

**THE
PUBLIC.**

**ONASSIS
USA**

**THE PUBLIC THEATER AND ONASSIS USA
ANNOUNCE ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS AND
PROGRAMMING FOR
ONASSIS FESTIVAL 2019: DEMOCRACY IS COMING
APRIL 10-28, 2019**

**Actors Phylicia Rashad and André Holland, Performer Diana Oh,
Architect Elizabeth Diller, Author Siri Hustvedt,
Philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah,
and *Life Without Tragedy* Art Installation by Kostis Velonis
Join the Lineup**

**Festival Also Includes the Previously Announced
Socrates by Tim Blake Nelson with Michael Stuhlbarg as Socrates;
Plus Pulitzer Prize Winner Suzan-Lori Parks and
Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**

March 14, 2019 – **The Public Theater** and **Onassis USA** today announced additional FREE programming and participants for the ***ONASSIS FESTIVAL 2019: DEMOCRACY IS COMING***, running April 10-28 at The Public Theater and also La MaMa. Actors Phylicia Rashad and André Holland, performer/singer-songwriter Diana Oh, architect Elizabeth Diller, author Siri Hustvedt, and Kostis Velonis' art installation *Life Without Tragedy* join the Festival lineup.

The 19-day Onassis Festival is a festival of arts and ideas that celebrates, evaluates, and considers anew the concept of democracy—perhaps the most renowned Greek innovation. Through a multidisciplinary program of theater, music, talks, and more, The Public Theater and Onassis USA, two agitators of public curiosity—one Greek, one American—bring together artists and thinkers from both countries to offer artistic interpretations and embodiments of democracy. The Festival is anchored by The Public's new production of Tim Blake Nelson's *Socrates* featuring Michael Stuhlbarg as Socrates and directed by Doug Hughes, running April 2-May 19.

On **Monday, April 15 at 7:00 p.m.**, Public Forum will present ***OF, BY, AND FOR THE PEOPLE*** in the Anspacher Theater. Theater and democracy share a birthplace, share fundamental tenets, and provide opportunities for the people to activate and understand their own power. But in a world where both the arts and democracy are increasingly under threat, what does it mean to be a "fundamentally democratic" theater? And how can the theater continue to encourage our best hopes for democracy? Featuring The Public's Artistic Director **Oskar Eustis** and The Public's Master Writer Chair **Suzan-Lori Parks** in a conversation with philosopher **Kwame Anthony Appiah**; the event will also include new announced performances from **André Holland** (*Much Ado About Nothing*, Academy Award-winning film *Moonlight*) and **Diana Oh** (*24 Hour Punk* at Joe's Pub).

On **Monday, April 22 at 7:00 p.m.** the Public Shakespeare Initiative will welcome Tony Award-winner **Phylicia Rashad** (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) for **PUBLIC SHAKESPEARE PRESENTS: WHAT'S HECUBA TO HIM? GREEK TRAGIC WOMEN ON SHAKESPEARE'S STAGE** in the Martinson Hall. Ancient Greek plays – and in particular, their titanic, tragic women – exerted a powerful and uncharted influence on Shakespeare's dramatic landscape. When Hamlet reflects on the moving power of tragic performance, he turns to the most prominent of them: "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba/That he should weep for her?" Through commentary and readings from Euripides and Shakespeare, theater scholar **Tanya Pollard** and actors **Isabel Arraiza**, **Tina Benko**, and **Ayana Workman**, in addition to **Phylicia Rashad**, will illustrate how Greek plays and their towering female figures challenged Shakespeare to reimagine the affective possibilities of tragedy, comedy, and the emerging genre of tragicomedy.

On **Sunday, April 14**, the Festival will present a **DAY OF DEMOCRACY** in the Shiva Theater at The Public. These three conversations will examine democracy's intersections with our everyday life. At **2:00 p.m.**, **DEMOCRACY IS THE CITY** will include architect **Alfredo Brillembourg**, Onassis USA Senior Advisor **Karen Brooks Hopkins**, and artist/historian **Kamau Ware**, plus a performance from singer **Morley**; at **4:00 p.m.**, **DEMOCRACY IS DIGITAL** will include international public policy advisor **Micaela Klein**, Assistant Professor of Media Design at Parsons **Katherine Moriwaki**, and BuzzFeed News Editor-in-Chief **Ben Smith**, with a performance from **Elle Winston**; and at **6:00 p.m.**, **DEMOCRACY IS COMING** will feature civil and human rights lawyer **Nora Benavidez**, Executive Editor of *The American Interest* **Damir Marusic**, Founding Editor of *Jacobin Magazine* **Bhaskar Sunkara**, and *What is Democracy* filmmaker **Astra Taylor**, as well as remarks from architect **Elizabeth Diller** and a performance from **Imani Uzuri**.

LIFE WITHOUT TRAGEDY, an art installation by **Kostis Velonis**, can be seen free of charge, at Astor Place South Plaza from April 10 through April 30. Velonis' interest in democracy encounters ancient Greek tragedy, and the artwork consists of three sculptures, constructed of wood, that mimic an ancient Greek amphitheater. He identifies the notion of democracy with Greek tragedy, since the theater in ancient Greece was not only a form of art, but also a social institution.

Public Theater Partner, Public Supporter, Member, and full price tickets are available now for ticketed Festival events. Tickets 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.

ONASSIS FESTIVAL AT THE PUBLIC:

Socrates

April 2 - May 19

Official Press Opening: April 16

(Running Time: Two hours and 45 minutes with an intermission)

World Premiere

Written by Tim Blake Nelson

Directed by Doug Hughes

Martinson Hall at The Public

SOCRATES is a witty and endlessly fascinating new drama about a complicated man who changed how the world thought. This powerful new play by actor, director, and writer Tim Blake Nelson (*O Brother, Where Art Thou?*; *Holes*) is an intellectual thrill ride from the philosopher's growing prominence in democratic Athens through the military and social upheavals that led to one of the most infamous executions in Western history. Tony Award winner Doug Hughes (*Doubt*, *Junk*) directs this timely and timeless new work that serves as a passionate tribute to the man who continues to inspire us to question authority and defend freedom of belief.

This Alien Nation

April 10 at 7:00 p.m.

(Running Time: 90 minutes)

By Sofija Stefanovic

With Siri Hustvedt

Joe's Pub at The Public

Host Sofija Stefanovic welcomes some of her favorite people for a celebration of immigration. Each month, at one of New York's finest venues, some fish-out-of-water tell true tales from their lives. Audiences will hear anecdotes about language barriers, cultural missteps, rumbles, romance, and more. From addresses to the President, to songs about first kisses, the evening is set to be one of worldly proportions where audiences will enjoy drinks, laughs, and cries in between.

Relic

April 10-13

(Running Time: 45 minutes)

By Euripides Laskaridis/Osmosis

Shiva Theater at The Public

RELIC is a survival from the past. A thing left behind, be it memory, object, language, or being. Euripides Laskaridis, an artist from Greece, immerses himself and others in ideas of transformation and ridicule that shift restlessly between the peculiarly poignant and the utterly bizarre. This outrageously engaging solo performance, crafted in the heated heart of the current Greek crisis, takes playful risks out far from the norm to test the limits of our acceptance when it comes to things incongruous and unfamiliar. Sly facets of cabaret, vaudeville, and slapstick make magic out of the mundane, maneuvering audiences unawares into moments unexpectedly transcendent.

The Fever

April 11-21

(Running Time: 60 minutes)

By 600 HIGHWAYMEN

La MaMa

Co-Presented with La MaMa and Onassis USA

Created by Obie Award-winning 600 HIGHWAYMEN, **THE FEVER** explores the limits of individual and collective responsibility, and our willingness to be there for one another. Returning from its debut in Under the Radar and performed in complete collaboration with an audience, **THE FEVER** asks how we assemble, organize, and care for the bodies around us.

Choir! Choir! Choir!

April 13 at 5:00 p.m.

(Running Time: 90 minutes)

By Choir! Choir! Choir!

FREE in The Public's Lobby

Audience becomes choir in this live, powerful pop music mass sing-along. Singers and non-singers alike are invited to The Public Theater's historic lobby to take part in an interactive musical collaboration. Pushing the boundaries between practice and performance, artist and audience, **CHOIR! CHOIR! CHOIR!** brings soul-lifting atonement to the plague of contemporary disconnection: a community brought together through the common language of music. Directors Nobu Adilman and Daveed Goldman have amassed a dedicated and passionate community of singers in their native Toronto, as well as around the world, and have performed with the likes of Patti Smith, Tegan and Sara, Rufus Wainwright, The Flaming Lips, Rickie Lee Jones, and Debbie Harry.

Banda Magda

April 14 at 9:30 p.m.

(Running Time: 90 minutes)

By Magda Giannikou and Banda Magda

Joe's Pub at The Public

Led by Greek-born composer, orchestrator, singer, and accordionist Magda Giannikou (Kronos Quartet, Louis CK), **BANDA MAGDA** embodies global multiculturalism in both personnel and style. The group, with members from Greece, Argentina, Japan, Colombia, and the U.S., draws on Brazilian samba, French chanson, Greek folk tunes, Colombian cumbia, and Afro-Peruvian lando. The polyglot music combines South American rhythms with jazz improvisation, cinematic arranging, sophisticated audience participation, and other elements. Founded in

2010 in New York, **BANDA MAGDA** has toured in more than 22 countries and 5 continents. This group of close musical friends turn Giannikou's songs into engaging romps that have won them a spot with Carnegie Hall Musical Explorers Series, and Snarky Puppy's Family Dinner Vol.1, as well as performances at discerning venues and festivals such as WOMAD, Atlanta Jazz Festival, Vancouver Jazz Festival, L'Olympia, Jazz à Vienne, Canarias Jazz, Apollo Hammersmith, The Kennedy Center, Kathmandu Jazz Festival, and many more.

Rebetika: The Blues of Greece

April 12 at 7:00 p.m.

(Running Time: 90 minutes)

By Lena Kitsopoulou

Joe's Pub at The Public

A musical movement that flourished in Greece in the 1920s and '30s, the *rebetika* were the songs of the refugees from Asia Minor, who had newly settled in the shantytowns of Athens and Piraeus. With rhythms and styles of Greek, Arab, Turkish, and Jewish influences, the *rebetika* told of the hardships of forced migration, life in the margins of society, underworld characters, the "hashish-smokers," and outlaws. Despite their origin and subject-matters, the songs quickly gained popularity and were eventually performed in the expensive nightclubs of that time, turning some of their songwriters into stars. Similar to fado, flamenco, and the American blues, the *rebetika* carried words and melodies of human struggle, and especially after the Second World War, to the Greeks, they became a symbol of resistance, resilience, and perseverance. For one night only, Lena Kitsopoulou and her band of accomplished traditional *rebetika* musicians from Greece will revive the backstreets of Athens and Piraeus in Joe's Pub.

Antigone – Lonely Planet

April 18-20

(Running Time: 120 minutes)

Written and Directed by Lena Kitsopoulou

Shiva Theater at The Public

From the imagination of Lena Kitsopoulou, the Greek stage's preeminent wild-child, comes a peculiar metamorphosis of an ancient Greek tragedy: Sophocles' *Antigone*, staged as a comedy. Can it be done? A quartet of skiers are invited to deliver a panel discussion on *Antigone*. This absurd premise quickly takes a dark spin which stays true to the motifs of the original play, all the while offering a satirical and desperate "here and now" take on it.

Xylouris White

April 18 at 7:00 p.m. & April 19 at 9:30 p.m.

(Running Time: 90 minutes)

Joe's Pub at The Public

Xylouris White is firmly rooted in the past and future and exemplifies the bridging of Greek and American cultures that is at the heart of the Onassis Festival. Playing music from Crete of original and traditional composition, the band consists of Georgios Xylouris on Cretan laouto and vocals and Jim White on drum kit. Xylouris is known and loved by Cretans and Greeks at home and abroad and has been playing professionally from age 12. Jim White is an Australian drummer known and loved throughout the world as the drummer of Dirty Three, Venom P Stinger, and now, Xylouris White. For the last four years these two men have been performing as Xylouris White, the culmination of 25 years of friendship forged through music and place.

ADDITIONAL FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING:

Life Without Tragedy

April 10-30

By Kostis Velonis

Developed by Kostis Velonis and Christian Kotzamanis

Commissioned and produced by Onassis Culture, as part of the Onassis Festival 2019: Democracy Is Coming Presented in partnership with the New York City Department of Transportation's Art Program and The Village

Alliance

FREE on View in Astor Place South Plaza

In ***Life Without Tragedy***, Kostis Velonis' interest in democracy encounters ancient Greek tragedy. The amphitheater is a space for the promotion of political discussions. Theatrical performances were, in the Athenian democracy, deeply rooted in the polity and its institutions. The actors and the members of the chorus were citizens, while the gathering in the theater functioned as an ecclesia (assembly of the citizens). The theater, although it was established during the period of the tyrants, is considered as a progeny of democracy, since it flourished in parallel with the democratic system of government. Democracy would liberate ancient Greek tragedy from its religious nature, giving it a direct anthropocentric and political character. Within the theater, the Athenians exercised in the debate of ideas, dialogue and communication. Velonis identifies the notion of democracy with Greek tragedy, since the theater in ancient Greece was not only a form of art, but also a social institution. The artwork consists of three sculptures, constructed of wood, that mimic an ancient Greek amphitheater.

DOT Art partners with community-based, nonprofit organizations and professional artists to present temporary public artwork on DOT property throughout the five boroughs for up to 11 months. Artists transform streets with colorful murals, dynamic projections, and eye-catching sculptures. Sidewalks, fences, triangles, medians, bridges, jersey barriers, step streets, public plazas, and pedestrianized spaces serve as canvases and foundations for temporary art. Over the past 11 years, DOT Art has produced over 300 temporary artworks citywide.

The Village Alliance manages the new public plazas at Astor Place, the nexus point of a young, exciting, vibrant and artistic community where East and West Villages meet. For over 25 years, the Village Alliance has been a leading advocate for the community, working with area businesses, residents, and cultural and academic institutions to ensure that Greenwich Village and Astor Place continue to grow and succeed. Their mission is to create a cleaner, safer, greener, more attractive, and enjoyable neighborhood.

Brunch, Tragedy, & Us

April 13 at 11:30 a.m.

(Running time: 120 minutes)

Featuring Simon Critchley, Paul Holdengräber, and Michael Imperioli

FREE in The Library at The Public

What better way to contemplate life and tragedy, than with two of the world's finest conversationalists and a Bloody Mary? To celebrate the launch of his latest book, *Tragedy, the Greeks, and Us*, writer and philosopher Simon Critchley joins master interviewer Paul Holdengräber for a stimulating discussion on the lessons drawn from ancient Greek tragedy, and how those can help us better understand the faults that are both in our stars and in ourselves. Critchley sees it as the responsibility of every generation to reinvent the classics. For us not to become stupefied by the onrush of a fast-changing future that we cannot control or even imagine, we must scrutinize and interpret the past and its powerful influence on our present. To discuss how Greek tragedy can help us do exactly that, Critchley finds a perfect partner in Holdengräber, Founding Executive Director of Onassis Los Angeles (OLA), and former director of The New York Public Library's LIVE from the NYPL, where he interviewed and hosted over 600 events with major cultural figures. Writer and actor Michael Imperioli will read from translations of the ancient texts.

DAY OF DEMOCRACY

April 14

Hosted by Drew Broussard

Shiva Theater at The Public

Democracy Is The City

2:00 p.m.

(Running time: 60 minutes)

Featuring Alfredo Brillembourg, Karen Brooks Hopkins, and Kamau Ware

Featuring a performance by Morley

Jane Jacobs wrote that "cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and

only when, they are created by everybody”—echoing Aristotle, who (millennia earlier) wrote that “any city which is truly so called, and is not merely one in name, must devote itself to the end of encouraging goodness.” How does the city—our city—encourage goodness, and how are we the people helping (or hindering) the creation of a city that we want to live in? *Democracy Is The City* examines the municipal level of democracy, from the creation of commons to their appropriation, and how our democratic rights are being sold to the highest bidder in our own backyard.

Democracy Is Digital

4:00 p.m.

(Running time: 60 minutes)

Featuring Micaela Klein, Katherine Moriwaki, and Ben Smith

Featuring a performance by Elle Winston

More than four billion people now use the internet, a population more than twice as large as that of the largest countries on the planet. In the last decade, technology has helped promote the spread of democratic action in movements like the Arab Spring and the Women’s March, while simultaneously being integral to the rise of authoritarianism and tyranny across the globe. The future of humanity is being determined by algorithms, but who has a voice in how they are used and abused? *Democracy Is Digital* explores the idea of a borderless society, bound only by the reach of ones and zeroes, and how that society might be designed – either for good or for ill.

Democracy Is Coming

6:00 p.m.

(Running time: 90 minutes)

With Nora Benavidez, Damir Marusic, Bhaskar Sunkara, and Astra Taylor

Featuring remarks from Elizabeth Diller and a performance by Imani Uzuri

Historically, democracy has made violent entrances into society—from ancient Greece to the American revolution to the Arab Spring. But has any people ever truly formed an ideal democracy? Or have we faltered — are we faltering now—on the steps of tyranny? Plato wrote that “the excessive increase of anything often causes a reaction in the opposite direction.” If that’s true, this current rise of authoritarian regimes might be a sign that democracy has a less obvious foothold in our society than we’d like to believe. *Democracy Is Coming* asks the question: if true democracy arrived tomorrow, would we even want to let it in?

PUBLIC FORUM: Of, By, and For the People

April 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Featuring Oskar Eustis and Suzan-Lori Parks in conversation with Kwame Anthony Appiah

Featuring performances by André Holland and Diana Oh

Anspacher Theater at The Public

Theater and democracy share a birthplace, share fundamental tenants, and provide opportunities for the people to activate and understand their own power. But in a world where both the arts and democracy are increasingly under threat, what does it mean to be a “fundamentally democratic” theater? And how can the theater continue to encourage our best hopes for democracy? Featuring The Public’s Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and The Public’s Master Writer Chair Suzan-Lori Parks in a conversation with philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah, as well as performances from André Holland (*Much Ado About Nothing*, Academy Award-winning film *Moonlight*) and Diana Oh (*24 Hour Punk* at Joe’s Pub).

PUBLIC SHAKESPEARE PRESENTS: What’s Hecuba to Him? Greek Tragic Women on Shakespeare’s Stage

April 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Featuring commentary by Tanya Pollard, and performances by Isabel Arraiza, Tina Benko, Phylicia Rashad, and Ayana Workman

Martinson Hall at The Public

Ancient Greek plays – and in particular, their titanic, tragic women – exerted a powerful and uncharted influence on Shakespeare's dramatic landscape. When Hamlet reflects on the moving power of tragic performance, he turns to the most prominent of them: "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba/That he should weep for her?" Through commentary and readings from Euripides and Shakespeare, Professor Tanya Pollard and a cast of actors including Isabel Arraiza, Tina Benko, Phylicia Rashad, and Ayana Workman will illustrate how Greek plays and their towering female figures challenged Shakespeare to reimagine the affective possibilities of tragedy, comedy, and the emerging genre of tragicomedy.

SHOW DISCUSSIONS:

A lively discussion with scholars and artists around these performances:

Socrates: Wednesday, April 10 at 6:00 p.m. before the performance with Dr. Young Richard Kim in the Shiva Theater

Relic: Thursday, April 11 immediately following the 8:00 p.m. performance in the Shiva Theater

Antigone – Lonely Planet: Thursday, April 18 and Friday, April 19 immediately following the 8:00 p.m. performances in the Shiva Theater

ABOUT ONASSIS USA:

Founded in 2000, the **Onassis Foundation USA** was the first international affiliate of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation. For over 19 years, it has been dedicated to culture, community, and education, with projects that can effectively inspire social change and justice across borders. By collaborating with Onassis Stegi in Athens and educational and cultural institutions throughout the Americas, Onassis USA presents theatrical and dance productions, art exhibits, conversations, lectures, and other initiatives, triggering discussions about democratic values, human rights, civil rights, and the ever-changing realities facing today's citizens on a global scale. Onassis Foundation USA runs through two major initiatives, one cultural for the general public through its Onassis Cultural Center New York, and the other educational for scholars and students in partnership with educational institutions through the Onassis Humanities Impact Program.

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

ONASSIS FESTIVAL TICKET INFORMATION

Public Theater Partner, Public Supporter, Member, and full price tickets are available now for ticketed Festival events. Tickets 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 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.

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