

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES 2014-15 SEASON

THE WINTER'S TALE

FREE PUBLIC WORKS SHAKESPEARE PRODUCTION AT THE DELACORTE
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY TODD ALMOND
CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED BY LEAR DEBESSONET

THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE

WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL BY ITAMAR MOSES, MICHAEL FRIEDMAN
CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED BY DANIEL AUKIN

FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS (PARTS 1, 2 & 3)

WORLD PREMIERE BY PUBLIC THEATER MASTER WRITER CHAIR
SUZAN-LORI PARKS
DIRECTED BY JO BONNEY

STRAIGHT WHITE MEN

NEW YORK PREMIERE WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY YOUNG JEAN LEE

HAMILTON

WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL BY LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA
INSPIRED BY THE BOOK "ALEXANDER HAMILTON" BY RON CHERNOW
DIRECTED BY THOMAS KAIL

THE TOTAL BENT

WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL BY STEW AND HEIDI RODEWALD
DIRECTED BY JOANNA SETTLE

UNDER THE RADAR FESTIVAL 11th EDITION

TOAST

WORLD PREMIERE BY LEMON ANDERSEN DIRECTED BY ELISE THORON

BRIDGET EVERETT'S *ROCK BOTTOM* AT JOE'S PUB

WORLD PREMIERE BY BRIDGET EVERETT, MARC SHAIMAN, SCOTT WITTMAN,
ADAM "AD-ROCK" HOROVITZ & MATT RAY DIRECTED BY SCOTT WITTMAN

HERE LIES LOVE

CONTINUES RETURN ENGAGEMENT IN LUESTHER HALL

MOBILE SHAKESPEARE UNIT TOURS ALL FIVE BOROUGH

April 21, 2014 – Public Theater Artistic Director **Oskar Eustis** and Executive Director **Patrick Willingham** announced the line-up today for The Public's 2014-15 season, continuing the theater's nearly six-decade tradition of producing theater that is accessible to all. The Public stages Shakespeare and the classics, musicals, contemporary and experimental works in equal measure while engaging a wide range of audiences and artists at its six downtown theaters at Astor Place, including Joe's Pub, as well as the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. Beginning in September, The Public's 59th season will include three world premiere musicals, a free Public Works musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* at the Delacorte, new plays by Suzan-Lori Parks, Young Jean Lee, and Lemon Andersen, the 11th edition of the acclaimed Under the Radar Festival, the continuation of the Mobile Shakespeare Unit, an exciting Public Forum line-up, New Work Now!, the Emerging Writers Group Spotlight Series, and Public Studio, a new performance series dedicated exclusively to developing the work of emerging writers. The Public Theater's acclaimed production of *Here Lies Love* will also continue its commercial Off-Broadway run in the LuEsther Hall where it was conceived.

"The Public's commitment to make theater that matters is brilliantly reflected in the power and diversity of the 2014-15 season," said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. "Starting with the return of the thrilling Public Works Shakespeare at the Delacorte, and proceeding through three explosive new musicals and major new work by Suzan-Lori Parks and Young Jean Lee, this season is truly of, by and for the people. This is work that we have developed and nurtured, and the artists have responded with astounding bravery and creativity."

The Public's 2014-15 season will begin in September with a free Public Works musical adaptation of Shakespeare's **THE WINTER'S TALE**, directed by Public Works Director **Lear deBessonnet**. Following last season's acclaimed Public Works' *The Tempest* that featured over 200 actors and community members, **THE WINTER'S TALE** will once again be an unforgettable community event that will include music and lyrics by **Todd Almond** and run for three nights only, September 5-7, at the Delacorte Theater.

Following the success of the recent musicals *Fun Home*, *Giant*, and *Here Lies Love*, The Public will present three world premiere musicals beginning in the fall with **THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE**, based on the nationally best-selling novel of the same name by 2005 MacArthur Fellow **Jonathan Lethem**. The musical features a book by **Itamar Moses**, music and lyrics by **Michael Friedman**, and is conceived and directed by **Daniel Aukin**.

In January, the previously announced new musical **HAMILTON**, written by **Lin-Manuel Miranda**, and inspired by the book "Alexander Hamilton" by **Ron Chernow**, and directed by **Thomas Kail**, will have its premiere in the Newman Theater. From the groundbreaking team behind the Tony Award winning-musical *In The Heights* comes a wildly inventive new show about the life, death, and rhymes of a scrappy young immigrant who forever changed America: Alexander Hamilton.

In the spring, **Stew** and **Heidi Rodewald**, the creative team behind the smash hit *Passing Strange*, return to The Public with a thrilling new musical directed by **Joanna Settle**, **THE TOTAL BENT**. The world premiere musical about the passions that divide a father and son as they make their music and make their choice between salvation and selling out will return to the Anspacher Theater for a five-week run after being developed as part of Public Lab in 2011.

The season will also feature three new plays beginning with **FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS (PARTS 1, 2 & 3)** by Pulitzer Prize winner and Public Theater Master Writer Chair **Suzan-Lori Parks**. Developed as part of Public Lab, **Jo Bonney** will return to direct this deeply personal epic about love and hope in a world of impossible choices.

STRAIGHT WHITE MEN, written and directed by **Young Jean Lee**, will have its New York premiere in November with **Austin Pendleton**, **Scott Shepherd**, **Pete Simpson**, and **James Stanley**. **Lemon Andersen's** first full-length play, **TOAST**, directed by **Elise Thoron**, will have its world premiere as part of Public Lab in the spring.

At Joe's Pub at The Public, **Bridget Everett** will stage a full theatrical run of her new show **ROCK BOTTOM**, which was originally commissioned as part of the Joe's Pub 2013 New York Voices series. Written by Everett with Tony Award-winning songwriting duo **Marc Shaiman** and **Scott Wittman**, **Adam "Ad-Rock" Horovitz** and **Matt Ray**, the show is directed by Wittman.

The Public's celebrated **Public Forum** series returns for its fifth and most adventurous season to date. Curated by Public Forum Director Jeremy McCarter, the Forum presents the theater of ideas: conversations and performances about the way we live now. The hugely popular Drama Club series – a "book club for plays" – will once again invite great artists and leading thinkers to read and discuss great one-act plays, and Forum Duets will bring together lively minds from theater and other corners of American life for freewheeling conversations about culture, politics, and more.

The **Mobile Shakespeare Unit** will once again tour in November, bringing free Shakespeare to the community and strengthening audience engagement with the arts. Following a three-week tour of the five boroughs, the Shakespeare production will have a limited sit-down engagement at The Public for three weeks in November.

The **Under the Radar Festival**, curated by Co-Artistic Directors Mark Russell and Meiyin Wang, will celebrate its 11th edition in January with some of the most exciting new artists from around the world.

"I am very excited that this upcoming season at The Public will offer world premiere musicals, new plays, Shakespeare as well as build on our new initiatives Public Works, Mobile Shakespeare Unit, Public Forum, and Public Studio that seek to engage and welcome new audiences," said **Executive Director Patrick Willingham**. "Going into our 59th season, we will continue to create theater that is accessible to all and to serve as a home for artists and the community to explore the important issues of our time."

THE PUBLIC THEATER MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM offers patrons the opportunity to purchase significantly discounted tickets to shows and events throughout the year for an annual \$60 (tax-deductible) donation. Memberships are available at www.publictheater.org or by calling **212-967-7555**. Single tickets for the 2014-15 season will go on sale later this year.

2014-15 SEASON:

Public Works at the Delacorte Theater
Musical Adaptation of William Shakespeare's **THE WINTER'S TALE**
Music and Lyrics by Todd Almond
Conceived and directed by Public Works Director Lear deBessonet
Choreography by Chase Brock
September 5-7, 2014

Conceived and directed by Obie Award winner **Lear deBessonet** with musical adaptation by **Todd Almond** and choreography by **Chase Brock**, Public Works' **THE WINTER'S TALE** brings Shakespeare's tale of mystery and magic to life as never before. Featuring Public Works' signature blend of professional actors, community members, and special guests, 200 New Yorkers will come together to tell Shakespeare's beloved fable of hard won joy and the promise of renewal.

Joe's Pub at The Public
ROCK BOTTOM
By Bridget Everett, Marc Shaiman, Scott Wittman, Adam "Ad-Rock" Horovitz and Matt Ray
Directed by Scott Wittman
Fall 2014

Originally commissioned as part of The Joe's Pub 2013 New York Voices series, **ROCK BOTTOM** will have a full theatrical run as part of The Public's 2014-15 season. Written by the ferociously talented **Bridget Everett** with Tony Award-winning songwriting duo **Marc Shaiman** and **Scott Wittman**, **Adam**

“Ad-Rock” Horovitz and **Matt Ray**, **ROCK BOTTOM** is the entertainer’s first major production since her 2007 musical *At Least It’s Pink*. **ROCK BOTTOM** is what happens when you’re too passionate to give up, and too big to fail. In it, Everett, who *The New York Times* has called an “early Bette Midler,” barrels through life tip-toeing toward disaster, wine bottle by wine bottle and man by man. However, instead of succumbing to a chardonnay-induced stupor, Everett embraces a series of revelations that lead her and her voice of an angel to redemption. It features new original songs written with Shaiman, Wittman, Ray and Horovitz, as well as familiar favorites heard in Everett’s monthly sold-out showcase with her band The Tender Moments at Joe’s Pub.

World Premiere

THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE

Book by Itamar Moses

Music and lyrics by Michael Friedman

Conceived and directed by Daniel Aukin

Based upon the novel by Jonathan Lethem

September 30 – November 2, 2014

Conceived and directed by **Daniel Aukin**, based on the acclaimed novel by **Jonathan Lethem**, the soaring new musical **THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE** makes its world premiere this fall with a dynamite creative team including composer/lyricist **Michael Friedman** (*Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*) and bookwriter **Itamar Moses**. **THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE** is the extraordinary coming-of-age story about 1970s Brooklyn and beyond — of black and white, soul and rap, block parties and blackouts, friendship and betrayal, comic books and 45s. And the story of what would happen if two teenagers obsessed with superheroes believed that maybe, just maybe, they could fly. Co-production with Dallas Theater Center.

World Premiere

FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS (PARTS 1, 2 & 3)

Written by Suzan-Lori Parks

Directed by Jo Bonney

October 14 – November 16, 2014

Pulitzer Prize winner and The Public’s Master Writer Chair **Suzan-Lori Parks** (*Topdog/Underdog*, *The Book of Grace*) continues her longstanding relationship with The Public Theater with **FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS (PARTS 1, 2 & 3)**, a devastatingly beautiful, dramatic work set over the course of the Civil War. **Jo Bonney** directs this moving and haunting drama comprised of three plays presented in a single performance. In Part 1, “A Measure of Man,” Hero, a slave who is accustomed to his master’s lies, must now decide whether to join him on the Confederate battlefield in exchange for a promise of freedom. Part 2, “The Battle in the Wilderness” follows Hero and the Colonel as they lead a captured Union soldier toward the Confederate lines as the cannons approach. Finally, in Part 3, “The Union of My Confederate Parts,” the loved ones Hero left behind question whether to escape or wait for his return - only to discover that for Hero, freedom may have come at a great spiritual cost. A masterful new work from one of our most lyrical and powerful writers, **FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS** is a deeply personal epic about love and hope in a world of impossible choices. Presented in association with American Repertory Theater.

New York Premiere

STRAIGHT WHITE MEN

Written and directed by Young Jean Lee

Featuring Austin Pendleton, Scott Shepherd, Pete Simpson, and James Stanley

November 6 – December 7, 2014

The New York Times has named Obie Award winner **Young Jean Lee** (*The Public’s Church* and *We’re Gonna Die*) “the most adventurous downtown playwright of her generation.” The Public presents the New York premiere of **STRAIGHT WHITE MEN**, in which she defies expectations with a conventionally

structured take on the classic American father-son drama. When Ed and his three adult sons come together to celebrate Christmas, they enjoy cheerful trash-talking, pranks, and takeout Chinese. Then they confront a problem that even being a happy family can't solve: when identity is the cornerstone of one's worth, and privilege is increasingly problematic, what is the value of being a straight white man? **STRAIGHT WHITE MEN** is a production by Young Jean Lee's Theater Company and is commissioned by the Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University, Center Theatre Group (Los Angeles), Steirischer Herbst Festival (Graz), Les Spectacles Vivants – Centre Pompidou (Paris), Festival d'Automne à Paris, and The Public Theater (New York).

UNDER THE RADAR FESTIVAL

January 7-18, 2015

Now celebrating its 11th edition, this acclaimed 12-day festival, curated by Co-Artistic Directors Mark Russell and Meiyin Wang, showcases cutting-edge theater from around the U.S. and the world. The Devised Theater Initiative, directed by Meiyin Wang, will also continue to provide support and resources to the next generation of independent artists and ensembles. Through The Public's annual Under the Radar Festival and year-round downtown season at Astor Place, many examples of this inventive art form have been brought to the attention of audiences in New York and around the world.

World Premiere

HAMILTON

Written by Lin-Manuel Miranda

Inspired by the book "Alexander Hamilton" by Ron Chernow

Directed by Thomas Kail

Featuring Lin-Manuel Miranda as Alexander Hamilton

January 20 – February 22, 2015

From the groundbreaking team behind the Tony Award-winning musical *In The Heights* comes a wildly inventive new show about the life, death and rhymes of a scrappy young immigrant who forever changed America: Alexander Hamilton. Tony and Grammy Award winner **Lin-Manuel Miranda** takes the stage as the unlikely founding father determined to make his mark on the new nation as hungry and ambitious as he is. From bastard orphan to Washington's right hand man, rebel to war hero, a loving husband caught in the country's first sex scandal, the Treasury head who made an untrusting world believe in the American economy, **HAMILTON** is an astonishing musical exploration of a political mastermind who was both sinner and saint. George Washington, Eliza Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson and Hamilton's lifelong friend/foil Aaron Burr all make their mark in this uproarious, heart-filled new musical. Tony Award nominee **Thomas Kail** directs **Lin-Manuel Miranda's** breathtaking array of music in this bold new show about taking your shot, speaking your mind and turning the world upside down. **HAMILTON** is produced with the support of Jeffrey Seller, Sander Jacobs, and Jill Furman.

World Premiere

THE TOTAL BENT

Text by Stew

Music by Heidi Rodewald and Stew

Directed by Joanna Settle

March 3 – April 5, 2015

Stew and **Heidi Rodewald**, creators of the Tony Award-winning show *Passing Strange*, team with director **Joanna Settle** to bring their thrilling new musical, **THE TOTAL BENT**, to The Public next spring. A riotous new show at the crossroads of the sacred and profane, survival and liberation, gospel and rock 'n' roll. When a British record producer arrives in Montgomery, Alabama to hook Marty Roy, a young black musical prodigy rebelling from the constraints of the world around him, he launches us back into Marty's tumultuous musical upbringing. The son of a gospel star and self-proclaimed healer, Marty spent

his childhood writing the songs that have made his charismatic father famous. But in an America on the verge of social upheaval, Marty finds himself at odds with his complicated and spiritually forceful father, desperate to make his own way and his own sound. A funny, fiery, one-of-a-kind show, **THE TOTAL BENT** is about the passions that divide a father and son as they make their music and make their choice between salvation and selling out.

Public Lab

TOAST

By Lemon Andersen

Directed by Elise Thoron

April 2-19, 2015

TOAST is an electrifying new play by acclaimed spoken word artist and Tony Award-winning writer **Lemon Andersen** (The Public's *County of Kings: The Beautiful Struggle*, HBO's "Def Poetry"), directed by Andersen's *County of Kings* collaborator **Elise Thoron**. A Public Theater commission first presented at The Public's Under the Radar Festival, **TOAST** ingeniously weaves major characters from black oral narratives into a gripping story about a group of inmates fighting to keep their minds free amidst the 1971 riots that rocked Attica Prison. After 27 years served for murder in Attica's D-Block, Willie Green, aka Dolomite, has become an unlikely father figure to his cellmates, folklore heroes like Jesse James, Hobo Ben, Annabelle Jones, Stackolee and Hard Rock. Though word is brewing throughout Attica that a riot is coming, Dolomite would rather not get involved. But when one of the youngest inmates in their block is viciously beaten by guards for protesting prison conditions, Dolomite has to decide whether to join the riots or lock himself in his cell and hope for a promised parole date and the chance to taste freedom. Honoring the spoken word narratives recited in pool halls, bars and prisons across America by generations of black poets, **TOAST** is a stunning new play about men trying to live free in a system—and a world—designed to keep them chained. **TOAST** was developed, in part, at the Sundance Institute Theatre Program. Funding for the development of **TOAST** is provided by Time Warner Inc., and the MAP Fund, a program of Creative Capital supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

ONGOING AT THE PUBLIC THEATER:

PUBLIC WORKS is a groundbreaking new initiative working with community partner organizations in all five boroughs. It is designed to bring community partners into the full life of The Public through workshops, classes, dialogues, invitations to shows at The Public, visits from the Mobile Shakespeare Unit, and most importantly, the creation of ambitious works of participatory theater. The five community partner organizations of Public Works are Children's Aid Society (Manhattan); DreamYard (Bronx); Fortune Society (Queens); Brownsville Recreation Center (Brooklyn); and Domestic Workers United (all boroughs, including Staten Island). Public Works is made possible with the generous support of the Ford Foundation, and the Theater Subdistrict Council, LDC.

PUBLIC LAB, now in its eighth season, provides audiences with access to new work with low-priced tickets and provides emerging and established artists with a platform to further develop their work on stage and in performances with scaled-down productions (shorter rehearsal periods and smaller budgets). All tickets are only \$20.

PUBLIC STUDIO is a new performance series dedicated exclusively to developing the work of emerging writers. In a laboratory environment, writers will be in rehearsal with actors and a director, incorporate bare-bones design elements, and open the process to an audience over a series of performances. More than a reading or workshop, but not a full production, this middle step affords early career writers the important opportunity to deepen their experience of working collaboratively over an extended rehearsal period and to see their work staged in front of an audience. All tickets are only \$10. Public Studio is made possible with the support of the Time Warner Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

THE PUBLIC FORUM series continues for its fifth and most adventurous season to date. Curated by Public Forum Director Jeremy McCarter, the Forum presents the theater of ideas: conversations and performances about the way we live now. The hugely popular Drama Club series – a “book club for plays” – will once again invite great artists and leading thinkers to read and discuss great one-act plays, and Forum Duets will bring together lively minds from theater and other corners of American life for freewheeling conversations about culture, politics, and more. Its past seasons have included Alec Baldwin, David Brooks, David Byrne, Matt Damon, Holly Hunter, Tony Kushner, Rachel Maddow, Wynton Marsalis, Audra McDonald, Salman Rushdie, Suzan-Lori Parks, David Simon, Anna Deavere Smith, Frank Rich, Steven Soderbergh, Cynthia Nixon, Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson, Harvey Fierstein and more.

MOBILE SHAKESPEARE UNIT is a reinvention of Joseph Papp’s Mobile Shakespeare program, which began in 1957 to bring Shakespeare to the masses, evolving into the New York Shakespeare Festival and ultimately becoming The Public Theater. Now in its fourth year, it presents Shakespeare for free to prisons, homeless shelters, centers for the elderly, and other community venues throughout the five boroughs. The Mobile Shakespeare Unit has already toured *Measure for Measure*, *Richard III* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. The Mobile Shakespeare Unit is made possible with the support of the Ford Foundation and The Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Additional generous support is provided by Bloomberg.

FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park is one of the cornerstones of The Public Theater’s mission. Since 1962, over five million people have enjoyed more than 150 free productions of Shakespeare and other classical works and musicals. This summer The Public will present ***MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*** (June 3-July 6), directed by Jack O’Brien; and ***KING LEAR*** (July 22-August 17), directed by Daniel Sullivan. Bank of America is the lead sponsor of Shakespeare in the Park.

JOE’S PUB AT THE PUBLIC, since its debut in 1998, has quickly become one of New York City’s most celebrated and in-demand showcase venues for live music and performance, presenting more than 800 performances a year and serving more than 100,000 audience members annually. Each year, Joe’s Pub sponsors New York Voices, their artist commissioning program, which will include this year– actor and cabaret performer Daniel Breaker with director Kate Whoriskey; indie-folk singer-songwriter Dawn Landes with writer and director Daniel Goldstein; and soulful singer-songwriter Martha Redbone. As part of The Public’s long history of cultivating the country’s most celebrated artists, New York Voices supports the creation of new works by critically-acclaimed musicians and performers. Joe’s Pub is open seven days a week, and food and drink service is available during every performance. Joe’s Pub New York Voices is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

NEW WORK NOW! is a popular, free reading series that allows audiences an opportunity to experience new work by a diverse selection of established and emerging theater artists. 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 Steve Cosson and Michael Friedman; *In Darfur* by Winter Miller; *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.

EMERGING WRITERS GROUP is a component of The Public Writers Initiative, a long-term program that provides key support and resources for writers at every stage of their careers. In just six years, it has nurtured numerous playwrights who have gone on to have their plays staged at The Public and elsewhere around the country. The EWG’s free Spotlight Series will also return this season. The Public’s recent production of *Detroit ’67*, written by Dominique Morisseau, marked the fifth work presented at The Public by a member of the Emerging Writers Group. Time Warner is the Founding Sponsor of the Emerging Writers Group, and provides continued program support through the Time Warner Foundation.

DEVISED THEATER INITIATIVE at The Public, directed by Meiyin Wang, is one of the first of its kind in the U.S., providing support and resources to the next generation of independent artists and ensembles. The Public Theater has been a strong supporter of the devised theater movement and has helped promote the work of such prominent devised theater-makers as Elevator Repair Service, Nature Theater of Oklahoma, Gob Squad, Guillermo Calderón, Young Jean Lee, Mike Daisey, to name a few. Through The Public's annual Under the Radar Festival and year-round downtown season at Astor Place, many examples of this inventive art form have been brought to the attention of audiences in New York and around the world.

THE LIBRARY AT THE PUBLIC is open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m., with brunch on select weekends. Chefs Andrew Carmellini and Zachary Faulisi have created an American menu of bar snacks, shareable appetizers, sandwiches, dinner plates and desserts sourcing local ingredients and New York influence that is available in both The Library and Joe's Pub.

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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, contemporary and experimental pieces 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 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; Public Works, a new initiative that is designed to cultivate new connections and new models of engagement with artists, audiences and the community each year; new and experimental stagings at The Public at Astor Place, including Public Lab; 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, as well as construction of new exterior entry stair and glass canopy; installation of ramps for improved accessibility; an expanded and refurbished lobby; the addition of a mezzanine level with a new restaurant 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

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