

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
AND
THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE
EXTEND
GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS
AN ADDITIONAL TWO WEEKS TO
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24**

**Part of a Theatrical Event Celebrating
The 40-Year Collaboration Between
Wallace Shawn and André Gregory**

Previews Begin Tonight at The Public Theater

October 7, 2013 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) and Theatre for a New Audience (Founding Artistic Director, Jeffrey Horowitz; Managing Director, Dorothy Ryan and Chairman of the Board, Henry Christensen III) announced a two-week extension today for the American premiere of ***GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS***, part of ***The Wallace Shawn-André Gregory Project***, written by **Wallace Shawn**. Directed by **André Gregory**, ***GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS*** begins previews tonight and was originally scheduled to close on Sunday, November 10. It will now run an additional two weeks through Sunday, November 24, with an official press opening on Monday, October 28.

Single tickets, starting at \$86.50, are on sale now and can be purchased by calling **(212) 967-7555**, www.publictheater.org, or in person at The Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street. Subject to availability, \$20 rush tickets may be purchased one hour prior to each scheduled performance at The Taub Box Office. **The Library at The Public** is open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The complete cast of ***GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS*** features **Julie Hagerty** (*Cerise*); **Emily Cass McDonnell** (*Rose, Robin alternate*); **Kristina Mueller** (*Rose alternate*); **Wallace Shawn** (*Ben*); and **Jennifer Tilly** (*Robin*).

A co-production with Theatre for a New Audience, ***The Wallace Shawn-André Gregory Project*** is a celebration of a remarkable theatrical collaboration. Wallace Shawn is one of America's most significant playwrights, long overdue for a major retrospective. André Gregory, his *My Dinner with André* co-star, has been directing Shawn's plays for 40 years, and as part of this retrospective, he directs Shawn's two most recent plays, the American premiere of the profoundly provocative ***Grasses of a Thousand Colors***, and the first New York revival of the acclaimed masterwork, ***The Designated Mourner***, which was staged this past June at The Public. Shawn is a multifaceted figure: an internationally famous character actor as well as an incomparably courageous playwright whom critics have placed in the first rank of contemporary dramatists. Gregory is the acclaimed director who has brought his most challenging works to fruition, including *Our Late Night*, Shawn's first play in New York City which was presented at The Public Theater in 1975.

Shawn's most outlandish work to date, ***GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS***, is a disturbing and anomalously beautiful play that touches on almost every imaginable form of sexual expression while spinning a

dystopian fantasy about ecological disaster. Ben, the play's central character, is a doctor who believes he has solved world hunger when he figures out how to rejigger the metabolisms of animals to tolerate eating their own kind. He ends up ruining the global ecosystem. Yet **GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS** is no mere social drama. Instead of exclusively dwelling on social disaster, it also explores the riotous sexual imaginations of Ben, his wife, and his lovers.

WALLACE SHAWN's plays include *The Designated Mourner*, *Grasses of a Thousand Colors*; *The Fever*; *Aunt Dan & Lemon* and *Marie and Bruce*. With André Gregory, he wrote the film *My Dinner With André*, and with Tom Cairns he wrote the film *Marie and Bruce*. Scott Elliott directed *Aunt Dan & Lemon* and directed Shawn as an actor in *Hurlyburly*. Shawn was the editor of "Final Edition," which contained work by Deborah Eisenberg, Mark Strand and Jonathan Schell, and Shawn's interview with Noam Chomsky.

ANDRÉ GREGORY, as a theatre director, has been one of the most important forces in the American theatre for nearly 40 years. Gregory was one of the original creators of the regional theatre movement in this country as well as the Off-Broadway movement in New York. His production of *Alice in Wonderland*, now legendary, played in New York for seven years, as well as touring the U.S., Europe, and the Mideast. It was made into a book in collaboration with Richard Avedon. His relationship with Wallace Shawn, which has been ongoing for over thirty years, began with his production of Shawn's *Our Late Night*, which was critically acclaimed and was presented at Joseph Papp's Public Theater. Shawn and Gregory went on to create *My Dinner With André*, which has now become an American classic. It was one of the two to three films to launch the American independent film movement. It is studied in many film courses with other American classics, such as *Citizen Kane* and *Casablanca*. It was directed by Louis Malle. The partnership of Shawn, Malle and Gregory went on to create the film *Vanya on 42nd Street*, which like *My Dinner With André*, was hugely successful and has been shown all over the world. In 2000, Gregory directed Wallace Shawn's play, *The Designated Mourner*, to universally successful reviews. As an actor, Gregory has performed in a dozen Hollywood films, including films directed by Martin Scorsese, Peter Weir and Woody Allen. Martin Scorsese directed Gregory in the role of John the Baptist in *The Last Temptation of Christ* and Peter Weir directed him in *The Mosquito Coast*. Gregory's most recent production of *Endgame* – over the years, he's done three – was performed in an unfinished Donald Judd building in the middle of the Marfa Texas desert in 2005. In 2009, Gregory directed a new play, *Grasses of a Thousand Colors*, by Wallace Shawn at the Royal Court Theatre in London. It received rave reviews, both there and in the U.S. This past spring, Jonathan Demme made a film of Gregory's production of Ibsen's *Master Builder* which Wallace Shawn adapted.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER AT ASTOR PLACE

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, The Public Theater is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare, the classics, musicals, contemporary and experimental pieces in equal measure. The Public continues the work of its visionary founder, Joe Papp, by acting as an advocate for the theater as an essential cultural force, and leading and framing dialogue on some of the most important issues of our day. Creating theater for one of the largest and most diverse audience bases in New York City for nearly 60 years, today the Company engages audiences in a variety of venues—including its landmark downtown home at Astor Place, which houses five theaters and Joe's Pub; the Delacorte Theater in Central Park, home to its beloved, free Shakespeare in the Park; and the Mobile Unit, which tours Shakespearean productions for underserved audiences throughout New York City's five boroughs. The Public's wide range of programming includes free Shakespeare in the Park, the bedrock of the Company's dedication to making theater accessible to all, new and experimental stagings at The Public at Astor Place, and a range of artist and audience development initiatives including its Public Forum series, which brings together theater artists and professionals from a variety of disciplines for discussions that shed light on social issues explored in Public productions. The Public Theater is located on property owned by the City of New York and receives annual support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; and in October 2012 the landmark building downtown at Astor Place was revitalized to physically manifest the Company's core mission of sparking new dialogues and increasing accessibility for artists and audiences, by dramatically opening up the building to the street and community, and transforming the lobby into a public piazza for artists, students, and audiences. Key elements of the revitalization included infrastructure updates to the 158-year old building, as well as construction of new exterior entry stair and glass canopy; installation of ramps for improved accessibility; an expanded and refurbished lobby; the addition of a mezzanine level with a new lounge, The

Library at The Public, designed by the Rockwell Group. The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities. www.publictheater.org

THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE, (*Jeffrey Horowitz, Artistic Director; Dorothy Ryan, Managing Director*) founded in 1979 by Mr. Horowitz, is a modern classical theatre whose cornerstone is Shakespeare. The Theatre is dedicated to the language and ideas of authors and produces Shakespeare alongside other classic and contemporary plays. It has played Off and on Broadway and toured nationally and internationally. In 2000, the Theatre's production of *The Green Bird* directed by Julie Taymor transferred to Broadway. In 2001 Theatre for a New Audience became the first American theatre invited to bring a production of Shakespeare to the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Stratford-upon-Avon. *Cymbeline*, directed by Bartlett Sher, premiered at the RSC; in 2007, Theatre for a New Audience was invited to return to the RSC with *The Merchant of Venice* starring F. Murray Abraham and directed by Darko Tresnjak. In 2011, Mr. Abraham reprised his role as Shylock for a national tour. The Theatre's productions have been honored with over 80-Tony, OBIE, Drama Desk, Drama League, Callaway, Lortel and Audelco awards and nominations. Last season, the Theatre played to 49,000 people, an audience diverse in age, economics and cultural background. The Theatre created and runs the largest program in the New York City Public Schools to introduce Shakespeare, and has served more than 123,000 students since the program began in 1984. On November 2, 2013, the Theatre will open its Polonsky Shakespeare Center in the new Downtown Brooklyn Cultural District. The building was recently named in recognition of leadership support from The Polonsky Foundation. Support for Theatre for a New Audience at Polonsky Shakespeare Center has been provided through a public-private partnership. Public support for this project was provided by the City of New York through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York City Council, and the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President.

TICKET INFORMATION

GRASSES OF A THOUSAND COLORS begins previews on Monday, October 7 and has been extended an additional two weeks through Sunday, November 24, with an official press opening on Monday, October 28.

Single tickets, starting at \$86.50, are on sale now and can be purchased by calling **(212) 967-7555**, www.publictheater.org, or in person at The Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street. Subject to availability, \$20 rush tickets may be purchased one hour prior to each scheduled performance at The Taub Box Office.

The performance schedule through November 10 is Tuesday through Saturday at 7:00 p.m., and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. There are added performances on October 7 and October 21 at 7:00 p.m. and November 2 at 2:00 p.m. (*There is no performance on October 8; October 29; and November 9.*)

The performance schedule for the two week extension, November 14 through November 24, is Tuesday through Saturday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. There is an added performance on November 18 at 7:00 p.m. (*There are no performances on November 11; November 12; November 13; and November 22.*)

Jennifer Tilly will not be performing in performances on Wednesday, October 9; Tuesday, October 15; Wednesday, October 23; Wednesday, October 30; Tuesday, November 5; Thursday, November 14, and Saturday, November 23 at 2:00 p.m. On these nights Emily Cass McDonnell will play the role of Robin, and Kristina Mueller will play the role of Rose.

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