

**THE PUBLIC THEATER  
ANNOUNCES ANNUAL GALA  
*RUNAWAYS*  
AT THE DELACORTE THEATER  
MONDAY, JUNE 11**

**By Elizabeth Swados  
Directed by Sam Pinkleton  
Choreography by Ani Taj  
Creative Adviser Jeanine Tesori**

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Iconic  
Musical To Honor Leonard Tow  
For His Invaluable Contribution to The Public**

March 27, 2018 - The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced today that The Public's Annual Gala will be a performance of the groundbreaking and thought-provoking musical *RUNAWAYS* by **Elizabeth Swados** on **Monday, June 11** at the Delacorte Theater. Directed by **Sam Pinkleton** with choreography by **Ani Taj**, and creative advisement by **Jeanine Tesori**, the highly-anticipated summer gala under the stars will celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this milestone production that first premiered at The Public in 1978 and continues to be a definitive moment in Public Theater history.

**Marcia Dunn, Susan Edelstein, Kenny Leon, Wendi Rose, Josh Sapan, and Susan and Peter J. Solomon** will serve as Gala Chairs for this special evening celebrating cable pioneer **Leonard Tow**, Founder and Chairman of The Tow Foundation, for his invaluable contribution to the past, present, and future of The Public Theater. Through Tow's vision, The Foundation has taken an innovative approach to philanthropy, and has helped transform the fields of medicine, education, justice, and the arts. The Public is thrilled to celebrate the impact Tow has had on the theater, the field, and the city. **New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson** and **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer** will serve as honorary Gala Chairs of the evening.

In 1977, legendary director Elizabeth Swados approached Joe Papp about creating a new show focused on the runaway youths of New York City—a group too often ignored and underestimated. Her musical would bring life to a powerful story of young people searching to find themselves. A champion of untold tales, Papp immediately commissioned the show and *Runaways* premiered at The Public in February 1978 before transferring to Broadway in May of the same year, earning five Tony Awards nominations for Best Musical, Book of a Musical, Original Score, Choreography and Direction. The much-celebrated production went on to become a pillar of the musical theater canon and helped cement Swados as a visionary director and a legendary force in the American Theater.

*“Runaways is an inspired musical collage about the hopes, dreams, fears, frustrations, loneliness, humor and, perhaps most of all, the anger, of young people who are estranged from their families and are searching for themselves.”*

– *Free for All: Joe Papp, The Public, and the Greatest Theater Story Ever Told*  
by Kenneth Turan

This production was initially produced by New York City Center's Encores! Off-Center in July 2016.

*Runaways* is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

The June gala will begin with cocktails and dinner alfresco at 6:00 p.m. in Central Park, followed by a one-act performance of **RUNAWAYS** at 8:00 p.m. in the Delacorte Theater and culminate with an after-party under the stars.

Gala tickets start at \$750 and are available by calling **(212) 539-8634**, online at [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org) or via email at [gala@publictheater.org](mailto: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.

**LEONARD TOW** (*Honoree*) is the Chief Executive Officer of New Century Holdings, LLC and Founder and Chairman of The Tow Foundation. Dr. Tow was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Citizens Communications Company from 1990 to 2004. He was Founder, Director, and Chief Executive Officer of Century Communications Corp., a cable television company, from its incorporation in 1973 until its sale in 1999. Dr. Tow was also Founder and Director of Centennial Cellular Corp., a cellular telephone company. He graduated from Brooklyn College and holds a Doctorate degree from Columbia University, and has taught at both Columbia University's Graduate School of Business and at Brooklyn College, as well as Hunter College. Dr. Tow also served for several years as Distinguished Adjunct Professor at New York University's School of Business. In 1998, Brooklyn College and the City University of New York awarded Dr. Tow a Doctorate of Humane Letters. Dr. Tow serves on the boards of several organizations, including Lincoln Center Theater, Cablevision, Educational Broadcasting Corp., and The Tow Foundation. He is a Trustee of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University and a Director of AMC Networks.

**ABOUT THE TOW FOUNDATION:**

The Tow Foundation, established in 1988 by Leonard and Claire Tow, funds projects that offer transformative experiences to individuals and create collaborative ventures in fields where they see opportunities for breakthroughs, reform, and benefits for underserved populations. Investments focus on the support of innovative programs and system reform in the areas of juvenile and criminal justice, groundbreaking medical research, higher education, and cultural institutions. For more information, visit [www.towfoundation.org](http://www.towfoundation.org).

**ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:**

**THE PUBLIC** is theater of, by, and for the people. Artist-driven, radically inclusive, and fundamentally democratic, The Public 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 theaters, The Public has long operated on the principles that theater 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 Forum, Under the Radar, Public Studio, Public Works, Public Shakespeare Initiative, and Joe's Pub. Since premiering *HAIR* in 1967, The Public continues to create the canon of American Theater and is currently represented on Broadway by the Tony Award-winning musical *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 59 Tony Awards, 169 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Desk Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org)

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