

**THE PUBLIC THEATER,  
THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY,  
AND MIAMI'S GABLESTAGE  
ANNOUNCE TRANSATLANTIC CASTING FOR  
*ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA***

**Directed and Edited by Tarell Alvin McCraney,  
This International Collaboration Will Be Presented  
February 18-March 23, 2014  
At The Public Theater**

**Jonathan Cake and Joaquina Kalukango  
To Play Antony and Cleopatra**

September 6, 2013 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced casting today for the international collaboration of Shakespeare's ***ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA***, produced by The Public Theater, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and Miami's GableStage. Directed and edited by **Tarell Alvin McCraney**, ***ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*** will play in Stratford-upon-Avon at the RSC's Swan Theatre (November 7-30, 2013), before travelling to the United States for an engagement in Miami Beach at The Colony Theater (January 11-February 9, 2014) followed by a limited run at The Public Theater (February 18-March 23, 2014). ***ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*** features a transatlantic cast that includes **Jonathan Cake** as Mark Antony and **Joaquina Kalukango** as Cleopatra.

This unique company has been cast in both the US and the UK, and comprises five actors from each country to make up the cast of Shakespeare's historical play of love and politics. The actors will be appearing with the permission of Actors' Equity Association pursuant to an exchange program between American Equity and UK Equity, incorporating the Variety Artistes' Foundation.

The US cast features **Charise Castro-Smith** (*Octavia, Iras*); **Joaquina Kalukango** (*Cleopatra*); **Ian Lassiter** (*Agrippa, Thyreus*); **Chivas Michael** (*Mardian, Eros, Soothsayer*); and **Henry Stram** (*Lepidus, Proculeius*).

The UK cast features **Jonathan Cake** (*Mark Antony*); **Samuel Collings** (*Octavius*); **Ash Hunter** (*Pompey, Alexas, Scarus*); **Chukwudi Iwuji** (*Enobarbus*); and **Sarah Niles** (*Charmian, Menas*) and they are appearing with the permission of Actors' Equity Association. The producers gratefully acknowledge Actors' Equity Association for its assistance with this production.

The creative team is also a mix of UK and US professionals with the production being designed by RSC Associate Designer **Tom Piper**. The lighting design is by **Stephen Strawbridge**, the music composed by **Michael Thurber**, and the movement director is **Gelan Lambert**, all from the US.

Rehearsals begin in the UK in September, directed by McCraney, who has radically edited the play and set it in the late 1700s against the backdrop of Saint-Domingue, on the eve of the Haitian Revolution

against the French, bringing to light vivid historical parallels with the story of *Antony and Cleopatra*.

**TARELL ALVIN McCRAANEY** (*Director, Editor*). His play *The Brothers Size* first premiered at The Public's Under the Radar Festival in 2006 and was followed by a Public Lab production in 2007. His complete trilogy, *The Brother/Sister Plays* (comprised of: *In the Red and Brown Water*, *The Brothers Size* and *Marcus; Or the Secret of Sweet*), was produced at The Public in 2009. For the Royal Shakespeare Company, he was the RSC/CAPITAL CENTRE Warwick International Playwright in Residence in 2009-2011 and is now an artistic associate. Born and raised in Miami, Florida, Tarell is an ensemble member of the Steppenwolf Theater Company and in residence at New Dramatist Center in New York. For the RSC he co-edited/directed the Young People's Shakespeare production of *Hamlet*, and wrote a new full-length play for the RSC's acting ensemble, *American Trade*. His other plays include *Choir Boy*, *Wig Out*, and *Head of Passes*, which received its world premiere in 2013 in Chicago. McCraney was the recipient of London's *Evening Standard* Award for Most Promising Playwright in 2008, the inaugural *New York Times* Outstanding Playwright Award in 2009 and the 2009 Steinberg Award.

### **ABOUT THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY**

One of the best known theatre companies in the world, the RSC connects people with Shakespeare and aims to produce bold, ambitious work. As well as Shakespeare, its repertoire includes classical plays and new work by contemporary writers. It is an ensemble company, with everyone from directors, writers and actors to production, technical and administrative staff playing their part in creating distinctive theatre. The RSC's home is in Stratford-upon-Avon and in 2010 the Company reopened the Royal Shakespeare and Swan Theatres after a £112.8m transformation to bring actors and audiences closer together. The RSC also plays regularly in London, Newcastle upon Tyne and on tour across the UK and the world. The RSC has a deeply held commitment to the development of theatre artists. It also runs a major education programme, working with schools and teachers to inspire a life-long love of Shakespeare in young people, and devises events and exhibitions for everyone to explore and participate in its work. The RSC celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2011 and, in 2012, produced the biggest celebration of Shakespeare ever staged, the World Shakespeare Festival, as part of London 2012 Festival for the Cultural Olympiad. RSC in America is presented in collaboration with The Ohio State University.

### **MADE IN Stratford-upon-Avon - seen around the world.**

Everyone at the Royal Shakespeare Company, from actors to technicians, milliners to musicians, plays a part in creating the world you see on stage. The work, which begins its life at our Stratford workshops and theatres, is shared with audiences through our touring, residencies and online activity throughout the world. So, wherever you experience the RSC, you will experience work that is made in Shakespeare's home town. Shakespeare has been performed and celebrated in Stratford for centuries and the RSC has trained generations of the very best theatre makers since the Company was founded in 1961. We pioneer contemporary approaches to Shakespeare's plays, as well as staging the work of those who inspired him, and today's writers.

### **ABOUT GABLESTAGE**

GableStage is one of the leading theater companies in the Southeastern United States. The company produces a six-play mainstage season that has earned its reputation for presenting adventurous and challenging work by contemporary playwrights worldwide. Located in the historic Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables since 1999, GableStage is led by Joseph Adler, Producing Artistic Director, now in his fifteenth season. Under his leadership, GableStage has been the recipient of 50 Carbonell Awards (South Florida's annual theater awards) and 175 Carbonell Nominations, as well as winning the Carbonell Award for Best Play seven times and Best Musical Carbonell Award twice. GableStage's touring productions of Shakespeare's plays have been seen by more than 1 million Miami-Dade County Public School students since the company was founded as Florida Shakespeare Theatre in 1979. GableStage is a non-for-profit organization committed to maintaining a leading voice for theater in the community and

proactively providing opportunities for South Florida's most gifted actors, directors, designers and technicians to develop their craft at the highest level.

## **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](http://www.publictheater.org)

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### **For further information:**

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