

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES EXTENSION FOR WORLD PREMIERE OF *MLIMA'S TALE* THROUGH JUNE 3

Written by Lynn Nottage
Directed by Jo Bonney

April 19, 2018 - The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced today a two-week extension for the world premiere of *MLIMA'S TALE*. Written by two-time Pulitzer Prize winner **Lynn Nottage** and directed by Obie Award winner **Jo Bonney**, *MLIMA'S TALE* continues The Public's Astor Anniversary Season at their landmark downtown home on Lafayette Street, celebrating 50 years of new work and the 50th Anniversary of *HAIR*. *MLIMA'S TALE* will now run two additional weeks through Sunday, June 3.

The complete cast of *MLIMA'S TALE* features **Ito Aghayere** (*Player 3*), **Jojo Gonzalez** (*Player 2*), **Kevin Mambo** (*Player 1*), and **Sahr Ngaujah** (*Mlima*).

This season, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner **Lynn Nottage** returns to The Public with a new drama as moving and incisive as her Broadway debut play *Sweat*. Taking us on a journey that starts in a game park in Kenya and goes around the world, *MLIMA'S TALE* is the story of Mlima, a magnificent elephant trapped in the clandestine international ivory market. Following a trail of greed and desire as old as trade itself, Mlima leads us through memory and fear, history and tradition, and want and need. Obie Award winner **Jo Bonney** directs this poignant new play that reveals the surprising and complicated deals that connect us all.

MLIMA'S TALE features scenic design by Riccardo Hernandez, costume design by Jennifer Moeller, lighting design by Lap Chi Chu, sound design by Darron L West, hair and makeup design by Cookie Jordan, music composition and direction by Justin Hicks, movement direction by Chris Walker, and fight direction by Thomas Schall.

LYNN NOTTAGE (*Playwright*) is a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and a screenwriter whose work has been produced widely in the U.S. and throughout the world. Most recently, her play *Sweat* (Susan Smith Blackburn Award, OSF American Revolution Cycle Commission) appeared at The Public Theater and Broadway, winning the Pulitzer Prize. Her other plays include *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk nom.); *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie, Lortel, NY Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and OCC Award); *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and NYDCC Awards); *Fabulation*, or *The Re-Education of Undine* (Obie); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*. She recently produced and conceived of *This Is Reading*, a multi-media performance installation at the Franklin Street Railroad Station in Reading, PA. Nottage was a producer/director on the Netflix series, "She's Gotta Have It" and co-founder of Market Road Films. Nottage is the recipient of a PEN/Laura Pels Master Dramatist Award, Doris Duke Artist Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship, Steinberg "Mimi" Distinguished Playwright Award, Dramatists Guild Hull-Warriner Award, the inaugural

Horton Foote Prize and Lee Reynolds Award. Her other honors include the National Black Theatre Fest's August Wilson Playwriting Award, a Guggenheim Grant, Lucille Lortel Fellowship and Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University. She is an Associate Professor at Columbia School of the Arts. She is an artist-in-residence at the Park Avenue Armory, a member of the Dramatists Guild and The American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

JO BONNEY (*Director*) has directed the Public Lab and main stage productions of *Father Comes Home From the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)*, as well as Danny Hoch's *Some People*, Diana Son's *Stop Kiss*, Anna Deavere Smith's *House Arrest*, Jose Rivera's *References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot*, and Naomi Wallace's *Fever Chart* at The Public. She has directed premieres of plays by Alan Ball, Eric Bogosian, Hammaad Chaudry, Culture Clash, Eve Ensler, Jessica Goldberg, Neil LaBute, Warren Leight, Martyna Majok, Lynn Nottage, Dael Orlandersmith, Darci Picoult, Will Power, John Pollono, David Rabe, Universes, and Michael Weller. She has also directed productions of plays by Caryl Churchill, Nilo Cruz, Charles Fuller, Lisa Loomer, John Osborne and Lanford Wilson. She is the recipient of the 1998 Obie Award for Sustained Excellence of Direction; Lucille Lortel Best Revival, Audelco Award for *Father Comes Home*, Lilly Award and is the editor of *Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance Texts from the Twentieth Century* (TCG).

ITO AGHAYERE (*Player 3*) has appeared on Broadway in *Junk* and Off-Broadway in *Familiar* (Playwrights Horizons), *The Liquid Plain* (Signature Theatre), *Three Days To See* (New York Theatre Workshop/Transport Group), *The Tempest*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Macbeth* (Classic Stage Company). Her film and television credits include *Logan Lucky*, *Goldie*, "Instinct," "Blacklist," "Elementary," "Doubt," "Master Of None," "Braindead," "The Knick," "Orange Is The New Black," "Unforgettable," "Forever." Education: MFA, Columbia University; BA, Duke University. A 2016 Lucille Lortel Nominee for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Play (*Familiar*).

JOJO GONZALEZ (*Player 2*) has appeared at The Public in *365 Days/365 Plays*, *Richard III*, *F**king A*, and *Dogeaters*. His additional Off-Broadway credits include *Small Mouth Sounds* (Ars Nova); *House Rules*, *The Romance Of Magno Rubio* (Ma-Yi); *A Dream Play* (Naatco). Regionally he has appeared in *Our Town* (Long Wharf), *Silence Of God* (Catf), and *Dogeaters* (La Jolla). His film and television credits include *The Pirates Of Somalia* (with Al Pacino), *Going In Style* (with Alan Arkin, Morgan Freeman, Michael Caine), *The Smurfs Movie*, "The Path," "Seven Seconds," "Madam Secretary," "Blindspot," "The Blacklist," "Deadbeat." He is the recipient of an Obie Award.

KEVIN MAMBO (*Player 1*) has appeared at The Public in *The Fortress of Solitude* and on Broadway in *Fela!* and *The Color Purple*. His additional Off-Broadway credits include *Ruined*, *Hoodoo Love*, *Jailbait*, *The Last Detail*, *The Memory of Love's Refrain*, and *The Convert*. His select film and television credits include *Cadillac Records*, *Nina*, *Rebel in the Rye*, *The Firing Squad*, *One of Us Tripped*, "Luke Cage," "Blacklist," "High Maintenance," "Soul Food," "Law & Order: SVU," "Deadline," "Criminal Intent," "Spin City," "Happyish." He has received three consecutive Daytime Emmy nominations, two Daytime Emmy Awards, and a Helen Hayes nomination.

SAHR NGAUJAH (*Mlima*) originated the title role in *Fela!* Off-Broadway, Broadway and on the West End, earning Obie and Theater World Awards; Olivier, Tony, Grammy, Drama Desk, Lortel and Drama League nominations. His Off-Broadway credits include *Master Harold and the Boys*, *The Signature Theater One-Acts*, *The Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek*. His film and television credits include "Deception," "Law & Order: SVU," "The Good Wife," "The Blacklist," "Last Resort," "The Accidental Wolf," *Patti Cake\$, Money Monster*, *Freeheld*, *Kensho at the Bedfellow*, *Blood Done Sign My Name*, *The Signal*, and *Stomp the Yard*. He holds a Masters of Theatre from DasArts - Netherlands. His music credits include Fela aKUsTic, Chop and Quench, Directors Band.

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

DATES & TICKET INFORMATION

MLIMA'S TALE began performances in The Public's Martinson Hall on Tuesday, March 27 and now runs two additional weeks through Sunday, June 3.

Public Theater Partner, Supporter, Member and full price tickets, starting at \$85, can be accessed by calling **(212) 967-7555**, visiting www.publictheater.org, or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street.

The performance schedule is Tuesday through Friday at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (*There is no 8:00 p.m. performance on Sunday, April 29.*)

The Library at The Public is open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and Joe's Pub at The Public continues to offer some of the best music in the city. For more information, visit www.publictheater.org.

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