

THE PUBLIC THEATER'S NATIONAL EXPANSION OF THE MOBILE UNIT BEGINS PERFORMANCES OF *SWEAT* SEPTEMBER 27

COMPLETE CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR FREE 18 CITY TOUR OF *SWEAT* BY LYNN NOTTAGE DIRECTED BY KATE WHORISKEY

September 24, 2018 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) will begin performances of the **MOBILE UNIT NATIONAL TOUR** of Lynn Nottage's powerful Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *SWEAT*, directed by Kate Whoriskey, on September 27 in Erie, Pennsylvania. The Mobile Unit, originally founded by Joe Papp in 1957 and currently touring to the five boroughs biannually, will begin its first national initiative with a free, four-week tour to 18 cities across Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin from Thursday, September 27 through Tuesday, October 23, 2018.

"Our *SWEAT* tour is intended to be just a start to rich, ongoing dialogues with the communities we visit," said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. "We have been overwhelmed with the enthusiasm of our community partners across the Midwest, and look forward to much, much more together."

SWEAT tells the story of a group of friends who have spent their lives sharing drinks, secrets, and laughs while working together on a factory floor. But when layoffs and picket lines begin to chip away at their trust, the friends find themselves pitted against each other in the hard fight to stay afloat.

The complete cast of **MOBILE UNIT NATIONAL TOUR OF *SWEAT*** includes **Carlo Albán** (*Oscar*), **Benton Greene** (*Brucie*), **Rebecca Hart** (*Jessie*), **Hunter Hoffman** (*Jason*), **Jenny Jules** (*Cynthia*), **Steve Key** (*Stan*), **Kate Nowlin** (*Tracey*), **Calvin Leon Smith** (*Chris*), and **Lance Coadie Williams** (*Evan*).

SWEAT will feature scenic design by Wilson Chin, costume design by Christopher Metzger, sound design by Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen, and fight direction by U. Jonathan Toppo.

"I am thrilled to bring *SWEAT* to the first audiences of the Mobile Unit National Tour," said **director Kate Whoriskey**. "This production features the most intimate relationship between the actor and audience to date. Our work in the rehearsal room is vitalized and grows more specific as we learn about the lives of the people we will meet on the road. We look forward to being in conversation."

SWEAT premiered in New York at The Public Theater in 2016 and was extended three times, with critics writing about the play's breathtaking timeliness, compassion, and power. The play opened on Broadway on March 26, 2017 at Studio 54 produced by Stuart Thompson and Louise Gund, won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play. The **MOBILE UNIT NATIONAL TOUR OF *SWEAT*** performances in Minnesota are produced in collaboration with the Guthrie Theater.

Before, during, and after performances, **MOBILE UNIT NATIONAL TOUR** will facilitate additional programming tailor-made with and for the 18 cities on the tour. This array of community-driven artistic activities—co-organized by leaders in both the Midwest and The Public—will support the vital work already happening in the communities. Taken together, the performance and programmatic components center on local issues and unite neighbors around their shared experiences, theatrical and local alike. Activities range from story circles (a small group of individuals sitting in a circle, sharing stories from their own experience, focusing on a common theme), to public art projects, to theater-driven workshops exploring issues, like opioid addiction, through an interactive experience with teaching artists and local experts.

The Public Theater has launched **PUBLIC RECORD**, a digital storytelling platform designed to collect and amplify stories from communities throughout the United States in order to inspire conversation, artmaking, and connection. PUBLIC RECORD is available for free on the App Store and Google Play Store, or by visiting publictheater.org/record.

In 2017, the **MOBILE UNIT** celebrated the 60th 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 a borrowed Department of Sanitation vehicle 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. Currently, The Public's Mobile Unit biannually 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. Recent New York Mobile Unit productions include *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*.

THE PUBLIC'S MOBILE UNIT NATIONAL TOUR OF SWEAT WILL PERFORM IN THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITIES FROM SEPTEMBER 27 THROUGH OCTOBER 23, 2018:

Erie, Pennsylvania | September 27

Ashtabula, Ohio | September 28

Meadville, Pennsylvania | September 29

Akron, Ohio | October 2

Ravenna, Ohio | October 3

Macomb, Michigan | October 5

Saginaw, Michigan | October 6

Eaton Rapids, Michigan | October 8

Albion, Michigan | October 9

Mankato, Minnesota | October 11

Rochester, Minnesota | October 12

St. Cloud, Minnesota | October 13

Kenosha, Wisconsin | October 16

Janesville, Wisconsin | October 17

Columbus, Wisconsin | October 18

Sauk City, Wisconsin | October 19

Viroqua, Wisconsin | October 21

Hayward, Wisconsin | October 23

For more information, please visit thepublic.nyc/mobilenational.

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THE MOBILE UNIT is made possible with the support of **The Rockefeller 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.

BIOS

LYNN NOTTAGE (*Playwright*) is a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and a screenwriter whose work has been produced widely in the U.S. and throughout the world. Most recently, her play *Sweat* (Susan Smith Blackburn Award, OSF American Revolution Cycle Commission) appeared at The Public Theater and on Broadway, winning the Pulitzer Prize. Her other plays include *Mlima's Tale*; *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk nom.); *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie, Lortel, NY Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and OCC Award); *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and NYDCC Awards); *Fabulation*, or *The Re-Education of Undine* (Obie); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*. She recently produced and conceived of *This Is Reading*, a multi-media performance installation at the Franklin Street Railroad Station in Reading, PA. Nottage was a producer/director on the Netflix series "She's Gotta Have It" and co-founder of Market Road Films. Nottage is the recipient of a PEN/Laura Pels Master Dramatist Award, Doris Duke Artist Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship, Steinberg "Mimi" Distinguished Playwright Award, Dramatists Guild Hull-Warriner Award, the inaugural Horton Foote Prize, and Lee Reynolds Award. Her other honors include the National Black Theatre Fest's August Wilson Playwriting Award, a Guggenheim Grant, Lucille Lortel Fellowship, and Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University. She is an Associate Professor at Columbia School of the Arts. She is an artist-in-residence at the Park Avenue Armory, and a member of the Dramatists Guild and The American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

KATE WHORISKEY (*Director*). Her New York credits include The Public and Broadway productions of *Sweat*, *Ping Pong*, and *Manhatta* at The Public's Public Studio, *Tales from Red Vienna* and *Ruined* at MTC (Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel nominations), *The Miracle Worker* (Broadway's Circle in the Square), *How I Learned to Drive* (Second Stage), *The Piano Teacher* (Vineyard Theatre), *Oroonoko* (Theatre for A New Audience), world premieres of *Fabulation* and *Inked Baby* (Playwrights Horizons), and *Massacre* at the Labyrinth Theatre. Internationally she has directed *Magdalena* at the Chatelet Theatre in Paris and Teatro Municipal de Sao Paulo. Regionally she has directed at The Goodman, The Geffen, American

Repertory Theatre, The Shakespeare Theatre, The Huntington, South Coast Rep, Baltimore Center Stage, Sundance Theatre Lab, New York Stage and Film, among others.

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 Critic's Circle Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. publictheater.org

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