, rather, those with which my own actual identity—as a left-wing, American Jew with Israeli-immigrant parents—intersected most directly. So it wasn't that I had nothing to say. **Rather, I didn't know where to begin because what I had to say was too confused, too contradictory, too raw.** It was definitely too much for an internet comment thread. And I was cowed by what at least appeared to be the stark, unwavering certainty of everybody else weighing in on these things. What possible use was the mess inside of me in the face of that?

A fault line inside of the writer is, I'm guessing, the genesis of many plays. Certainly, it's true of a lot of mine. I just wasn't sure how to go about saying anything on subjects about which I felt I could say nothing.

And then I remembered my friend's advice.



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He Goes Here

Jaquel Spivey is playing a new Damian in *Mean Girls*, the movie musical.

By Logan Culwell-Block

Jaquel Spivey says when he writes his memoir, the *Mean Girls* chapter will be titled “My Light at the End of the Tunnel.”

“To get to tell a story of a fat, Black, queer person who is happy about the world around him and loves himself unconditionally and walks through the world with his head held high—it was the perfect segue into finding Jaquel again,” he tells *Playbill*.

That happy character is Damian, *Mean Girls*’ least mean character and most loyal friend. Spivey is taking on the role in the story’s newest iteration, a screen version of the 2018 Broadway musical (itself based on the hit 2004 film). And as for finding Jaquel again, that’s because Spivey hit most of our radars in the Tony-winning musical *A Strange Loop*. Spivey earned a Tony Award nomination starring as Usher, a Black, queer musical theatre writer struggling for self-acceptance in a world that seems to hate him.

“I had such a great experience on Broadway,” he says. “But after a while, when you’re playing a character that’s in such a dark place, it starts to weigh on you.”

Spivey’s take on Damian was partially helped, he says, by some initially disappointing

news. Two of Damian’s big numbers from the Broadway version of *Mean Girls*—“Where Do You Belong?” and “Stop”—were cut from the film. “I feel that in *this world of Mean Girls*, Damian is not your theatre gay,” Spivey explains. He decided to use the opportunity to widen perceptions about gay and queer people. “Queerness doesn’t have one look and one existence. There are a lot of queer people out here who don’t even like Broadway... everybody has their own thing.”

It’s also helped him address another quirk of queer representation that can be unintentionally damaging. “Sometimes queer people put on the show because they know that we often entertain people with our existence,” he says. “I happen to be queer, and that doesn’t come with me needing to perform for you.”

This Damian is a little more unapologetically himself. “I grew up in North Carolina,” Spivey says. “I know what it’s like to walk down the hall and have a group of jocks laugh and snicker, but I sashayed anyway. Damian does that, too. I hope it encourages some kid out there to keep being their best true self.” In short, Jaquel Spivey does, in fact, go here.

Love Amidst Addiction



Kelli O'Hara and Brian d'Arcy James in *Days of Wine and Roses*
PHOTO BY AHRON R. FOSTER

How *Days of Wine and Roses* is a love story, albeit an unhealthy one.

By Logan Culwell-Block

When asked to sum up the new Broadway musical *Days of Wine and Roses*, Tony winner Kelli O'Hara calls it "a love story [about] two people who find each other, they fall into addiction." Wait, how is that a love story?

Well according to composer Adam Guettel, "Love can be expressed through addiction. It's just not expressed very healthily." Guettel and Craig Lucas' newest piece, *Days of Wine and Roses* is currently playing a limited engagement on Broadway at Studio 54.

Based on the 1962 film and a 1958 teleplay, *Days of Wine and Roses* is a tragic romance between Kirsten Arnesen (O'Hara) and Joe Clay (Brian d'Arcy James), two people also battling alcoholism. The original film made Guettel cry when he first saw it. And the ensuing musical, which is a one act and 100 minutes long, has O'Hara and James in some of the darkest scenes of their career. Or as director Michael Grief tells Playbill, "They get to do the suffering for us."

D'Arcy James admits the material is "challenging because it's taking a head-on look at addiction and the real-life ramifications of what this disease can do to people, how it can destroy them."

The production, a transfer from Atlantic Theater Company's 2023 Off-Broadway

world premiere, is a multi-layered reunion. Guettel, Lucas, and O'Hara previously collaborated on 2005's *The Light in the Piazza*. "I was having a hard time knowing where my type of voice fit in, and meeting a composer like Adam gave me a spot," recalls O'Hara of how Guettel helped create a space for her classical soprano voice on Broadway.

The Tony winner is also sharing the stage with James after co-starring in Broadway's *Sweet Smell of Success* in 2002. They've been good friends since then. "To be able to jump back into a working relationship... at this point in our lives has been really fascinating and fun," enthuses James about working with O'Hara. "We're both really interested in trying to be as diligent and ferocious about creating great characters, and this is demanding."

For O'Hara's part, she says the long connections with her *Days of Wine and Roses* collaborators is what helps her go to the difficult places required by its plot onstage.

"We're dealing with a subject matter that's very emotional," O'Hara says. Guettel started talking to her about the show 20 years ago. "It's very deep and dark, and you have to feel safe. We go onto that stage within that story, and if we don't just feel like we dive and fall into each other, we can't do it."

PLAYBILL QUIZ: SPRING PREVIEW 2024!

By Andrew Gans

It's a banner season for new musicals on Broadway. The 2023-2024 season on the Main Stem has already welcomed the openings of *Back to the Future*, *Here Lies Love*, *Harmony*, *How to Dance in Ohio*, and *Once Upon a One More Time*. And there's even more musicals coming this spring. Can you identify each new musical below?

1. Following an acclaimed Off-Broadway run, this Adam Guettel-Craig Lucas musical, adapted from the 1962 film and 1958 teleplay, plays a limited engagement at Studio 54. It stars Kelli O'Hara and Brian d'Arcy James, with direction by Michael Greif.



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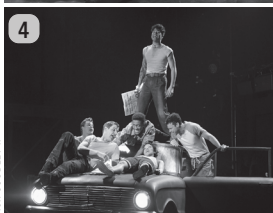
2. Based on the novel by Sara Gruen, this new musical from Rick Elice and PigPen Theatre Co.—about a young man who finds a new home with a traveling circus—will arrive in February with direction by Jessica Stone at the Imperial.



JOAN MARCUS

3. Based on Alicia Keys' life growing up in New York City, this new musical from the Grammy-winning songwriter and librettist Kristoffer Diaz will begin previews in March at the Shubert Theatre under the direction of Michael Greif.

4. Danya Taymor will direct this new musical—based on the novel by S.E. Hinton and Francis Ford Coppola's film—created by Adam Rapp, Justin Levine, and Jamestown Revival. It's about a group of young men in a fight for survival and a quest for purpose. Performances begin in March at the Jacobs.



RICH SOUBLET II



LIZ LAUBEN

5. With a book by Jonathan A. Abrams and a story by Tyler Mitchell and Abrams, this musical, inspired by the songs of Huey Lewis and The News, will begin in March at the James Earl Jones Theatre. It will be directed by Gordon Greenberg.



JIM COX

6. Based on the novel by Nicholas Sparks that inspired the film of the same name, this new Ingrid Michaelson-Bekah Brunstetter musical about the enduring power of love will arrive at Broadway's Schoenfeld Theatre in February. Schele Williams will direct.



MATTHEW MURPHY

7. Directed by Rachel Chavkin, this new musical from Carson Kreitzer, Matt Gould, and Raja Feather Kelly casts Eden Espinosa as a famed painter and will begin previews at the Longacre in March.



JOAN MARCUS

8. Following an extended run at The Public Theater, Shaina Taub's new musical, set in 1913 as women fight for the right to vote, will open at the Music Box in April under the direction of Leigh Silverman.

ANSWERS: 1. *Days of Wine and Roses* 2. *Water for Elephants* 3. *Hell's Kitchen* 4. *The Outsiders* 5. *The Heart of Rock and Roll* 6. *The Notebook* 7. *Lempicka* 8. *Suffs*