

THE PUBLIC.



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PRESS KIT

PUBLIC FORUM RELAUNCHES AT THE DELACORTE THEATER WITH *QUICK, BRIGHT, THINGS COME TO CONFUSION, OR WHAT WE DO FOR LOVE* ON MONDAY, JUNE 15

Free One-Night-Only Event Will Feature

Frankie J. Alvarez, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Grantham Coleman, Micaela Diamond, J. Harrison Ghee, Rebecca Naomi Jones, Matty Maggiacomo, James Shapiro, Christian Slater, Ayanna Thompson, Logan Ury

June 10, 2026 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) proudly announces the return of the renowned Public Forum series to The Delacorte Theater in Central Park, beginning with free event **QUICK, BRIGHT, THINGS COME TO CONFUSION, OR WHAT WE DO FOR LOVE** on **Monday, June 15 at 8:00 p.m.**

With its madcap romances, busted friendships, and chaotic fairy magic, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has surprised and delighted audiences for more than 400 years. **Frankie J. Alvarez, Grantham Coleman, Micaela Diamond, J. Harrison Ghee, Rebecca Naomi Jones, Matty Maggiacomo, and Christian Slater** will present Shakespeare's story of the play's four young lovers in all their lovestruck comic confusion, sparking a conversation about why and how we do so many crazy, inspired, devoted, disloyal things in our friendships and love affairs. The program is curated by **Alexa Smith** and **Jeremy McCarter**.

Audiences will hear insights from **Kwame Anthony Appiah**, the NYU philosopher who writes the weekly "Ethicist" column in *The New York Times Magazine* and serves as Public Theater trustee; **James Shapiro**, Public Theater Shakespeare Scholar in Residence since 2012 and Larry Miller Professor of English at Columbia University; **Ayanna Thompson**, Public Theater Shakespeare Scholar in Residence and Regents Professor of English at Arizona State University; and **Logan Ury**, Hinge's Lead Relationship Scientist and author of *How to Not Die Alone*.

Monday evenings, typically the night off from The Public's Free Shakespeare in the Park performances, will now feature the revival of the **PUBLIC FORUM** series. The series will feature a distinctive mix of performance and conversation and a focus on American voices on this year's 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Free tickets will be made available on each Public Forum date via the line at The Delacorte, evening Standby at The Delacorte, digital lottery with TodayTix, and an in-person lottery at The Public. For more information, visit publictheater.org.

PUBLIC FORUMS

AMERICAN SUBLIME

June 22

An in-progress theatrical exploration inspired by artist **Amy Sherald**'s acclaimed body of work, originally exhibited as *American Sublime* at major US museums, is now taking shape for the stage. The evening will feature live performance excerpts alongside a conversation with Sherald and director **Zhailon Levingston**, joined by additional collaborating artists, reflecting on the creative process and the evolution of Sherald's work for the stage. Creatively developed in association with National Black Theatre (Sade Lythcott, Chief Executive Officer; Jonathan McCrory, Executive Artistic Director) and JamRock Productions. Participants include **James Ijames**, **Niles Luther**, and **Anna Deavere Smith**.

CITIES UNDER SIEGE

June 29

The arrival of an estimated 3,000 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in Minnesota—dubbed Operation Metro Surge—began a period of significant civic unrest with far-reaching impact on public safety, law enforcement, the local economy and workforce, education, and the daily lives of Minnesotans. In January 2026, The Public Theater and The Guthrie Theater partnered to commission acclaimed documentary theater artists **Jessica Blank** and **Erik Jensen** to capture firsthand interviews, begin in-depth engagement with affected communities, and embark on the creation of a new play featuring Minnesotans' real experiences. This special Forum evening will feature excerpts from this urgent work in progress and discussion around how cities and civilians respond in moments of crisis.

DIVISION AND RENEWAL: AN EVENING WITH MICHAEL SANDEL

August 10

American society has rarely been more polarized. How did we reach this moment of crisis, and what can any of us do to repair what has been broken? **Michael Sandel**, the Harvard professor and globally acclaimed "rock-star philosopher," will return to The Delacorte Theater for a night of public philosophy, engaging an audience of New Yorkers in a spirited conversation about meritocracy, dignity, and where we go from here.

SUMMER BOOK CLUB CELEBRATION WITH THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

August 17

Calling all New Yorkers! As part of its annual Summer at the Library programming, **The New York Public Library**, in partnership with The Public Theater, invites New Yorkers to join a summer book club and read **N.K. Jemisin's** *The City We Became* together. The book club will culminate in a marquee event at The Delacorte Theater featuring readings, commissioned performances, and public conversation inspired by and celebrating the book.

BIOS

FRANKIE J. ALVAREZ. Film: *Disclosure Day* (dir. Steven Spielberg), *Vandal* (dir. JD Freixas), *Looking: The Movie* (dir. Andrew Haigh). TV (selected): Agustín in HBO'S "Looking," "Let the Right One In," "Law & Order: SVU," multiple pilots. NY: *Wet Brain* (PH/MCC). Regional (selected): Williamstown, LJP, OSF, McCarter. Education: BFA, FSU; MFA, The Juilliard School.

KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH, Silver Professor of Philosophy and Law at NYU, grew up in Ghana and was educated at Cambridge University, where he received both a BA and a PhD in philosophy. He taught previously at the University of Ghana, Cambridge, Yale, Cornell, Duke, Harvard, and Princeton. His books include *Assertion and Conditionals*, *For Truth in Semantics*, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, *The Ethics of Identity*, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, *The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen*, and *The Lies that Bind: Rethinking Identity* and two textbook introductions to philosophy. He is also the author of three mystery novels. Professor Appiah is President of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Fellow of the Royal Society, the Royal Society of Literature, and the British

Academy, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. He has served as President of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association and as Chair of its Board. He began writing the Ethicist column for the New York Times Sunday magazine in 2015 and has written frequently in the New York Review of Books. President Obama presented him with a National Humanities Medal in 2012. In 2024, he was awarded the Kluge Prize for Achievement in the Study of Humanity by the Library of Congress.

GRANTHAM COLEMAN. Broadway: *Macbeth*, *The Great Society*. Off-Broadway: *Richard II*, *Wine in the Wilderness*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Buzzer*, *Choir Boy*, *One Night, We Are Proud to Present...*, *As You Like It*. Regional: *The Tempest*, *Sweat*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo & Juliet*. Film: *Rustin*, *Bardo*, *Black Bear*, *Seberg*. Television: "Emperor of Ocean Park," "Bass Reeves," "Power Book III: Raising Kanan," "Red Bird Lane," "The Carmichael Show," "NCIS: Los Angeles," "Doubt," "11.22.63," "Murder in the First," "The Night Shift," "The Americans." Grantham is a graduate of The Juilliard School.

MICAELA DIAMOND is a Tony and Grammy Award-nominated actor for her portrayal of Lucille Frank in *Parade* on Broadway. She made her Broadway debut as Babe, the youngest Cher, in *The Cher Show*. She has also appeared in *The Seat of Our Pants* at The Public Theater (Outer Critics and Drama Desk nominations), Stephen Sondheim's final musical *Here We Are* at The Shed, Leonard Bernstein's opera *Mass* at the Kennedy Center, *Row* at Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Ethan Coen's *A Play Is a Poem* in Los Angeles. TV/Film: Ryan Murphy's "Grotesquerie" (Hulu), *Tick, Tick...Boom!* (Netflix) "Elsbeth" (CBS), "Jesus Christ Superstar Live" (Hulu), and "Up Here" (Hulu).

J. HARRISON GHEE is a Tony and Grammy Award-winning actor, making history in 2023 as the first non-binary performer to win Best Leading Actor in a Musical for their dual role in *Some Like It Hot*. Recently, Ghee starred in *Hadestown* on Broadway, the Off-Broadway hit *Saturday Church*, and the premiere of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Other Broadway roles include *Kinky Boots*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Chicago*, and *The Sting*. On television, Ghee has appeared in FOX's "Accused," Netflix's "Raising Dion," NBC's "Stumble," and HBO's "High Maintenance." Ghee hopes to inspire others to dream big and go full-out.

REBECCA NAOMI JONES Broadway: *Hadestown*, *Stereophonic*, *Oklahoma!*, *Significant Other*, *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*, *American Idiot*, *Passing Strange*. Off-Broadway highlights: *Mother Russia*, *I Can Get It for You Wholesale*, *Big Love*, *Murder Ballad*, *As You Like It*, *Marie and Rosetta*. Television highlights: "Your Friends and Neighbors" (current), "Genius: Aretha," "Raising Kanan," "Black Cake," "Sex&Drugs&Rock&Roll," "High Maintenance." Film highlights: *Alone at Dawn* (upcoming), *Influenced*, *The Big Sick*, *Someone Great*. BFA in Drama from the University of North Carolina: School of the Arts.

MATTY MAGGIACOMO is a Peloton instructor who has inspired millions with his warm, neighborly approach to fitness. A trained broadcast journalist, on-air reporter, and producer, he is a natural storyteller in every arena — including as host of Drama Club with Matty, a podcast celebrating the world of theatre. Matty creates community wherever he goes, using his platform to champion inclusivity, celebrate individuality, and advocate boldly for LGBTQIA+ rights.

JAMES SHAPIRO, who teaches Shakespeare at Columbia University, has been a Shakespeare Scholar in Residence at The Public Theater since 2012. Among his prizewinning books are *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (2005) and *Shakespeare in a Divided America* (2020).

CHRISTIAN SLATER was most recently seen in A24's award-winning *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You*, which premiered at the 2025 Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals and in Sam Shepard's *The Curse of the Starving Class*, in which he starred opposite Calista Flockhart. He will next be seen in season four of the Apple TV+ comedy series "Shrinking" and the upcoming action-comedy heist film *How to Rob a Bank*, directed by David Leitch. Slater is perhaps best known for his work in "Mr. Robot" for which he received Critics Choice and Golden Globe Awards and multiple nominations. He starred in the award-winning FX series from 2015-

2019 opposite Rami Malek. Other recent TV credits include “Dr. Death,” which garnered him a Critics Choice Award nomination, and “Dexter: Original Sin” on Showtime + Paramount. His film credits include *The Wife* with Glenn Close and Lars Von Trier’s *Nymphomaniac* in addition to cult hits *Heathers* and *True Romance*. Slater has also led a prolific stage career. On Broadway, he starred in *The Glass Menagerie* and on the West End, he starred in *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *Swimming With Sharks*, among many others. Slater is repped by UTA.

AYANNA THOMPSON is a Regents Professor of English at Arizona State University, and the executive director of the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. She is the author of many titles, including *Blackface* and *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Peter Sellars*. Thompson is a member of the board of trustees of the Royal Shakespeare Company and is a Shakespeare Scholar in Residence at The Public Theater in New York.

LOGAN URY is Hinge’s Lead Relationship Scientist, a behavioral scientist turned dating coach, and the author of the bestselling book *How to Not Die Alone: The Surprising Science That Will Help You Find Love*. She’s the host of the Netflix series “The Later Daters,” from executive producer Michelle Obama. She works as Hinge’s Director of Relationship Science, conducting research on modern dating. She also writes the popular weekly newsletter, *Logan’s Love Letter*, which has 100,000 weekly readers. She studied psychology at Harvard and ran Google’s behavioral science team, the Irrational Lab. She lives in the Bay Area with her husband Scott and their toddler.

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, 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 64 Tony Awards, 197 Obie Awards, 63 Drama Desk Awards, 66 Lortel Awards, 36 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics’ Circle Awards, 72 AUDELCO Awards, 6 Antonyo Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. <http://www.publictheater.org/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.

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