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CAST & CREATIVE HEADSHOTS
DELACORTE THEATER PHOTOS

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR THE FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK PRODUCTION OF *PUBLIC WORKS' AS YOU LIKE IT*

Adapted by Shaina Taub & Laurie Woolery
Music & Lyrics by Shaina Taub
Original Choreography by Sonya Tayeh
Choreography Restaging & Additional Choreography by Billy Griffin
Directed by Laurie Woolery

10th Anniversary Season of Public Works to Feature 127 New Yorkers
From All Five Boroughs With Ato Blankson-Wood, Darius de Haas,
Rebecca Naomi Jones, Christopher M. Ramirez, and Shaina Taub on
The Delacorte Stage in Central Park

Performances Begin August 10 and Run Through September 11 with an
Official Press Opening Tuesday, August 30

July 6, 2022 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced complete casting today for the Free Shakespeare in the Park production of **Public Works' AS YOU LIKE IT**, closing out the 60th Anniversary Season at The Delacorte Theater. Adapted by Public Theater Artist-in-Residence **Shaina Taub** and Director of Public Works **Laurie Woolery**, with music and lyrics by Shaina Taub, original choreography by Tony Award winner **Sonya Tayeh**, choreography restaging and additional choreography by **Billy Griffin**, **AS YOU LIKE IT** returns after its original Public Works production in 2017 and a two-year pandemic delay for a four-week run to celebrate Public Works' 10th Anniversary. Directed by Laurie Woolery, **AS YOU LIKE IT** will begin performances at The Delacorte on Wednesday, August 10 and run through Sunday, September 11, with an official press opening on Tuesday, August 30.

Public Works' acclaimed musical production of **AS YOU LIKE IT** returns to Central Park, bringing together its diverse ensemble of both professional actors and community members from across New York. Adapted by **Shaina Taub** and Director of Public Works **Laurie Woolery**, featuring music and lyrics by Taub, this ambitious work of participatory theater has been hailed as “thrilling & terrifically vital” by *The New York Times*. Forced from their homes, Orlando, Duke Senior, his daughter Rosalind, and niece Celia are banished to the Forest of Arden. There, they discover a community of acceptance and transformational

love, where all are welcomed and embraced. Laurie Woolery directs this magical adaptation of a beloved classic.

The complete Equity cast of **AS YOU LIKE IT** will include **Damion Allen** (*William*), **Tristan André** (*De Boys/Attendant*), **Amar Atkins** (*Understudy Duke Senior/Duke Frederick*), **Ato Blankson-Wood** (*Orlando*), **Lori Brown-Niang** (*Agent/Puppet-deer*), **Sean-Michael Bruno** (*Understudy De Boys*), **Brianna Cabrera** (*Silvia*), **Darius de Haas** (*Duke Senior*), **Bianca Edwards** (*Phoebe*), **Danyel Fulton** (*Understudy Rosalind/Phoebe*), **Emily Gardner Xu Hall** (*Jaques Standby*), **Pierre Harmony Graves** (*De Boys/Arden Dancer/Young Orlando Dad*), **Rebecca Naomi Jones** (*Rosalind*), **Jonathan Jordan** (*Andy*), **Trevor McGhie** (*Understudy Orlando/Oliver*), **Mike Millán** (*Understudy Touchstone/Andy*), **Bobby Moody** (*De Boys/Arden Dancer*), **Renrick Palmer** (*Oliver*), **Eric Pierre** (*Duke Frederick*), **Idania Quezada** (*Celia*), **Christopher M. Ramirez** (*Touchstone*), **Edwin Rivera** (*De Boys/Attendant*), **Kevin Tate** (*Understudy De Boys Dancer*), **Shaina Taub** (*Jaques*), and **Claudia Yanez** (*Understudy Celia/Silvia*). They will be joined by two rotating ensembles of community members from all five boroughs to perform together on The Delacorte stage in this enchanting comedy.

AS YOU LIKE IT will feature scenic design by Myung Hee Cho; costume design by Emilio Sosa; lighting design by Isabella Byrd; sound design by Sun Hee Kil; hair, wig, and makeup design by Leah Loukas; puppet design by James Ortiz; prop management by Corinne Gologursky; Delacorte 2022 sound system design by Daniel Lundberg; orchestrations by Mike Brun; music direction by Andrea Grody; music coordination by Dean Sharenow; and fight direction by Lisa Kopitsky. Kristen Gibbs will serve as production stage manager and Anaïs Bustos and Jessie Moore will serve as stage managers.

Public Works and **AS YOU LIKE IT** Director **Laurie Woolery** said, “Our musical adaptation of *As You Like It* was created in response to a shifting world post the 2016 presidential election, where polarizing opinions fractured relationships and created a culture of ‘othering’ one another. Over the last five years, our country has experienced a global pandemic, an anti-racist uprising, and so much loss that has further isolated us. The nature of theater is to gather and sit in community with one another. The heart of the story of *As You Like It* contains the possibility of humans being whole again through the healing power of community and its ability to gather and hold space for one another during the darkest of times. This is a dream we had for over two years and can’t wait to gather together in community, outdoors, under the stars at The Delacorte Theater.”

PUBLIC WORKS, a major initiative of The Public Theater, aims to restore and build community by connecting people through the creation of extraordinary works of art. Public Works is animated by the idea that theater is a place of possibility, where the boundaries that separate us from each other in the rest of life can fall away. Working with partner organizations in all five boroughs, Public Works invites community members to take classes, attend performances, and join in the creation of ambitious works of participatory theater. Led by Public Works Director Laurie Woolery, this initiative deliberately blurs the line between professional artists and community members, creating theater that is not only for the people, but by and of the people as well. Public Works exemplifies The Public’s long-standing commitment to putting community at the core of the theater’s mission. Public Works seeks to create a space where we can not only reflect on the world as it is, but where we can propose new possibilities for what our society might be.

The Public Works community partner organizations are **Brownsville Recreation Center** (Brooklyn), **Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education** (Bronx), **Center for Family Life in Sunset Park** (Brooklyn), **Children’s Aid** (all boroughs), **DreamYard** (Bronx), **Domestic Workers United** (all boroughs), **The Fortune Society** (Queens), and **Military Resilience Foundation** (all boroughs).

The second cohort of Public Works National includes an extraordinary list of national affiliates: Long Wharf Theatre (New Haven, CT), Pittsburgh Public Theater (Pittsburgh, PA), Theatre Under The Stars (Houston, TX), Trinity Repertory Company (Providence, RI), Tulsa Performing Arts Center and Trust (Tulsa, OK), Virginia Stage Company (Norfolk, VA), and Williamstown Theatre Festival (Williamstown, MA). These National Affiliates joined the Founding Public Works National and International Partners—Dallas Theater

Center (Dallas, TX), the National Theatre's Public Acts program (London and nationally, United Kingdom), and Seattle Repertory Theatre (Seattle, WA). This network of theaters gathers to actively share practices and build momentum around community-based theater nationwide. Collectively, they are seeking to put theater at the heart of every community, and community at the heart of every theater.

Free tickets will be distributed in a variety of ways across all five boroughs, including the in-person line at The Delacorte Theater, the in-person lottery at The Public Theater, and borough distribution sites. Additionally, TodayTix is The Public's partner for the free virtual ticket lottery distribution.

The Public will welcome audiences back to The Delacorte at full capacity this summer. Proof of a complete COVID-19 vaccination by the date of attendance will be required for access to the facility and theater. Face masks are not required, but are recommended, while in attendance. Public Theater staff and artists are subject to a mandatory vaccination and booster policy, in addition to onsite testing protocols when working within all facilities. For more information on the health and safety protocols this season, please visit thepublic.nyc/safeinthepark.

Since 1962, over five million people have enjoyed more than 150 free productions of Shakespeare and other classical works and musicals at The Delacorte Theater. Conceived by founder Joseph Papp as a way to make great theater accessible to all, The Public's Free Shakespeare in the Park continues to be the bedrock of the Company's mission to increase access and engage the community.

This season, The Public proudly welcomes the return of **Jerome L. Greene Foundation** as season sponsor. The generous support of Jerome L. Greene Foundation helps to sustain The Public's mission of inclusion, creating great theater, boldly conceived, and free for all.

The Public Theater, in partnership with Central Park Conservancy and the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, is embarking on a much-needed revitalization of the 60-year-old Delacorte Theater in Central Park. The plan—a major investment in outdoor cultural space as part of New York's economic recovery—will dramatically improve the home of Free Shakespeare in the Park, addressing critical infrastructure, accessibility, and theatrical needs. The key approved design which will begin construction in Fall 2022 includes accessible and comfortable space for audiences and artists with disabilities, streamlined backstage operations and improved comfort for cast and crew, a revitalized exterior for a more dynamic aesthetic experience, a focus on resilience and sustainability, and lighting improvements, among other benefits. For more information on The Delacorte's revitalization, visit publictheater.org.

To support The Public Theater, become a Supporter or Partner by visiting publictheater.org/supporttoday.

ATO BLANKSON-WOOD (*Orlando*). Broadway credits include *Slave Play* (Tony nomination), *HAIR*, and *Lysistrata Jones*. Off-Broadway credits include *The Rolling Stone* at Lincoln Center Theater (Drama League Award nomination); *Slave Play* at NYTW (Lortel Award nomination); *The Total Bent* at The Public (Drama League and Lortel Award nominations); Public Works' *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, *Transfers* at MCC; *Antigone in Ferguson* at Harlem Stage; The Foundry Theatre's *O, Earth*; and *Iphigenia in Aulis* at CSC. Film/TV credits include *The Same Storm* (upcoming), *Worth*, *BlackKkKlansman*, *The Kindergarten Teacher*, *Detroit*, *It's Kind of a Funny Story*, "Monster" (upcoming, Netflix), "When They See Us" (Netflix), "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" (Amazon), "She's Gotta Have It" (Netflix), and "The Good Fight" (CBS). Blankson-Wood is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and the Yale School of Drama.

DARIUS DE HAAS (*Duke Senior*). Broadway credits include *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Carousel*, *Rent*, *The Gershwin's Fascinating Rhythm*, *Marie Christine*, and *Shuffle Along*. Other notable theater includes *The Waves In Quarantine*, *Running Man* (Obie Award), *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin*, and *Children of Eden*. TV credits include "Dietland," "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" (the singing voice of "Shy Baldwin"), and "In The Life." A concert/recording artist, among de Haas' credits include *You Send Me: The Songs and Soul of Sam Cooke for Lyrics and Lyricists* at The 92nd St Y (conceiver, writer, and performer), *The Lincoln Center American Songbook*, *Duke Ellington Sacred Concert* with Los Angeles

Master Chorale, Carnegie Hall, and many orchestras including the National Symphony, Cincinnati Pops, and Boston Pops. His recordings include *Day Dream: Variations on Strayhorn*, *Quiet Please* (with Steven Blier), and many original cast recordings. de Haas is a founding member of Black Theatre United, an organization whose mission is to inspire reform and combat systemic racism within the theater community and throughout the nation. Please visit www.dariusdehaas.com.

REBECCA NAOMI JONES (*Rosalind*) received a Drama Desk nomination for her portrayal of Laurey in Daniel Fish's Tony Award-winning revival of *Oklahoma!* Other Broadway performances include *Significant Other*, *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*, *American Idiot*, and *Passing Strange*. Her Off-Broadway work includes *Big Love* (Drama League nomination), *Murder Ballad* (Lilly Award, Lucille Lortel nomination), *Describe the Night* (2018 Obie Award for Best Play), *Marie and Rosetta*, *Fire in Dreamland*, *The Fortress of Solitude*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Wig Out!*, and *As You Like It*. Television credits include "And Just Like That," "Genius: Aretha," "High Maintenance," "Strangers," "Sex&Drugs&Rock&Roll," "Inside Amy Schumer," "Limitless," "Difficult People," "Law & Order: SVU," and others. Film credits include *Someone Great*, *The Outside Story*, *French Fries*, *Most Likely To Murder*, *The Big Sick*, *Ratter*, *Ordinary World*, *Passing Strange*, and the documentary *Broadway Idiot*. Solo concerts include Lincoln Center American Songbook and Apollo Cafe. Jones holds a BFA in Drama from the University of North Carolina: School of the Arts.

CHRISTOPHER M. RAMIREZ (*Touchstone*). Regional acting credits include *Quixote Nuevo* (The Denver Center); *HAIR*, *Thinking Shakespeare LOVE!*, *Twelfth Night*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *The Heart of Rock & Roll* (The Old Globe); Disney's *Freaky Friday* (La Jolla Playhouse, Cleveland Play House, Alley Theatre); *Lookingglass Alice* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Man of La Mancha* (Barrington Stage Company); *The Count of Monte Cristo* (Pioneer Theatre Company); *In the Heights* and *Fun Home* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); and *Violet* (Clarence Brown Theatre Company). TV credits include "Instinct" (CBS) and "FBI" (CBS). Ramirez received a BFA from Boston Conservatory and an MFA from the Old Globe/USD Shiley Graduate Theater Program. @c_rambrothaman.

SHAINA TAUB (*As You Like It Adapter and Music & Lyrics/Jaques*) is an Emmy and Drama Desk-nominated songwriter and performer. She is a winner of the Kleban Prize, the Fred Ebb Award, and the Jonathan Larson Grant. Her original musical *Suffs* had its world premiere at The Public Theater earlier this year. She is a signed artist with Atlantic Records, and her third album, *Songs of the Great Hill*, was released this spring. She's an artist-in-residence at The Public Theater, where she has a regular concert residency at Joe's Pub. She's currently writing lyrics for the upcoming Broadway musical *The Devil Wears Prada*, with music by Sir Elton John. She created and starred in musical adaptations of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* that were commissioned and produced by The Public Theater at The Delacorte in Central Park as part of their groundbreaking community-based program, Public Works. Those adaptations have now been produced in London, Seattle, Dallas, and beyond.

SONYA TAYEH (*As You Like It Original Choreography*) is an Tony Award-winning choreographer currently represented on Broadway with *Moulin Rouge! The Musical*. Selected credits include "Rent: Live" (Fox), *The Lucky Ones* (Ars Nova), *Face the Torrent* for Malpaso Dance Co, American Ballet Theatre, *You'll Still Call Me By Name* (commissioned by Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and New York Live Arts), Martha Graham Dance Company's *Lamentation Variation* series and *Canticle* remount (The Joyce/Tour), *Hundred Days* (The Public's Under the Radar Festival and NYTW), and *Kung Fu* (Signature Theatre). Her accolades include two Lortels, an Obie, two Emmy noms, and two Drama Desk Awards. Tayeh has directed and choreographed for world-renowned musical artists such as Madonna, Florence and the Machine, and Miley Cyrus. www.sonyatayeh.com

LURIE WOOLERY (*As You Like It Adapter and Director*) is a director, playwright, community activist, and citizen artist who works in theaters across the country, including The Public Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Goodman Theatre, Cornerstone Theater Company, and South Coast Repertory. Projects include the world premiere of Mary Kathryn Nagle's *Manahatta* at both Yale Repertory and Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the world premiere musical of *As You Like It*, co-created with Shaina Taub for The Public Theater. In 2020, Woolery produced the

documentary *Under The Greenwood Tree* that tells the story of how the Public Works community banded together amidst the global pandemic and anti-racist uprising, as well as curating the national community public art installation *The Seed Project* on the façade of The Public Theater, featuring 164 Public Works community members sharing their hopes for the future. Woolery has developed new work with diverse communities ranging from incarcerated women to residents of a Kansas town devastated by a tornado. She creates site-specific work ranging from a working sawmill in Eureka to the banks of the Los Angeles River. Woolery is the Director of Public Works at The Public Theater, a program that seeks to engage the people of New York by making them creators and not just spectators. Working with partner organizations in all five boroughs, Public Works invites members of diverse communities to join in the creation of ambitious works of participatory theater. Woolery is the former Associate Artistic Director of Cornerstone Theater Company and Conservatory Director at South Coast Repertory. Woolery is a founding member of The Sol Project, 2020 United States Artist recipient, and 2021 American for the Arts Johnson Fellow.

ABOUT JEROME L. GREENE FOUNDATION:

Jerome L. Greene Foundation supports select programs that make a significant impact on the lives of all New Yorkers in the arts, education, medicine, and social justice. Its 40-year history is grounded in the vision of its founder, Jerry Greene, to give back to the city he loved. Today, the Foundation honors this commitment by continuing to fund quality programs and by identifying new ways to increase access to the arts and to education, create opportunities for ground-breaking medical research, and help ensure social justice for all. www.jlgreene.org

ABOUT TODAYTIX:

TodayTix takes the drama out of theatre ticketing. The company caters to today's audiences with diverse shows, prices that can't be beat, and a frictionless, highly rated app. Founded in 2013, with its seamless platform, impressive reach, and first-to-market signature digital Lottery and mobile Rush programs, TodayTix works with over 2,000 partners in numerous markets to attract and engage millions of theatregoers across the world. TodayTix is part of TodayTix Group, the premier discovery and ticketing partner for global cultural events, combining unparalleled inventory, an expansive multi-retailer ecosystem, and unique relationships with theatre and culture's best. To learn more, visit www.todaytix.com or download TodayTix for iOS or Android.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:

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 Lab, 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 60 Tony Awards, 184 Obie Awards, 56 Drama Desk Awards, 59 Lortel Awards, 34 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 58 AUDELCO Awards, 6 Antonyo Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. publictheater.org

The Public Theater stands in honor of the first inhabitants and our ancestors. We acknowledge the land on which The Public and its theaters stand—the original homeland of the Lenape people. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. We honor the generations of stewards and we pay our respects to the many diverse indigenous peoples still connected to this land.

The Public also gives our respect to the people of Seneca Village, a community of Black property owners who were removed from their land and whose village was destroyed in the creation of Central Park. We recognize the sacrifice that these ancestors made and honor Seneca Village's legacy.

Jerome L. Greene Foundation is the proud season sponsor of Free Shakespeare in the Park.

The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

FREE TICKET INFORMATION

Performances of **AS YOU LIKE IT** will begin at The Delacorte Theater on Wednesday, August 10 and run through Sunday, September 11, with an official press opening on Tuesday, August 30.

Tickets to The Public Theater's Free Shakespeare in the Park are distributed in a number of ways. On the day of each public performance, free tickets may be acquired in person at The Delacorte Theater, in person at a borough distribution site, via an in-person lottery in the lobby of The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street, or through a digital lottery via the TodayTix mobile app or website. All tickets are subject to availability.

The **Audio Described** performance will be on Wednesday, August 31 at 8:00 p.m. The **American Sign Language Interpreted** performances will be on Thursday, September 8 at 8:00 p.m. The **Open Caption** performance will be on Sunday, September 11 at 8:00 p.m.

A limited number of tickets are also available via advance reservation by making a contribution in support of Free Shakespeare in the Park. To learn more, or to make a contribution, call **212.967.7555**, or visit publictheater.org.

The full performance calendar can be found at publictheater.org and complete ticket distribution details can be found at thepublic.nyc/parktix22.

The Delacorte Theater in Central Park is accessible by entering at 81st Street and Central Park West or at 79th Street and Fifth Avenue.

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