

## THE PUBLIC THEATER IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP WITH UN WOMEN'S HeForShe Movement

### Inaugural HeForShe Arts Week To Run March 8-15 in New York To Coincide With International Women's Day

January 26, 2016 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced today that it is proud to serve as the inaugural theatrical partner with **HeForShe**, the movement for gender equality from UN Women, in partnership with the City of New York. The first **HeForShe Arts Week** in support of global gender equality will run March 8-15, 2016 in New York, to coincide with International Women's Day observed globally on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

"The theater is a force for democracy, and the core idea of democracy is equality," said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. "The theater is a collaborative form, and the core of collaboration is solidarity. The Public is proud to stand in solidarity with HeForShe and the United Nations as we fight together for a better world."

"The arts both reflect and influence culture. At its best, art shapes how we see the world," said **Emma Watson, British Actor and UN Women Global Goodwill Ambassador**. "So it makes perfect sense for HeForShe to partner with arts institutions like The Public Theater to evolve the behaviors, norms, and perceptions that shapes our cultural view of gender."

During the inaugural arts week in March, other partner institutions such as venues for ballets, operas, Broadway shows, concerts, as well as other theatres, galleries, and museums will join the **HeForShe Initiative** and spotlight the work of UN Women as the global champion for the rights of women and girls, in addition donating a percentage of proceeds to the organization to support its efforts to advance women's empowerment and gender equality globally.

"The engagement of the arts world brings a crucial extra dimension to our work on gender equality and women's empowerment," said **Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women**. "Performance can make a direct connection to truths about the relationships and power structures between women and men, often without needing words, reaching those who may not otherwise be aware of unconscious assumptions about roles, identities, and rights. Art provides a uniquely potent and universal medium to create and record experience and understanding. We are thankful to The Public Theater for its leadership and support of Arts Week."

HeForShe Arts Week provides an exciting opportunity for arts and cultural institutions in New York City to support UN Women's mission of a Planet 50-50 by 2030. It is expected that this effort in New York City, where UN Women is headquartered, will expand to cities around the world from 2017 and beyond.

"Art makes people think and question, and people change the world. Indeed, for women from Jane Austen to Maya Angelou, art has been one of the most effective ways to make our voices heard," said **First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray**. "Our world works best when everyone has the opportunity to succeed, but we are not there yet—not even close. Too many women don't feel safe in their own homes and public spaces. Too many women are unheard in our political system, and under-appreciated in the

workplace. We must continue using our art as a megaphone. That's why I am honored to partner with HeForShe and The Public Theater for New York Arts Week.”

For more than 60 years, The Public Theater has been a champion of diversity and equality on its stages, in its audiences and at the core of its mission. Last season, The Public produced the game-changing new musical *Hamilton* that featured a diverse cast of actors telling the story of the immigrant Founding Fathers. It also championed the ground-breaking new musical *Fun Home*, based on Alison Bechdel's lesbian coming-of-age graphic novel, that went on to win a Tony Award for Best Musical and make history as the first time a female composer and book writer garnered this prestigious award. This season, The Public's critically acclaimed *Eclipsed* will be the only play on Broadway with a female writer and director, in addition to its all-female cast. And in February, The Public will premiere *Southern Comfort*, a transformative new musical based on the true story of a group of transgender friends living life on their own terms in the back hills of rural Georgia. The Public's Mobile Unit tours throughout NYC's five boroughs to prisons, homeless shelters, and recreation centers, bringing free productions to audiences who have limited or no access to the arts; and the award-winning Public Works program seeks to engage the people of New York (and across the country) by making them creators and not just spectators, creating theater that is not only for the people, but by, and of, the people. 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. For more information, visit [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org).

**UN Women** is the UN entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. For more information, visit [www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org).

Created by UN Women, the **HeForShe** solidarity movement for gender equality provides a systematic approach and targeted platform on which men and boys can engage and become change agents towards the achievement of gender equality. HeForShe invites men and boys to build on the work of the women's movement as equal partners, crafting and implementing a shared vision of gender equality that will benefit all of humanity. For more information, visit [www.heforshe.org/](http://www.heforshe.org/)

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