

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES ***NEW WORK NOW!*** **September 9 – 21**

Free Readings of 14 Plays
By Established and Emerging Artists Including
Robert O'Hara, Jessica Blank, Erik Jensen, Kathryn Grody,
Ethan Lipton, Dominique Morisseau and Adi Hanash

Directors Include Daniel Goldstein, Liesl Tommy, Kwame Kwei-Armah,
Leigh Silverman, Kate Whoriskey and Davis McCallum

August 15, 2013 –The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced the September line-up today for ***NEW WORK NOW!***, the free reading series that allows audiences an opportunity to experience new work by a diverse selection of established and emerging theater artists. ***NEW WORK NOW!*** will run September 9 to September 21 in The Public's Martinson Theater (425 Lafayette Street). Now in its twentieth season, ***NEW WORK NOW!*** is an important part of The Public Theater's ongoing commitment to developing and mentoring new voices for the American Theater.

Member tickets are available now for this free reading series, and single ticket reservations will be available on Tuesday, August 20 online at publictheater.org or by contacting the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at Astor Place at **(212) 967-7555**.

This year's ***NEW WORK NOW!*** playwrights are Jessica Blank, Radha Blank, Mikhail Durnenkov, Kathryn Grody, Adi Hanash, Erik Jensen, Harry Kondoleon, Ethan Lipton, Dominique Morisseau, Mary Kathryn Nagle, Dan O'Brien, Robert O'Hara, Pavel Pryazhko, Ethan Sandler, Patrick Vassel, and Natal'ya Vorozhbit.

"*New Work Now!* explodes on our stage this fall with 14 incredible plays from a brilliantly talented group of writers," said **Associate Artistic Director Mandy Hackett**. "Sharing new work-in-progress with our audiences is always a thrilling experience and this dynamic line-up (for free) is not to be missed."

This year's ***NEW WORK NOW!*** series also includes ***NEW WORK THEN***, an opportunity for The Public to celebrate seminal works from the past. This year, The Public will present a reading of *Zero Positive* by Harry Kondoleon. Originally produced by The Public Theater in 1988, ***NEW WORK THEN*** is proud to once again present this searing and fantastical play to a new generation.

Previous ***NEW WORK NOW!*** series have included the debuts of *Wild With Happy* by Colman Domingo; *Urge for Going* by Mona Mansour; *In the Red and Brown Water* by Tarell Alvin McCraney; *The Good Negro* by Tracey Scott Wilson; *Paris Commune* by Steven Cosson and Michael Friedman; *The Poor Itch* by John Belluso; *In Darfur* by Winter Miller; *Durango* by Julia Cho; *Measure for Pleasure* by David Grimm; *Satellites* by Diana Son; *Well* by Lisa Kron; *Caroline, or Change* by Tony Kushner and Jeanine

Tesori; and the Pulitzer Prize-winning plays *Anna in the Tropics* by Nilo Cruz and *Topdog/Underdog* by Suzan-Lori Parks.

2013 NEW WORK NOW! Schedule

Monday, September 9 at 7:00 p.m.

THE BODY OF AN AMERICAN

By Dan O'Brien

Directed by Davis McCallum

With a single, stark photograph, the course of global events is changed forever. In powerful, theatrical language, Dan O'Brien explores the ethical and personal consequences resulting from Paul Watson's real-life photograph of the body of an American soldier dragged from the wreck of a Blackhawk and mutilated in the streets of Mogadishu. Winner of the PEN Center USA Award for Drama, the L. Arnold Weissberger Award, and the inaugural Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama.

Tuesday, September 10 at 7:00 p.m.

PARADISE BLUE

By Dominique Morisseau

Directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah

Detroit's Blackbottom neighborhood. 1949. An old jazz spot and rooming house stays alive by its resident bebop band. Headed by troubled trumpeter and club owner Blue, the band and business struggle to stay afloat in face of the city's urban renewal plans to uproot Blackbottom. But when a mysterious woman comes along with her own money and a walk that drives men crazy, no one is prepared for how far she'll go to change the plans. ***PARADISE BLUE*** is the first part of Dominique Morisseau's Detroit Trilogy, which includes the recent Public Lab/Classical Theatre of Harlem co-production of *Detroit '67*.

Wednesday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m.

NEW WORK THEN: ZERO POSITIVE

By Harry Kondoleon

Directed by Sarah Benson

New York City. 1987. AIDS is a death sentence and Himmer has just gotten the bad news. But the resourceful author isn't going to wait around to die. He's going to take his death into his own hands – with a little help from his friends. Originally produced by The Public Theater in 1988, *NEW WORK THEN* is proud to once again present this searing and fantastical play to a new generation.

Thursday, September 12 at 7:00 p.m.

NOTHING LEFT TO BURN

By Adi Hanash and Patrick Vassel

Directed by Patrick Vassel

"This is a love story. Unlike most love stories, this one ends with me setting myself on fire." So begins Mohamed, the Tunisian fruit-seller who set himself ablaze and began the Arab Spring, as he tells his tale. Mohamed and Fazia meet at the market and a forbidden romance blossoms, but the personal eventually turns political in this romantic comedy that ends in tragedy, though not without hope.

Saturday, September 14 at 7:00 p.m.

MANAHATTA

By Mary Kathryn Nagle

Directed by Kate Whoriskey

Co-presented by The Eagle Project

When a modern day Lenape woman returns to her ancestral land to work on Wall Street, she must reconcile all that her people have lost with what she now attempts to gain. Simultaneously, ***MANAHATTA*** also tells the story of the Lenape Indians who lived on the island of Manahatta in the 1600s, when Peter Minuit and the Dutch claim to have purchased the island for \$24. Written in The

Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group, this play explores how the concepts of indigenous identity, ownership, and the entire system of American capitalism have made us who we are today.

Sunday, September 15 at 7:00 p.m.

ARTIFICIAL FELLOW TRAVELER

Written and performed by Ethan Sandler

Directed by Daniel Goldstein

Ethan Sandler has carefully (some might say "obsessively") constructed a survival kit meant to keep his family alive for five days if/when the sh*t hits the fan. Earthquake? Alien Invasion? Zombie Apocalypse? He's got it covered (or at least he prays he does). ***ARTIFICIAL FELLOW TRAVELER*** tells the story of how these five post-apocalyptic days might unfold while exploring questions of fear, paranoia and the possible identity of a second gunman in the JFK assassination.

Monday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m.

TUMACHO

By Ethan Lipton

Directed by Leigh Silverman

In a small frontier town in the Old West, the men are dropping like flies at the hands of no good gangster Big Bill Yardley. Orphaned sharpshooter Catalina Vucuvich-Villalobos dreams of taking the murderer down. But when the demon ghost Tumacho rolls back into town, all the rules change. An uproarious tale about cowboys, coyotes, and chronic halitosis. *Yeehaw!* An inaugural member of The Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group, Ethan Lipton is the Obie Award-winning author of *No Place to Go*. ***TUMACHO*** is a commission of Clubbed Thumb, made possible with funding from the New York State Council of the Arts.

Tuesday, September 17 at 7:00 p.m.

FALLING APART...TOGETHER

Written and performed by Kathryn Grody

Directed by Timothy Near

In the middle of their lives, two performers find their younger and naïve expectations of a life of domestic bliss and artistic fulfillment challenged by the reality of their marriage, children and careers. In her new solo show, two-time Obie Award-winning actress and writer Kathryn Grody explores how a family can go from idyllic deliciousness to relative catastrophe and yet still manage to survive – bruised and altered, but wiser in the knowledge of the work it takes to make and hold onto a family.

Wednesday, September 18 at 7:00 p.m.

HOW TO BE A ROCK CRITIC

By Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen

Performed by Erik Jensen

Directed by Jessica Blank

Outsized, manic, often fucked-up and impossibly creative, Gonzo journalist Lester Bangs was America's greatest rock critic and a living icon. Both irreligious and messianic about humanity in general and music in particular, Lester traveled with and battled the likes of The Clash, Bob Marley, Lou Reed and the MC5, peeling away the veneer between "star" and audience. But when the ragged, rebel ethos of the 70's gave way to the corporate pop of the 80's, Lester lost the myth he'd built a life around, and overdosed at 33. This solo play performed by Jensen and created by the award-winning team behind *The Exonerated* and *Aftermath* utilizes Lester's own writing to chart the life, work and death of one of the 20th century's most ground-breaking, pioneering voices.

Thursday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m.

BARBECUE

Written and directed by Robert O'Hara

A pot head, an alcoholic, a pill popper and a control freak. The last four people who should ever perform an intervention decide it's time for their crack-head sister, Zippity Boom, to get her life together. This hilarious, over-the-top family portrait offers all the pleasures of watching people in a knock-down drag-out fight, but also asks: who's zooming who? The Obie Award-winning director of *In the Continuum*, Robert O'Hara recently directed *Wild With Happy* at The Public.

Friday, September 20 at 7:00 p.m.

HAPPYFLOWERNAIL

Written and performed by Radha Blank

Directed by Liesl Tommy

Business is bad for Mrs. Sung. A rival nail salon just opened up down the street. Her best manicurist is nowhere to be found. And her most loyal customer is facing eviction. In a Korean-owned nail salon in the heart of Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, the lives of five women intersect in this timely solo-performance play that explores loss, survival, gentrification and the American Dream. Radha Blank was an inaugural member of The Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group.

Saturday, September 21 at 5:00 p.m. (One Day Marathon)

THE BOARDWALK TRILOGY: THE BRIGHTON BEACH BROOKLYN PLAYS

Presented in Collaboration with Actor's Touring Company, UK (with Elyse Dodgson, International

Director, Royal Court Theatre, London)

CEC ArtsLink

In June 2012, three Russian-speaking playwrights went to live in Brighton Beach to explore a world made up of emigrants who fled the former Soviet Union and formed their own community on the Brooklyn shorefront. Mikhail Durnenkov (Russia), Pavel Pryazhko (Belarus) and Natal'ya Vorozhbit (Ukraine) were accompanied by Elyse Dodgson, International Director of the Royal Court Theatre, London who grew up in Brighton Beach; Ramin Gray, Artistic Director of Actors Touring Company, UK; poet and translator Sasha Dugdale; and hosted by The Public Theater. The resulting plays shine startling lights on Brighton Beach, its residents and their attitudes to being both immigrants away from their homeland and new Americans. All from the perspective of those left behind.

BLACK BODY

By Mikhail Durnenkov

Translated by Rory Mullarkey

Directed by Ramin Gray

It's a normal day in Brighton Beach. Roman works in his hair salon. His father makes a model of the Kremlin from matchsticks. Anna and Mark rehearse for a concert of Silver Age poetry. Then they hear the news: "Russia is gone." Instead of a country, there's only a black hole. In this poignant, sci-fi romp, it falls to the Brooklyn shorefront residents of Brighton Beach to preserve Russia – not only its culture and heritage but also its soul.

EMIGRANTS

By Pavel Pryazhko

Translated by Sasha Dugdale

Directed by Ramin Gray

Zhenya runs a boarding house in Brighton Beach with some strange foreign visitors: a woman who presents him with a pumpkin pie, a man who Skypes in German, and Kira – who arrived from Russia when she was eight but has no memory of her life before America. They all have problems with keys. From the perspective of his basement room on Neptune Avenue, Pryazhko creates a world of laconic dialogue and surreal imagery in which nothing is what it seems and nothing quite fits.

PLACE

By Natal'ya Vorozhbit

Translated by Sasha Dugdale
Directed by Sacha Wares

Paradise for You, Zhanna's shop selling remnants of the Soviet Union, is a painful reminder of her past: the gangster husband she left in Kiev, his murder by the KGB. It is also her sole means of supporting her disabled mother and her unmarried son Misha. Zhanna is desperate for Misha to marry and provide her with grandchildren, not least because she promised Father Yury that she'd abstain from sex until a grandchild arrives. But when the mysterious Lyonya arrives from Kiev, this promise proves increasingly difficult to keep. A story about one woman and her will to survive.

The entire development of this project was made possible by the generous support of the Genesis Foundation. Special thanks for the additional support from the Martin E. Segal Theatre Center and TMU (Trust for Mutual Understanding).

PLAYWRIGHT BIOS

JESSICA BLANK and **ERIK JENSEN** co-wrote *The Exonerated* (Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Lortel, Fringe First, Amnesty awards), adapted the film starring Susan Sarandon and Danny Glover, and co-wrote the memoir, *Living Justice*. Their second play, *Aftermath*, directed by Blank, premiered at NYTW. Blank's first novel was optioned for film; her second was optioned by Fox TV, with Blank and Jensen adapting both. Blank appeared regularly on CBS' "Made in Jersey"; her other acting includes Mira Nair's "The Namesake," "Rescue Me," "The Mentalist," "Bored to Death." Erik wrote acclaimed sci-fi graphic novel *The Reconcilers* and portrayed NY Yankee Thurman Munson in *The Bronx is Burning*. He starred in Ron Moore's *Virtuality*, Shaun Cassidy's *Frontier*, among 75 additional film and television credits. He also starred in the Pulitzer-winning *Disgraced* at LCT3, and at The Public in *The Good Negro*.

RADHA BLANK is the author of nine plays including *Kenya*, *SEED*, *nannyland*, *American Schemes*, *Casket Sharp*, *32 To Base*, *Rice & Chicken Parts*, *Washington Highlands*, and *HappyFlowerNail*. She is a 2013 Sundance Institute UCROSS Playwright, a 2011 Helen Merrill Award recipient, a 2011 NEA New Play Development Award recipient, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow, a Nickelodeon Writing Fellow and a member of The Public Theater's inaugural Emerging Writers Group. She has written for Nickelodeon and has written several screenplays, including *FOH* (Winner, Best Screenplay at the 2013 BlackStar Film Festival).

MIKHAIL DURNENKOV is the author of over 15 plays including *Junk*, *Easy People*, and *The Last Day of Summer*, which he wrote with his brother Vyacheslav and was produced at the Moscow Art Theatre. His plays have been translated and produced all over Europe. In 2009, he wrote *The Drunks*, with his brother, which was produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company. He has also participated in workshops with the Royal Court Theatre in London. In 2013, he was commissioned with his brother by the Moscow Art Theatre to write a documentary play about Konstantin Stanislavski for the Stanislavski Jubilee.

KATHRYN GRODY's current projects include Ed Napiers' *Momentary Ecstasy* at Half Moon Theatre, Andrea Kulchuskas' *Money* at The Womens Project, and Donald Margulies' *A Model Apartment*, directed by Evan Cabnet. Her other credits include Obies for *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, *Top Girls*, Drama Desk nomination for *A Moms' Life*, Nell to Alvin Epsteins' Nagg in *Endgame*, Liz Magic Lasers' *I Feel Your Pain*, Tina Howes' *She Lost Her Head*.

ADI HANASH's recent credits include *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Woolly Mammoth, Helen Hayes Nom.); *Comedy of Sorrows* (Hybrid Theatre Works); *Nothing Left to Burn* (Ars Nova ANTFest); *AK-47 Sing Along* (ERA); *Cymbeline* (New York Classical Theatre); *Zoya's Apartment*, *Kate Crackernuts* (ART/MXAT). His film and television credits include *Rubicon*, *Our Idiot Brother*, *Non-Stop*, *The Bourne Legacy*, and "White Collar."

HARRY KONDOLEON is an American playwright and novelist of 17 plays and two novels. After a battle with AIDS, he died in 1994 at the age of 39 and is still remembered for his unique voice. In 1981, he graduated with an MFA from the Yale School of Drama. He earned Obie Awards, the Oppenheimer/

Newsday Award, and a Drama-Logue Award. He was awarded the Fulbright, National Endowment for the Arts, Rockefeller, and Guggenheim fellowships.

ETHAN LIPTON's plays include *Luther* (Clubbed Thumb) and *Red-Handed Otter* (Playwright's Realm). His Obie-winning musical *No Place to Go* was commissioned by Joe's Pub, produced by The Public and will be mounted this fall at the Gate Theatre in London. Ethan was the 2012-13 Playwright's Realm Page One playwright and an inaugural member of The Public's Emerging Writers Group. He is the recipient of NYFA and Drama-Logue awards and commissions from True Love and Playwrights Horizons.

DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU is a playwright and actress whose credits include *Detroit '67* (The Public, Classical Theatre of Harlem), *Sunset Baby*, *Blood at the Root*, and *Follow Me To Nellie's*. Her awards include the Jane Chambers Playwriting Award honor, two-time NAACP Image Award, Primus Prize commendation, Stavis Playwriting Award, Spirit of Detroit Award, University of Michigan Emerging Leader Award, Weissberger Award, and the PoNY Fellowship.

MARY KATHRYN NAGLE was born in Oklahoma City and is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and an honorary member of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska. She graduated summa cum laude from Tulane Law School where she was the recipient of the Judge John Minor Wisdom Award. She is a member of the 2013 Emerging Writers Group at The Public Theater. Her plays have been performed from Oklahoma to New York.

DAN O'BRIEN's *The Body of an American* premiered in 2012 at Portland Center Stage and received the inaugural Edward M. Kennedy Prize, as well as the L. Arnold Weissberger Award. *The Body of an American* will receive its UK premiere this season at the Gate Theatre in London, directed by James Dacre. *War Reporter*, O'Brien's debut collection of poems, published by Hanging Loose in New York City and CB Editions in London, is currently shortlisted for the UK's prestigious Forward Prize for Best First Collection.

ROBERT O'HARA has received the NAACP Best Director Award, the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play, the Obie and Oppenheimer Award. He directed Colman Domingo's *Wild With Happy* at The Public, the world premieres of Tarell McCraney's *Brother/Sister Plays* (Part 2), and his own plays, *BootyCandy* and *Insurrection: Holding History*. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at NYU/Tisch School of the Arts and the Mellon Playwright in Residence at Woolly Mammoth Theatre.

PAVEL PRYAZHKO was born and lives in Minsk. He has won several major Russian language theatre awards and his plays have been produced all over Europe. His play *Life is Grand* was invited to the Golden Mask Festival in Moscow in 2010. His plays *The Field* and *Harvest* have both been translated to English by Sasha Dugdale. *Harvest* was presented as a staged reading in London in the Royal Court Theatre's International Season in 2011.

ETHAN SANDLER is a writer and performer whose works include *Punch Drunk* and *=Celebration* (Daniel Goldstein, dir). *Epitaph*, written and performed with Adrian Wenner, won the Best Sketch Award at the HBO Comedy Festival and was nominated for the Perrier Award at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh. His film and television writing credits include "My Boys," "Whitney," and currently "We Are Men" on CBS.

PATRICK VASSEL is a director, writer, and teacher from Akron, Ohio. His directing credits include *The Adventures of Boy and Girl* (NYC Fringe '13); *We the People: America Rocks!* (TheatreWorks USA national tour); *Font of Knowledge* (Shelby Company, MN Fringe '12); *The Little Dog Laughed* (The Gallery Players); *Nothing Left to Burn* (Ars Nova ANTFest). His Associate credits include *Magic/Bird* (Broadway), *Single Girls Guide* (Capital Repertory), *Stars of David* (Philadelphia Theater Company), *Broke House* (Abrons Arts Center), and *Working* (59E59).

NATAL'YA VOROZHBIT was born and lives in Kiev and studied at the Moscow Literary Institute. Her plays include *Demons*, *Galka Motalko*, and *Viy* which were staged throughout Russia, Ukraine, and at the National Theatre of Latvia. She also writes extensively for cinema and television. She has written two plays for the Royal Court Theatre in London after participating in their workshops in Moscow and

London: *What do you want a Ukrainian God* (2004) and *The Khomenko Family Chronicles* (2007). Her play *The Grain Store* was produced by The Royal Shakespeare Company in 2009.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER AT ASTOR PLACE

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, The Public Theater is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare, the classics, musicals, and contemporary and experimental works in equal measure. 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. Creating theater for one of the largest and most diverse audience bases in New York City for nearly 60 years, today the Company engages audiences in a variety of venues—including its landmark downtown home at Astor Place, which houses five theaters and Joe's Pub; the Delacorte Theater in Central Park, home to its beloved, free Shakespeare in the Park; and the Mobile Unit, which tours Shakespearean and other classic productions for underserved audiences throughout New York City's five boroughs. The Public's wide range of programming includes free Shakespeare in the Park, the bedrock of the Company's dedication to making theater accessible to all, new and experimental stagings at The Public at Astor Place, and a range of artist and audience development initiatives including its Public Forum series, which brings together theater artists and professionals from a variety of disciplines for discussions that shed light on social issues explored in Public productions. The Public Theater is located on property owned by the City of New York and receives annual support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; and in October 2012 the landmark building downtown at Astor Place was revitalized to physically manifest the Company's core mission of sparking new dialogues and increasing accessibility for artists and audiences, by dramatically opening up the building to the street and community, and transforming the lobby into a public piazza for artists, students, and audiences. Key elements of the revitalization included infrastructure updates to the 158-year old building, including changes to the main entry, expanded lobby, additional restrooms, and the addition of a new lounge, The Library at The Public, designed by the Rockwell Group. The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities. www.publictheater.org

TICKET INFORMATION

NEW WORK NOW! begins on Monday, September 9 and runs through Saturday, September 21. All shows, excluding *The Boardwalk Trilogy*, are at 7:00 p.m. in The Public's Martinson Theater at Astor Place.

The Public Theater is located at 425 Lafayette Street. Tickets are free. Member tickets are available now and single ticket reservations will be available on Tuesday, August 20 online at publictheater.org, by calling **(212) 967-7555** or visiting the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at Astor Place. There is a limit of 2 tickets per reading per person.

The Library at The Public is open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.publictheater.org.

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