

**THE PUBLIC THEATER'S
MOBILE UNIT
TO TOUR THIS SPRING WITH
THE TEMPEST
DIRECTED BY LAURIE WOOLERY**

**Free Three-Week Tour to Visit
Correctional Facilities, Homeless Shelters,
Social Service Organizations, and Community Centers
April 4 – 27**

**Free Performances of *The Tempest* at The Public
Continue Tradition of Access to Shakespeare for All
April 29 – May 19**

March 6, 2019 – Continuing its commitment to bringing free Shakespeare to the community and strengthening audience engagement through the arts, The Public Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, will mount its **MOBILE UNIT** again this spring with a free three-week tour to the five boroughs of Shakespeare's ***THE TEMPEST***, directed by **Laurie Woolery**. Now in its ninth year, the Mobile Unit's free tour (April 4-27) brings Shakespeare and other works to audiences who have limited or no access to the arts by visiting correctional facilities, homeless shelters, social service organizations, and other community venues. There will also be a free three-week engagement of ***THE TEMPEST*** at The Public Theater in the Shiva theater running Monday, April 29 through Sunday, May 19, with an official press opening on Friday, May 3.

The complete cast of ***THE TEMPEST*** features **Jasai Chase Owens** (*Ferdinand*), **Dan Domingues** (*Antonio*), **Danaya Esperanza** (*Ariel*), **Christopher Ryan Grant** (*Caliban*), **Sam Morales** (*Miranda*), **Nancy Rodriguez** (*Gonzalo*), **Reza Salazar** (*Sebastian*), **Myra Lucretia Taylor** (*Prospero*), and **JD Webster** (*Alonso*).

"Laurie Woolery has been one of The Public Theater's stars; her production of *As You Like It* for Public Works was one of the best we ever created," said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. "I can't wait to watch the collision of her gorgeous spirit and Shakespeare's magical play."

Prospero, a powerful magician and the rightful Duchess of Milan, has been usurped by her brother and has escaped to a remote and barren island. There, despite the unforgiving landscape, she has tried her best to make a home for her daughter, Miranda. When Prospero conjures a powerful storm to sink her brother's ship, she must decide how to deal with him and his confederates, who have washed ashore. How will she exact her long-awaited revenge? How do you satiate a desire for justice?

"Since I arrived at The Public, I have dreamed of working on the Mobile Unit. As Director of Public Works, the uniting of these two iconic programs just feels right," said **Director Laurie Woolery**. "Community is at the heart of everything I do so I asked myself, 'What do we as a society need to hear right now?' With fear and injustice surrounding us on a daily basis, how do we not drown in our own rage? Prospero asks this question so it felt

right to explore this play through a female lens. My hope is that together we will all find a way to heal and move forward.”

All tour performances are free, and performances at The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center; Pelham Fritz Recreation Center; St. Paul’s Chapel; Brownsville Recreation Center; Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center; Roy Wilkins Recreation Center; Einstein Community Center – Co-Op City 50th anniversary; DreamYard Arts Project; Queens Public Library Central Branch; Faber Park Recreation Center; ARROW Field House; The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; and North Brooklyn YMCA are also open to the general public via RSVP at publictheater.org. To further the mission and reach of **THE MOBILE UNIT**, tickets for each performance of the limited run at The Public Theater will be given to community organizations that are unable to host a visit from the tour.

THE TEMPEST features scenic design by Claire DeLiso, costume design by Wilberth Gonzalez, and music composition by Michelle J. Rodriguez.

In 2018, the **MOBILE UNIT** celebrated the 61st anniversary of its inaugural mobile tour in 1957 which began with a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Joseph Papp with Bryarly Lee and Stephen Joyce in the titular roles. The 1957 Mobile Unit tour received early support from New York City authorities. Stanley Lowell, then deputy mayor, was an early champion for free theater and mobilized city resources and departments to support Papp's production. The first Mobile Unit rolled up to performance venues across the city in borrowed Department of Sanitation vehicles with a wooden folding stage mounted to a truck bed and portable seating risers to accommodate 700 people per venue. The city’s Parks Department permitted performances in local parks across all five boroughs. Subsequent productions included *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Henry V*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*, *Take One Step*, *Unfinished Women Cry in No Man’s Land While a Bird Dies in a Gilded Cage*, and *Volpone*, among many others. This modern reimagining of The Public Theater’s original Mobile Theater is inspired by Ten Thousand Things Theater in Minneapolis, MN. In the fall of 2018, the **MOBILE UNIT** toured nationally with a Mobile Unit National Tour of Lynn Nottage’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Sweat* to communities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. The tour extended beyond performances with community engagement activities on the issues and conversations most alive in their communities.

Recent **MOBILE UNIT** productions include *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; *Henry V*; *The Winter’s Tale*; *Twelfth Night*; *Hamlet*; *Romeo & Juliet*; *The Comedy of Errors*; *Measure for Measure*; *Richard III*; *Much Ado About Nothing*; *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*; and *Macbeth*. This program reinforces The Public’s commitment to the ongoing exploration of Shakespeare’s canon, along with the Public Shakespeare Initiative; the recent Public Works production of *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* staged at the Delacorte Theater for free; Free Shakespeare in the Park; and The Public’s other affordable productions at its downtown home at Astor Place.

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY ON THE PUBLIC’S MOBILE UNIT

“I do not know if I have ever been so moved by a theatrical work in my life.”

– Highbridge Recreation Center Audience Member

“Thank you for making Mobile Unit a reality. I sat in an audience with people of different colors and ages. I saw people on stage that had physical characteristics like mine. And I saw a little girl be enthralled by Shakespeare’s work. Keep it up! Pa’lante!”

– North Brooklyn YMCA Audience Member

*“Pure joy! Thanks for continuing to push boundaries and bringing theatre to everyone!
Love what you’re doing!”*

– Pelham Fritz Recreation Center Audience Member

“I love that you came to my neighborhood! The same room where I vote!”

– Pelham Fritz Recreation Center Audience Member

The Mobile Unit is made possible with the support of **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, The Tow Foundation, The McLaughlin Children's Trust, and Bloomberg Philanthropies.** Additional support provided by **JetBlue Airways, Open Society Foundations, Susan & David Edelstein, The MAE Private Foundation, and The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.** This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs** in partnership with the City Council. **The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust** provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

TOUR DATES WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING VENUES (April 4-27):

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center, Manhattan, is a one-of-a-kind organization that empowers community members to lead healthy, successful lives (April 4).

Pelham Fritz Recreation Center, Manhattan, is a NYC Parks and Recreation center located in Harlem (April 5).

St. Paul's Chapel, Manhattan, part of Trinity Wall Street, is an Episcopal parish that has been a part of New York City since 1697 (April 6).

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House/Women's Mental Health Shelter, Manhattan, provides short-term, safe, and supportive environments to address immediate needs for mentally ill homeless women (April 8).

Brownsville Recreation Center, Brooklyn, a Public Works community partner, is a NYC Parks and Recreation center located in the Brownsville Playground with extensive resources for youth and seniors. The center offers a vibrant space to tap into pursuits artistic and athletic alike (April 10).

Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, Bronx, is a NYC Parks and Recreation center (April 11).

Queensboro Correctional Facility, Queens, is a minimum-security correctional facility in Long Island City (April 12).

Roy Wilkins Recreation Center, Queens, is a NYC Parks and Recreation center (April 15).

Einstein Community Center – Co-Op City 50th Anniversary, Bronx, is a community center located in co-op city, which is an operative housing development that provides homes for over 15,000 families (April 16).

DreamYard Arts Project, Bronx, a Public Works community partner, uses project-based arts learning to ignite the transformative spirit (April 17).

Queens Public Library, Central Branch, Queens, is located in Jamaica, Queens and also serves as a Public Theater borough distribution center for Free Shakespeare in the Park (April 18).

Faber Park Recreation Center, Staten Island, is a NYC Parks and Recreation center (April 20).

ARROW Field House, Queens, is a NYC Parks and Recreation center (April 23).

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Manhattan, houses one of the world's most extensive collections in its field, available free of charge (April 24).

Edgecombe Correctional Facility, Manhattan, is a minimum-security male parole diversion facility (April 25).

Taconic Correctional Facility, Westchester, is a medium security facility for women in New York (April 26).

North Brooklyn YMCA, Brooklyn, is a community center that empowers youth, improves health, and strengthens community. (April 27).

LAURIE WOOLERY (*Director*) is a theater director and community artist. She has worked at The Public Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Cornerstone Theater Company, South Coast Repertory, and Los Angeles Philharmonic, among others. Woolery has directed world premieres of plays by Tanya Saracho, Mary Kathryn Nagle, Charise Castro Smith, Marisela Trevino Orta, Aditi Kapil, K.J. Sanchez, and more. Currently, Woolery is the Director of Public Works, an initiative at The Public Theater that seeks to engage the people of New York by making them creators and not just spectators. In 2015, Woolery launched ACTivate, a program that puts community members in the artistic driver's seat. In 2017, with collaborator Shaina Taub, Woolery created a new musical adaptation of *As You Like It* at the Delacorte Theater featuring 200 New Yorkers. That production topped *The New York Times*' "The Best Theater in 2017." She is the former Associate Artistic Director of Cornerstone Theater Company and former Conservatory Director at South Coast Repertory. Woolery has taught at Princeton, NYU, Brown, and more, and serves on the Board of the Latinx Producers Action Network and Latinx Theatre Commons. She is also one of the founding members of The Sol Project and recipient of the Fuller Road Fellowship for Female Directors of Color.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:

THE PUBLIC is theater of, by, and for all 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, 170 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. publictheater.org

TICKET INFORMATION

All tour performances are free, and performances at The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center; Pelham Fritz Recreation Center; St. Paul's Chapel; Brownsville Recreation Center; Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center; Roy Wilkins Recreation Center; Einstein Community Center – Co-Op City 50th anniversary; DreamYard Arts Project; Queens Public Library Central Branch; Faber Park Recreation Center; ARROW Field House; The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; and North Brooklyn YMCA are also open to the general public via RSVP at publictheater.org.

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Furthering the mission of making great theater accessible to all, tickets to the **MOBILE UNIT**'s run at The Public are **FREE** and are available via TodayTix mobile Lottery and in-person distribution downtown at The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette Street at Astor Place. On each public performance date, free tickets will be distributed in-person beginning 90 minutes prior to curtain, and via mobile lottery on the TodayTix app. Download the TodayTix app to enter or visit publictheater.org for more information.

The performance schedule at The Public will be Tuesday through Sunday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. (*There are no performances at 1:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 4, and there is an added performance on Monday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m.*)

Please check The Public's website for the most up-to-date performance times.

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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