



THE PUBLIC THEATER
AND
INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
PRESENT
PUBLIC FORUM AT THE DELACORTE

WELCOME HOME: A CELEBRATION
OF WORLD REFUGEE DAY
MONDAY, JUNE 20

One-Night-Only Free Event to Feature
Performances and Readings by K'naan,
Michael Cerveris, F. Murray Abraham, Hoon Lee,
David Henry Hwang, Kwame Kwei-Armah, and More

U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson To Lead
Naturalization Ceremony for New Citizens On Stage

May 26, 2016 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) and International Rescue Committee announced today that a special free one-night-only Public Forum event, **WELCOME HOME: A CELEBRATION OF WORLD REFUGEE DAY**, will take place on **Monday, June 20** at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. Free Public Forum tickets will be distributed, two per person (age 5+), at the Delacorte Theater beginning at 12:00 p.m. on the day of the Forum.

As of 2015, over 60 million people across the planet are currently displaced from their homes – more than at any time previously in history. To draw attention to the crisis and to confirm New York City's place as America's open arms to those fleeing their homes for a better life, The Public Theater and International Rescue Committee will come together at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park to commemorate World Refugee Day.

"America is a nation created by refugees; and at our best we have welcomed immigrants from across the globe, many fleeing persecution and oppression in their homelands," said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. "The pilgrims were refugees at Plymouth Rock, and The Public and IRC are proud to celebrate the best of American traditions, the welcome embodied by that lady in New York harbor."

Doors will open at 6:45 p.m. and at that time a naturalization ceremony for brand new citizens will take place for the first time ever on the Delacorte stage, led by **U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson**. The Forum program will begin at **7:30 p.m.** and highlights of the evening will include **F. Murray Abraham** reading Shakespeare's incendiary plea for refugees from *Sir Thomas More*, a performance of a song by **K'naan**, **Michael Cerveris** performing "Better Angels" from Tom Kitt's new musical *The Visitor*, **Hoon Lee** reading **David Henry Hwang**, a chorus of New York City schoolchildren reading Emma Lazarus' "The New Colossus," **Kwame Kwei-Armah** reading John Winthrop's "A Model of Christian Charity," **Natalie Cortez** performing "There Is a Child" from The Public's *Giant*, and more.

“As we prepare to celebrate World Refugee Day in just under a month, it is important to remember the myriad gifts refugees have brought to this country and the world,” said **International Rescue Committee President and CEO David Miliband**. “The IRC is proud to partner with The Public on this amazing night that will showcase the talent of longstanding refugees now at the top of their professions and welcome home new ones who may just become the next big thing.”

Free Public Forum tickets will be distributed, two per person (age 5+), at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park beginning at 12:00 p.m. on the day of the Forum. For more ticket information please visit www.publictheater.org. The Public continues its partnership with **TodayTix**, who will now be offering the exclusive Mobile Ticket Lottery for Free Shakespeare in the Park, replacing the virtual lottery from previous years. Public Forum tickets will be distributed by random mobile lottery on the TodayTix app on Monday, June 20. The Public’s Delacorte Theater is accessible by entering at 81st Street and Central Park West, or 79th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Public Forum **WELCOME HOME: A CELEBRATION OF WORLD REFUGEE DAY** is made possible by a grant from the **Stavros Niarchos Foundation**.

PUBLIC FORUM, now in its sixth season, brings together talented members of the theater community and interesting individuals from the arts, media, politics, and society to discuss, debate, and further explore the ideas present on The Public Theater’s stages. Alec Baldwin, Anne Hathaway, Cynthia Nixon, Sam Waterston, Jeremy McCarter, and former NEA Chair Rocco Landesman have hosted its programs, which have featured insights and performances from the likes of Uzo Aduba, Christine Baranski, David Brooks, David Byrne, Jessica Chastain, Matt Damon, E.L. Doctorow, James Earl Jones, Tony Kushner, Wynton Marsalis, Darryl “D.M.C.” McDaniels, Audra McDonald, Stephin Merritt, Suzan-Lori Parks, Salman Rushdie, David Simon, Anna Deavere Smith, Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson, and many more. Through curated conversations and surprising combinations, Public Forum seeks to engage audiences in discovering answers to the questions that drive us, both onstage and off.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

The International Rescue Committee responds to the world’s worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC is at work in over 40 countries and 26 U.S. cities helping people to survive, reclaim control of their future and strengthen their communities. Learn more at Rescue.org and follow the IRC on [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#).

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER AND THE DELACORTE THEATER IN CENTRAL PARK:

The Public Theater, under the leadership of Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare, the classics, musicals, contemporary and experimental pieces in equal measure. Celebrating his 10th anniversary season at The Public, Eustis has created new community-based initiatives designed to engage audiences like Public Lab, Public Studio, Public Forum, Public Works, and a remount of the Mobile Unit. 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 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, an expanding initiative that is designed to cultivate new connections and new models of engagement with artists, audiences and the community each year; and audience and artist development initiatives that range from Emerging Writers Group and to the Public Forum series. The Public 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. The Public is currently represented on Broadway by the Tony Award-winning *Fun Home* and Lin-Manuel Miranda's acclaimed American musical *Hamilton*, and Danai Gurira's *Eclipsed* featuring Lupita Nyong'o. The Public has received 47 Tony Awards, 168 Obie Awards, 52 Drama Desk Awards, 48 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critics Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics Awards, and five Pulitzer Prizes. www.publictheater.org.

Conceived by founder Joseph Papp as a way to make great theater accessible to all, The Delacorte Theater officially opened in Central Park on June 18, 1962, with *The Merchant of Venice*, directed by Papp and Gladys Vaughan and featuring George C. Scott as Shylock. *The Merchant of Venice* was followed that summer by a production of *The Tempest*, directed by Gerald Freedman and featuring Paul Stevens as Prospero and James Earl Jones as Caliban. The first Delacorte summer season concluded with *King Lear*, directed by Papp and Vaughan and featuring Frank Silvera as Lear. Since then more than 150 productions have been presented for free at the Delcorte Theater in Central Park. Highlights of past Delacorte productions include *Othello* in 1964 with James Earl Jones; *Hamlet* in 1975 with Sam Waterston; *The Taming of the Shrew* in 1978 with Raul Julia and Meryl Streep; *The Pirates of Penzance* in 1980 with Kevin Kline and Linda Ronstadt; *Henry V* in 1984 with Kevin Kline; *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1988 with Kevin Kline and Blythe Danner; *Richard III* in 1990 with Denzel Washington; *Othello* in 1991 with Raul Julia and Christopher Walken; *The Tempest* in 1995 with Patrick Stewart; *The Seagull* in 2001 with Natalie Portman, Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline and Philip Seymour Hoffman; *Mother Courage* in 2006 with Meryl Streep and Kevin Kline; *Macbeth* in 2006 with Liev Schreiber; *HAIR* in 2008 with Jonathan Groff and Will Swenson; *Twelfth Night* in 2009 with Anne Hathaway; *The Merchant of Venice* in 2010 with Al Pacino and Lily Rabe; Stephen Sondheim's *Into The Woods* with Amy Adams, Denis O'Hare, and Donna Murphy in 2012; *The Comedy of Errors* with Jesse Tyler Ferguson and Hamish Linklater, and Alex Timbers and Michael Friedman's world premiere musical adaptation of *Love's Labour's Lost* in 2013; Lily Rabe and Hamish Linklater in Jack O'Brien's *Much Ado About Nothing*, and John Lithgow as Lear in *King Lear* in 2014; and Sam Waterston in *The Tempest* and Lily Rabe and Hamish Linklater in *Cymbeline* in 2015.

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