

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
ANNOUNCES
THE UNITED STATES OF SHAKESPEARE
AT THE DELACORTE THEATER
MONDAY, JUNE 6**

**Star-Studded Annual Gala Featuring Meryl Streep,
Phylicia Rashad, Jimmy Smits, and More
To Honor Bank of America
For Their 10 Years of Generous Support**

May 17, 2016 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced today that The Public Theater's Annual Gala, ***THE UNITED STATES OF SHAKESPEARE***, will take place on **Monday, June 6** at the Delacorte Theater. Directed by **Jeremy McCarter**, the always highly-anticipated gala will include scenes from Shakespeare's greatest works and the American poems, songs, and stories they inspired, performed by some of The Public's – and the nation's – most celebrated actors and musicians. **Andi Bernstein** and **Ashley Leeds** will serve as Gala Co-Chairs for this one-night-only special event that will honor **Bank of America** for 10 years of leadership and support of free Shakespeare in the Park.

THE UNITED STATES OF SHAKESPEARE will include **F. Murray Abraham, Sarah Amengual, Lemon Andersen, Christine Baranski, Kate Burton, Michael Cerveris, Michael Friedman, Bill Irwin, Lisa Kron, Hamish Linklater, Suzan-Lori Parks, Steven Pasquale, Martha Plimpton, Lily Rabe, Phylicia Rashad, Jay O. Sanders, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, Jimmy Smits, Meryl Streep, Jeanine Tesori, and John Douglas Thompson**; and The Public's Shakespeare Scholar in Residence **Jim Shapiro**, with musical direction by **Chris Fenwick**. More casting to be announced at a later date.

The summertime gala will begin with cocktails and dinner alfresco at 6:00 p.m. in Central Park, followed by a one-act performance of ***THE UNITED STATES OF SHAKESPEARE*** at 8:00 p.m. and culminate with an after-party hosted by The Public Theater Young Partners under the stars. (*The gala rain date is Tuesday, June 7*). Wine for the event is generously provided by iconic Italian wine brand, **Ruffino**.

Tickets to The Public Theater's Annual Gala start at \$650 and are available for purchase by calling **(212) 539-8634**, online at www.publictheater.org/gala2016 or via email at gala@publictheater.org. Proceeds from the gala will help support The Public's mission of providing a home for artists who give voice to the pressing issues of our time, provide affordable access to thousands of New Yorkers with free Shakespeare in the Park and other groundbreaking works, and strengthen the vital relationship between our artists and audiences.

Since 1962, over five million people have enjoyed more than 150 free productions of Shakespeare and other classical works and musicals at the Delacorte Theater. Conceived by Joe Papp as a way to make great theater accessible to all, The Public's free Shakespeare in the Park continues to be the bedrock of the Company's mission to increase access and engage the community.

JEREMY McCARTER (*Director*) spent five years on The Public's artistic staff, where he created and directed the Public Forum series of performances and conversations. He is the co-author of the #1 *New*

York Times nonfiction bestseller *Hamilton: The Revolution* with Lin-Manuel Miranda. He also wrote the script for the Public's 2014 gala, *One Thrilling Combination*. As director of Public Forum, he directed and hosted readings of texts by Shakespeare, Sophocles, Caryl Churchill, Thornton Wilder, Luis Valdez, Susan Glaspell, and more. Before joining The Public, he served on the Pulitzer drama jury, and wrote cultural criticism for *Newsweek* and *New York Magazine*. He is currently a writer, producer, and director living in Chicago.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:

The Public Theater, under the leadership of Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare, the classics, musicals, contemporary and experimental pieces in equal measure. Celebrating his 10th anniversary season at The Public, Eustis has created new community-based initiatives designed to engage audiences like Public Lab, Public Studio, Public Forum, Public Works, and a remount of the Mobile Unit. 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 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; Public Works, an expanding initiative that is designed to cultivate new connections and new models of engagement with artists, audiences and the community each year; and audience and artist development initiatives that range from Emerging Writers Group and to the Public Forum series. The Public 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. The Public is currently represented on Broadway by the Tony Award-winning *Fun Home* and Lin-Manuel Miranda's acclaimed American musical *Hamilton*, and Danai Gurira's *Eclipsed* featuring Lupita Nyong'o. The Public has received 47 Tony Awards, 167 Obie Awards, 52 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 31 Outer Critics Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics Awards, and five Pulitzer Prizes. www.publictheater.org.

ABOUT BANK OF AMERICA

Bank of America is one of the world's leading financial institutions, serving individual consumers, small and middle-market businesses and large corporations with a full range of banking, investing, asset management and other financial and risk management products and services. The company provides unmatched convenience in the United States, serving approximately 47 million consumer and small business relationships with approximately 4,700 retail financial centers, approximately 16,000 ATMs, and award-winning online banking with approximately 32 million active users and approximately 19 million mobile users. Bank of America is a global leader in wealth management, corporate and investment banking and trading across a broad range of asset classes, serving corporations, governments, institutions and individuals around the world. Bank of America offers industry-leading support to approximately 3 million small business owners through a suite of innovative, easy-to-use online products and services. The company serves clients through operations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and more than 35 countries. Bank of America Corporation stock (NYSE: BAC) is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Visit the Bank of America newsroom for more [Bank of America news](http://www.bankofamerica.com). www.bankofamerica.com

#