



GODDESS REHEARSAL PHOTOS
GODDESS CAST & CREATIVE TEAM HEADSHOTS

PREVIEWS BEGIN FOR NEW YORK PREMIERE OF **GODDESS** APRIL 29; NEW MUSICAL EXTENDS THROUGH JUNE 8

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY MICHAEL THURBER
BOOK BY SAHEEM ALI
CHOREOGRAPHY BY DARRELL GRAND MOULTRIE
ADDITIONAL BOOK MATERIAL BY JAMES IJAMES
DIRECTED BY SAHEEM ALI

Performances Begin with a Joseph Papp Free Preview Performance
On Tuesday, April 29 and Will Now Run Through Sunday, June 8
Official Press Opening on Tuesday, May 20

April 22, 2025 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham) announced an extension for The Public's upcoming musical **GODDESS**. After a successful world premiere at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, **GODDESS** will make its much-anticipated debut in New York. The production will begin in the Newman Theater on Tuesday, April 29, and will now run through Sunday, June 8, with an official press opening on Tuesday, May 20.

GODDESS comes to The Public for its New York premiere featuring music and lyrics by **Michael Thurber**, book and direction by Associate Artistic Director/Resident Director **Saheem Ali**, additional book material by **James Ijames**, and choreography by **Darrell Grand Moultrie**. A mysterious singer arrives at Moto Moto, a steamy Afro-jazz club in Mombasa, Kenya. She casts an entrancing spell on everyone, including a young man who has returned home from studying in America. Will the big plans for his life—stepping into a political legacy and marrying his fiancée—be upended? Inspired by the myth of Marimba, the Goddess who created beautiful songs from her heartbreak, this new musical is a rousing tale of romance, the supernatural, and the quest towards one's truest self.

The **GODDESS** cast includes **Brandon Alvión** (*Ensemble*), **Jason Bowen** (*Madongo*), **George Brown** (*Understudy*), **Nick Rashad Burroughs** (*Ahmed*), **Melessie Clark** (*Griotrio/Understudy*), **Zachary Downer** (*Ensemble*), **Amber Iman** (*Nadira*), **Arica Jackson** (*Rashida*), **Ayana George Jackson** (*Siti*), **Quiantae Mapenzi Johnson** (*Ensemble*), **Christina Jones** (*Ensemble*), **Parris Lewis** (*Understudy*), **Kareem Marsh** (*Swing*), **Nayah Merisier** (*Swing*), **J Paul Nicholas** (*Hassan*), **Isio-Maya Nuwere** (*Ensemble*), **Teshomech Olenja** (*Griotrio/Understudy*), **Destinee Rea** (*Cheche*), **Jasmin Richardson** (*Ensemble*), **Awa Sal Secka** (*Griotrio/Understudy*), **Austin Scott** (*Omari*), **Teddy Trice** (*Ensemble*), **Ekele Ukegbu** (*Understudy*), **Wade Watson** (*Ensemble*), **Reggie D. White** (*Balozí*), and **Christopher Henry Young** (*Understudy*).

The production features scenic design by **Arnulfo Maldonado**, costume design by **Dede Ayite**, lighting design by **Bradley King**, sound design by **Nevin Steinberg**, hair and wig design by **Nikiya Mathis**, puppet

design by **Julian Crouch**, and prop management by **Claire M. Kavanah**. **Thomas Schall** is the production's fight consultant. **Karishma Bhagani** is the cultural consultant. Original casting by **Whitley Theatrical** and Public Theater casting by **Taylor Williams**. The music team for **GODDESS** includes music supervision by **Marco Pagua**, music coordination by **David Lai**, and music direction by **Paul Byssainthe Jr.** **Victoria Navarro** serves as the production stage manager and **Tesia Childs** and **Giselle Andrea Raphaela** are the stage managers.

The Public is currently producing Caryl Churchill's **GLASS. KILL. WHAT IF IF ONLY. IMP.**, a quartet of inventive plays written by groundbreaking playwright **Caryl Churchill** and directed by **James Macdonald**. Following a significant revitalization, The Delacorte Theater, home of Free Shakespeare in the Park, will reopen in Summer 2025 with a production of Shakespeare's classic comedy **TWELFTH NIGHT**, also directed by The Public's Associate Artistic Director/Resident Director, Tony Award nominee **Saheem Ali**, and featuring Public Theater alumni **Khris Davis**, **Peter Dinklage**, **Jesse Tyler Ferguson**, **Lupita Nyong'o**, **Sandra Oh**, and **Daphne Rubin-Vega** and Public debuts **b**, **Junior Nyong'o**, and **Moses Sumney**. Free Shakespeare will also be accessible across the city through Mobile Unit's **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**, in a production directed by **Rebecca Martinez** that will tour the five boroughs, and a new Public Works adaptation of **PERICLES**, with music and lyrics by **Troy Anthony** and directed by **Carl Cofield**, at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

The Library serves food and drink beginning at 6:00 p.m. and closing at midnight. The Library is closed on Mondays. For more information, visit publictheater.org.

GODDESS BIOS:

SAHEEM ALI (*Book and Direction*) is a proud immigrant from Kenya, currently serving as the Associate Artistic Director/Resident Director of New York's Public Theater. He received Tony, Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel nominations, as well as the Joe A. Callaway award for his direction of *Fat Ham*. He most recently developed the *Buena Vista Social Club* musical at Atlantic Theater Company, which is currently running on Broadway. (Drama Desk nom). His production of *Merry Wives* (Free Shakespeare in the Park) was recorded for PBS' "Great Performances" and was the subject of the HBO documentary *Reopening Night*. Other productions include *Good Bones* (The Public); *Nollywood Dreams* (MCC); *Romeo y Julieta*, *Shipwreck*, and *Richard II* (radio plays); *Fires in the Mirror* (Signature Theater); *The Rolling Stone* (Lincoln Center Theater); *Passage* (Soho Rep); *Sugar in Our Wounds* (MTC); *Tartuffe* (Playmakers Rep); *Where Storms Are Born* (Williamstown); and *Kill Move Paradise* (National Black Theater). He is a Usual Suspect at New York Theater Workshop, a Sir John Gielgud SDCF Fellow, a Shubert Fellow and the recipient of an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Directing.

MICHAEL THURBER (*Music and Lyrics*) is a Drama Desk-nominated composer and lyricist. Thurber made his international debut with his score for *Antony and Cleopatra*, a co-production between the RSC and The Public Theater directed by Academy Award winner Tarell McCraney. He has composed scores for numerous other Public Theater productions, including the 2021 Free Shakespeare in the Park *Merry Wives*; and *Romeo y Julieta*, a radio play starring Lupita Nyong'o. Thurber was the 2020 recipient of the Bryan Gallace Fellowship grant via SPACE@Ryder Farm. He was the bassist on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" under the leadership of Jon Batiste. He has performed globally with many artists including Chris Thile, Willie Nelson, James Taylor, Mavis Staples, David Byrne, Lawrence, Alisa Weilerstein, Louis Cato, and many more. Thurber teaches at NYU's Clive Davis Institute. He studied music at Juilliard and the Interlochen Arts Academy.

JAMES IJAMES (*Additional Book Material*) is a playwright and educator. Ijames is the recipient of the 2022 Pulitzer in Drama for *Fat Ham*, a Pew Fellow for Playwriting, the Terrance McNally New Play Award for *White*, the Kesselring Honorable Mention Prize for *...Miz Martha*, a Whiting Award, a Kesselring Prize for *Kill Move Paradise*, and a 2020 and 2022 Steinberg Prize. The 2023 Broadway production of *Fat Ham* received 5 Tony nominations including Best Play. Ijames an Associate Professor of Theatre at Villanova University.

DARRELL GRAND MOULTRIE (*Choreography*). A recipient of the Princess Grace Choreography Fellowship Award and a graduate of The Juilliard School, Moultrie's select credits include *Fat Ham* (Broadway & The Public), *Good Bones* (The Public), *Merry Wives* (Free Shakespeare in the Park), *Goddess* (Berkeley Rep), *Space Dogs* (MCC), Disney's new revival of *Aida* (the Netherlands), *Invisible Thread* (Second Stage), *Daddy* (The New Group/Vineyard Theatre), *Sugar in Our Wounds* (MTC), and *Witness Uganda* (ART). Moultrie has choreographed premieres for dance companies around the world including American Ballet Theatre, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Smuin Ballet, and Milwaukee Ballet. Moultrie served as a choreographer on Beyonce's "Mrs. Carter" world tour.

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 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 and *Hell's Kitchen* by Alicia Keys and Kristoffer Diaz. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 64 Tony Awards, 195 Obie Awards, 62 Drama Desk Awards, 63 Lortel Awards, 36 Outer Critics Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 70 AUDELCO Awards, 6 Antony 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.

GODDESS is produced by special arrangement with **Mara Isaacs, No Guarantees Productions,** and **Rashad V. Chambers.**

Principal production support at The Public provided by **Teresa Tsai Productions.**

Generous support for **GODDESS** is provided by **Reade St Productions/Cathy Dantchik** and **The Otis Booth Foundation.**

Special thanks to **Andrew B. Cogan** and the **Anna L. Weissberger Foundation.**

Musical theater productions at The Public receive support from **The Mandy Hackett Musical Theater Fund.**

The world premiere of **GODDESS** was produced in August 2022 by **Berkeley Repertory Theatre.**

TICKET INFORMATION

GODDESS begins performances in The Public's Newman Theater with a Joseph Papp Free Performance on Tuesday, April 29 and officially opens on Tuesday, May 20. Originally scheduled to close on Sunday, June 1, the production has now been extended through Sunday, June 8.

Tickets are available now and can be accessed by visiting publictheater.org, calling **212.967.7555**, or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street.

The Public's Joseph Papp Free Performance initiative will offer free tickets to the performance on Tuesday, April 29 through TodayTix. The Lottery will open for entries on Monday, April 28. Winners will be notified by email and push notification anytime from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and if selected, winners will have one hour to claim their tickets.

The performance schedule is Tuesday through Sunday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. (*There will be no performance on Saturday, May 3. The performance on Wednesday, May 28 will be at 8:00 p.m.*)

The **Open Captioned** performance will be on Friday, May 30 at 7:00 p.m. The **American Sign Language Interpreted** performance will be on Saturday, May 31 at 1:00 p.m. The **Audio Described** performance will be on Sunday, June 1 at 1:00 p.m. The performance on May 25 at 1:00 p.m. will **require patrons to wear masks**. A Black Theater Night, a community performance for the African Diaspora, will be on Friday, May 9 at 7:00pm with a post-show reception. To access tickets for this performance, use code **GODDESSBTN**.

The full performance calendar can be found at publictheater.org.

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