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Denée Benton



Ato Blankson-Wood



Lori Brown-Niang



Kenneth Collins



Allyson Kaye Daniel



Amina Faye



Joel Frost



Debra Harewood



Crystal Lucas-Perry



Erika Myers



Alex Newell



Stephen Scott Wormley

PHOTOS: CAST AND CREATIVE HEADSHOTS

PHOTOS: VENUE AND PAST PUBLIC WORKS PRODUCTIONS

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR *PERICLES: A PUBLIC WORKS CONCERT EXPERIENCE*

By William Shakespeare

Music and Lyrics by Troy Anthony

Choreography by Tiffany Rea-Fisher

Directed by Carl Cofield

**Free Limited Engagement at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine
Runs August 29-September 2**

**Cast Includes 100 Public Works Community Members From
Partner Organizations Across All Five Boroughs
Alongside Denée Benton, Ato Blankson-Wood, Lori Brown-Niang,
Kenneth Collins, Allyson Kaye Daniel, Amina Faye, Joel Frost,
Debra Harewood, Crystal Lucas-Perry, Erika Myers, Alex Newell,
and Stephen Scott Wormley**

July 23, 2025 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced casting today for **PERICLES: A Public Works Concert Experience**, a new adaptation with music and lyrics by **Troy Anthony**, choreography by **Tiffany Rea-Fisher**, and direction by **Carl Cofield**. The free production will run at the awe-inspiring **Cathedral of St. John the Divine** Friday, August 29 through Tuesday, September 2.

This season's Public Works production is a powerful concert experience of **PERICLES**, the Bard's epic about losing and re-discovering faith. Reconceived by playwright and songwriter **Troy Anthony**, this magnificent new production performed by Public Works community members from all over New York City, is a celebration of life, love, and transformation. Inspired by Gospel music and the rousing power of the Black church, this new concert adaptation will be performed in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Associate Artistic Director of the Classical Theatre of Harlem **Carl Cofield** directs.

"As a member of the Public Works community myself, I was thrilled to write a show *for* the community I love so much. I have been in many roles with Public Works, from working as an administrator and teacher at the Public Works partner organization DreamYard to performing in several productions over the years, so I really knew *who* I was writing for," said composer **Troy Anthony**. "Public Works is community at its best and is all about hard-won joy. This show is a balm for your soul—the medicine that we need right now. It's so special to do this at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, as this play is what I imagine church should be: a place for all people."

The Equity cast of **PERICLES** includes **Denée Benton** (*Thaisa*), **Ato Blankson-Wood** (*Pericles*), **Lori Brown-Niang** (*Bawd*), **Kenneth Collins** (*Simonides*), **Allyson Kaye Daniel** (*Understudy Gower/Thaisa/Diana*), **Amina Faye** (*Marina*), **Joel Frost** (*Cleon*), **Debra Harewood** (*Helicanus*), **Crystal Lucas-Perry** (*Gower*), **Erika Myers** (*Dionyza*), **Alex Newell** (*Diana*), and **Stephen Scott Wormley** (*Understudy Pericles*). They are joined by 100 New Yorkers from all five boroughs.

In addition to Public Works' long-term community partners across New York City, **The Fire Ensemble** joins **PERICLES** as a show-specific partner. Led by **PERICLES** composer Troy Anthony, The Fire Ensemble is a community-centered production company creating revolutionary new work rooted in music, ritual, and revelation by gathering through choirs that foster collective liberation and intergenerational healing. The Fire Ensemble invites a range of community members to rehearse, workshop, and perform in transformative large-scale music theater works rooted in predominantly Black musical styles including gospel, R&B, and musical theater.

"We are so lucky that Troy comes from an incredible community practice and has cultivated a choir that centers BIPOC and Queer New Yorkers," said Director of Civic Artistic Programs **Pablo Hernandez Basulto**. "Given the missions of The Fire Ensemble and Public Works align so well, we're excited to have a show-specific partnership for the first time and welcome members of The Fire Ensemble to be a part of this special concert experience."

"Although Public Works typically performs at The Delacorte Theater, we're thrilled to perform *Pericles* at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine while The Delacorte reopens with *Twelfth Night*," he continued. "Creating theater in non-traditional venues is something The Public's Mobile Unit has been exploring for years, and we're excited to join in on the fun with the Public Works community. The Cathedral is a beautiful and fitting location for this story that deals with the loss of faith in the face of insurmountable grief, and this new adaptation that is deeply inspired by gospel music—with the special flavor of Public Works!"

Public Works' **PERICLES** features production design by **Riw Rakkulchon**, lighting design by **Melissa Mizell**, co-sound design by **Justin Stasiw** and **Walter Trarbach**, dramaturgy by **Jesse Cameron Alick**, music supervision by **Troy Anthony**, music coordination by **Kristy Norter**, and music direction by **Sam Appiah**. **Michael Domue** is the production stage manager, and **Aisling Galvin** and **Adalhia Hart** are the stage managers.

"I'm honored to be collaborating with the brilliant Troy Anthony on this bold, contemporary reimagining of Shakespeare's *Pericles*. This play, with its sweeping journey through loss, resilience, and renewal, resonates deeply with me, especially its central message: to hold fast to hope in the face of adversity. That enduring call to 'keep the faith' is what draws me to Shakespeare's thornier works, and it's what makes *Pericles* feel so timely and urgent today," said director **Carl Cofield**. "To bring this story to life alongside such a passionate, visionary community of artists is both a privilege and a profound reminder of why I remain committed to this powerful art form. This is the type of work that I have the honor to grapple with at the Classical Theatre of Harlem. I am deeply grateful to The Public, Troy, and this wonderful community."

This is a free, non-ticketed production, and seating is first-come, first-served. The public can mark their interest online at publictheater.org to receive performance reminders, directions, and other pertinent information.

PUBLIC WORKS, a major civic artistic program of The Public Theater, aims to restore and build community by connecting people through the creation of extraordinary works of art. Working with partner organizations in all five boroughs, Public Works invites community members to take classes, participate in programming, attend performances, and join in the creation of ambitious works of participatory theater. Public Works 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 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).

Public Works' **PERICLES** closes 2025's **SHAKESPEARE FOR THE CITY**, The Public's annual summer celebration of free programming bringing world-class theater to audiences through New York City, presented by Citizens. Mobile Unit kicked off the summer, touring a free bilingual production of **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING** to the five boroughs throughout June. In August, the newly renovated Delacorte Theater will reopen a dazzling Free Shakespeare in the Park production of **TWELFTH NIGHT**. Each performance is completely free and open to all. Join The Public in celebrating the joy, power, and transformative connection of live theater. Free. For all. Forever.

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

BIOS:

TROY ANTHONY (*Music & Lyrics*) is a Kentucky-born composer, director, and theater-maker based in NYC rigorously practicing Black queer joy. He is the Founding Creative Director of Fire Ensemble Inc. where he focuses on the intersection between musical theater, community practice, and social justice. He has presented work at 54 Below, JACK, Joe's Pub, Prospect Theater Company, and Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. Commissions include 5th Avenue Theater, The Civilians, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Public Theater, St. Louis Rep, and The Shed. Anthony has over 15 years of experience in youth and community development work with organizations such as the Kentucky Center's Governor's School for the Arts, the Vermont Governor's Institute on the Arts and The Public Theater. He was the first Director of Legacy and Internship Programs at the DreamYard Project in The Bronx where he focused on the importance of emerging leadership.

CARL COFIELD (*Director*) is the Chair of Graduate Acting at NYU and Associate Artistic Director of the award-winning Classical Theatre of Harlem. His directing credits include the world premiere of *The XIXth* by Kemp Powers for the Old Globe, *Seize the King* and *The Bacchae* (both New York Times Critic's Picks), *MEMNON* (Getty Villa), *One Night in Miami* (Rogue Machine, Denver Center), and *King Lear* starring André De Shields and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (CTH). Other regional credits include *A Raisin in the Sun* and an Afro-futuristic *Twelfth Night* (Yale Rep and CTH), *Disgraced* (Denver Center), and *The Mountaintop* (Cleveland Play House). Cofield helmed *The Princeton & Slavery Plays* at McCarter Theatre, collaborating with renowned playwrights. His acting work spans prestigious theaters nationwide, including Manhattan Theatre Club, Arena Stage, Berkeley Rep and others. Honors include an NAACP Theatre Award, an L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, AUDELCO, and others. Cofield received an MFA from Columbia School of the Arts.

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE. Over one hundred years ago, the trustees of the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine conceived its mission to be a house of prayer for all people, an instrument

of church unity, and a center of intellectual light and leading in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Today, as the mother church of the Episcopal Diocese of New York and the seat of its bishop, the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine serves the many diverse people of our diocese, city, nation and world through the worship of God; pastoral, educational and community outreach activities; cultural and civic events; international ecumenical initiatives; and the preservation of the great architectural and historic site that is its legacy. stjohndivine.org

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 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 musicals *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, 61 Lortel Awards, 36 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 70 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.

CITIZENS is the presenting partner of **SHAKESPEARE FOR THE CITY**.

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