



# A NOTE

FROM OSKAR EUSTIS

Dear Friends,

**Caryl Churchill is arguably the most influential living playwright in the English language. For over 50 years she has been creating utterly unique, unpredictable plays that combine formal experimentation with deep social engagement.** She's a profoundly political playwright whose work is always esthetically compelling; she's a brilliantly innovative artist whose work tackles the deepest and most difficult issues we face. She isn't the most commercially successful writer we have; indeed, she's never aimed at that kind of success. But her influence on generations of playwrights is unequalled in the Anglo-American theater.

Whether examining changing sexual mores in *Cloud Nine*, the conflict between feminism and individual achievement in *Top Girls*, the history of the penal state in *Soft Cops*, the last gasp of the Ceaușescu regime in *Mad Forest*, or U.S.-British relationships in *Drunk Enough To Say I Love You?*, Caryl has an **astounding ability to weave deep ideas into human and dramatic form, making thought concrete as only the greatest of writers can do.**

The Public has been producing Caryl's work for almost 50 years; not coincidentally, my own relationship with Caryl stretches back almost that far, when I began to produce her work in San Francisco at the same time Joe Papp was presenting her in New York at The Public. Caryl first came to us as part of a brilliant exchange with the Royal Court Theatre in London, where we would exchange playwrights and productions: we began our involvement with Caryl and David Hare; the Royal Court began an equally long relationship with Wallace Shawn. It was a powerful program, fueled by the mission affinities between the theaters, the personal warmth among the artists, and the financial muscle of *A Chorus Line*.

**So with these four gorgeous, mysterious one acts we are celebrating a half century of collaboration** with a writer whose artistry and personal integrity have been profoundly important to me, and to countless other theater artists. Like the late Beckett, Caryl is writing tiny, brilliant jewels, distilled to their essence, deceptively simple and deeply fascinating. Brought to life by her long-time collaborator and Public stalwart James Macdonald, we are so glad to have them here at the Public.



**OSKAR EUSTIS**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE PUBLIC THEATER