

Know Before You Go To The Public Theater

A Visual Guide

THE PUBLIC.



Photo by Aislinn Weidele

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC THEATER</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>THE HISTORY OF OUR BUILDING</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>THE BUILDING TODAY</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>LOBBY MAP</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>THEATER SPACES</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE BUILDING</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>PURCHASING TICKETS</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>GETTING TO THE PUBLIC</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>ARRIVING AT THE PUBLIC</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>BEFORE THE SHOW</u>	<u>30</u>

WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC THEATER!

We are so excited to welcome you to [The Public Theater](#)! This guide can help you prepare and feel comfortable before joining us.

The Public Theater has two spaces, a large building near Astor Place, and [The Delacorte Theater](#) in Central Park, home to Shakespeare in the Park.

This guide is for the downtown location at 425 Lafayette Street, between 4th Street and Astor Place.

While the photos may be from previous seasons and shows, the information in here remains up-to-date and current.



Photo by Joseph Augstein

The Public Theater & Shakespeare in the Park Land Acknowledgments

The Public Theater stands in honor of the first people and our ancestors. We acknowledge the land on which The Public and its theaters stand—the original homeland of the Lenape people— and the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory.

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. Read our full [Land Acknowledgement](#).



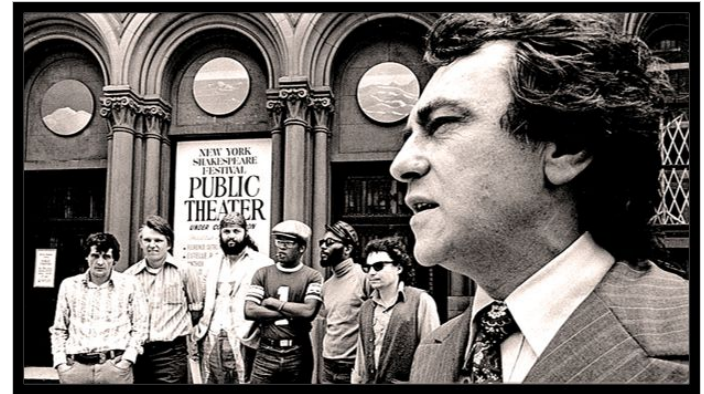
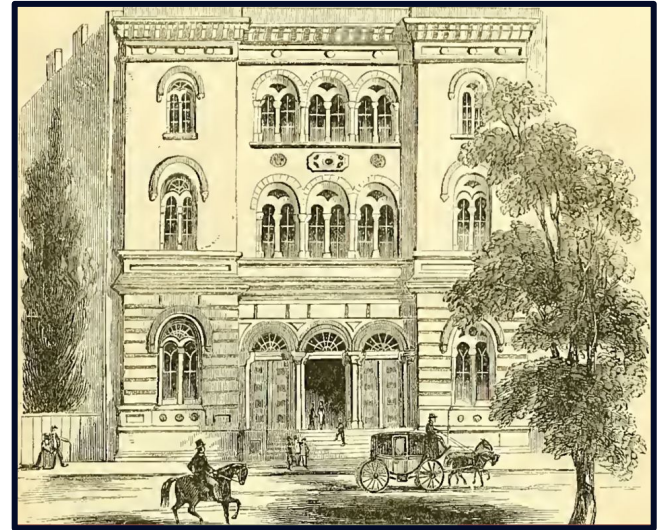
THE HISTORY OF OUR BUILDING

The building was first built in 1854 as The Astor Library, the first free public reference library in New York City. It expanded two times, with the final expansion in 1881. It was also the site Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, a refugee center, from 1920-1965.

In 1965, it became one of the first city historic landmarks, and on the National Register of Historic Places.

Then, in 1967 it was renovated to become The Public Theater.

The age, various uses, and the historic preservation makes the building unique to be a theater space. In this guide, we will try to name the quirks.



THE BUILDING TODAY

The Public Theater building is open to all, on most days 10am-midnight, even if you don't have a ticket to the show.

We have public restrooms, water fountain with cups, free phone charger lockers, free wifi (PT-Guest), cushioned benches with bistro style tables throughout the lobby.

You can also enjoy [Bar Torino](#), our brand new lobby cafe with coffee, sandwiches, sweets, and drinks.
Open from 10am-10pm

[The Astor Tavern](#), (previously called The Library), our new restaurant on the mezzanine serving dinner and drinks from 5pm--11pm



THE BUILDING TODAY

Restrooms are only on the lobby level. When facing Bar Torino, they are down the hallway to your left, past the elevator.

We have two large restrooms with many stalls, including accessible stalls. The restrooms have bright fluorescent lights

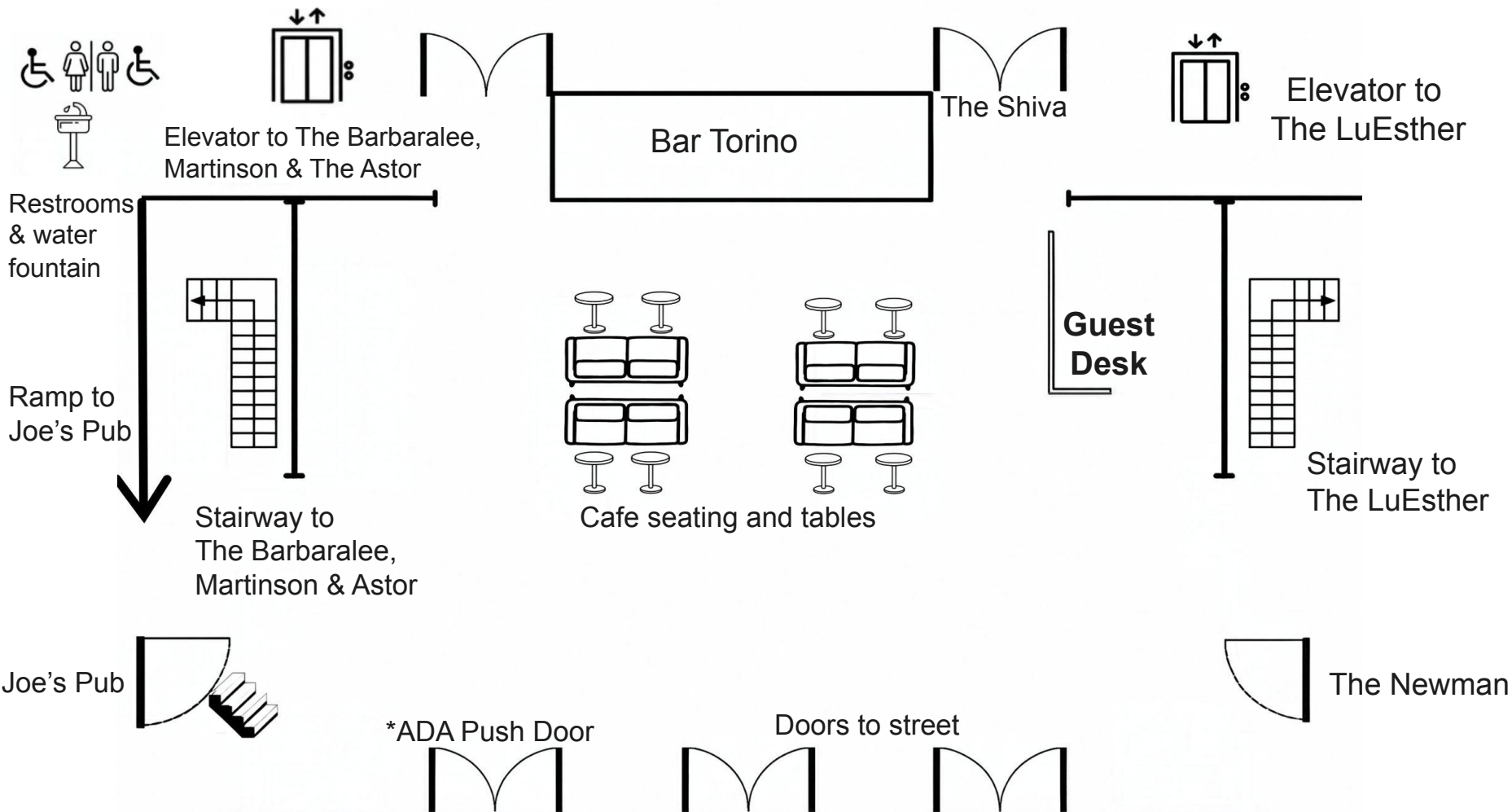
Gender diversity is welcomed, and you can use the restroom that most aligns with your gender identity. There are all gender restrooms available, and also companion restrooms available. You may ask a staff member to access them.

Please note, if you leave the theater to use the restroom, reentry into the theater is at the discretion of house manager.

There is a free charging station with lockers, a water fountain with cups, and sanitizer by the restrooms.



LOBBY MAP



THEATER SPACES

In addition to our open public spaces, we have have [five stages](#) and a dinner-cabaret venue, which are only open with a ticket to the performance in the space.

Our venues includes:

- [The Newman Theater](#)
- [The Shiva Theater](#)
- [The LuEsther Hall](#)
- [The Barbaralee Theater](#)
- [The Martinson Hall](#)
- [Joe's Pub](#)



[All spaces](#) have wheelchair accessible seating. Guests are encouraged to contact us at 212.967.7555 or email us at accessibility@publictheater.org to connect about specific access needs or with questions about accessible seating.

Restrooms are only in the lobby, not in individual theaters.

THE NEWMAN

The Newman is the largest of our theater spaces, with about 299 seats. It is where some of our biggest shows have premiered, including HAMILTON, HELL'S KITCHEN, SUFFS, and A CHORUS LINE. It is on the first floor to the right when walking into the lobby.

The entrance for the Newman is at the top of the theater and accessed after climbing 8 stairs with handrails available. The seating is stadium style, which may require walking down the stairs to access your seats.

Most seats in the Newman are cushioned chairs that tip up when empty. The ADA seats are static with a width of 20 inches and depth of 24 inches.

The theater is equipped with a wheelchair lift and stairs can be avoided. Please ask a Front of House staff member for assistance with the lift or for an alternate route.



THE SHIVA

The Shiva is our smallest and most flexible space with approximately 99 seats.

It is on the first floor, behind Bar Torino.

Accessible seating is located in the first row. The rest of the seats require The first row does not require any stairs. The rest of the seats are only accessible by stairs.

The seats in the Shiva have a small black cushion with a small wooden arm rest between seats.



THE LUESTHER HALL

The Luesther Hall is on the third floor. It can be accessed by the South Elevator or by Staircase C on the South Side. While it is on the 3rd floor, it is 6 flights of stairs.

It is a flexible space, with seating configurations able to change for each show. The capacity is 160 seats.

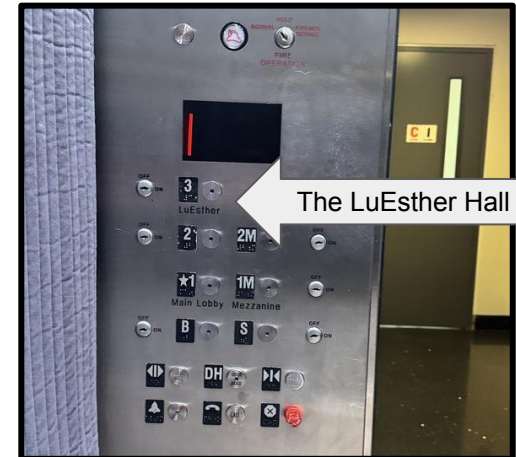
The front row has accessible seats. The rest typically require stairs to access.

The seats in the LuEsther have a small black cushion with a small wooden arm rest between seats.

The seats are 21 inches wide and deep.



**LUESTHER HALL
STAGE**



THE BARBARALEE

The Barbaralee (previously The Anspacher) is on the second floor, with a capacity of 275 seats. You can take the North Elevator or Staircase.

It is a “thrust” stage, which means audiences sit on 3 of the 4 sides of the stage. The actors are directed to face all three sides throughout the show, so you may not always see their faces.

Entrance to the theater is usually climbing 14 stairs with handrails available, then down stairs to your seats. The front row is entirely accessible. For accessible entrance, Front of House staff will take through a stage door. Since actors use this entrance, it is only possible to enter through this space before and after the show.

Most seats in the Barbaralee are cushioned chairs that tip up when empty. The ADA seats are static with a width of 20 inches and depth of 24 inches.



THE MARTINSON

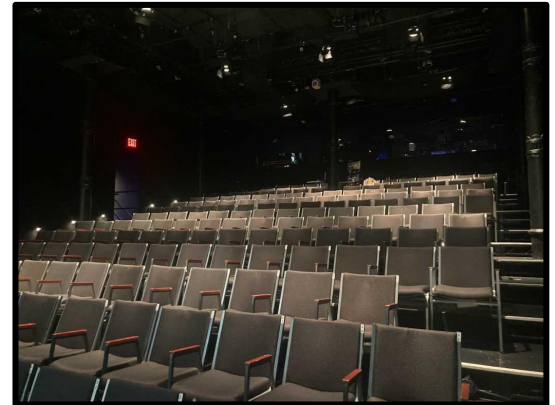
The Martinson Hall is on the third floor, it has a capacity of 199.

It can be accessed by the North Elevator or Staircase. Please note, that while it is the third floor, it is 6 flights of stairs.

The front row is entirely accessible. The rest of the seats require stairs.

The seats in the Martinson have a small black cushion with a small wooden armrest between seats.

The seats are 21 inches wide and deep.

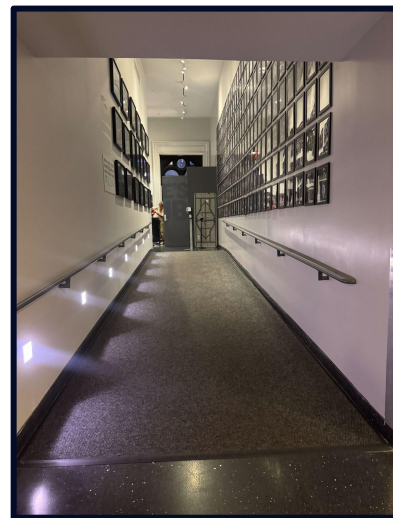


JOE'S PUB

Joe's Pub is our cabaret style dinner venue. It often has two different shows a night.

It is located on our lobby level, directly to the left when you walk into the lobby. It is accessed by three stairs, or a ramp. The middle section is entirely accessible.

In addition to a ticket, Joe's Pub has a [two drink or one food](#) item minimum.



First Three Photos by Eric Helgas

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE BUILDING

The building is on top of a subway line, sometimes while in the lobby or in the theaters on the first floor you can hear or feel a slight shake of the train passing by underneath.

While each theater has heavy doors to help block sound, sometimes sounds from different theaters. This may include music or some sound effects from one show. Occasionally, sirens or other city noises from outside can be heard.

Above the seats in the lobby, there is an art-installation chandelier that has bright flashing LED lights that changes designs or display words. This can be especially bright at night with the dim lobby lights.

The lobby can become crowded and loud, especially between 6pm-8pm, when shows typically begin. You can ask the Front of House staff in the lobby for ear plugs or headphones.



THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE BUILDING

It is a public space, open for all. People not affiliated with the theater often sit outside on the steps, use the restroom, or sit down and cool off or warm up.

We have community agreements posted outside the building and pictured here. This reminds our visitors to keep The Public safe, respectful and accessible for everyone.

The community agreements include:

- Be courteous and kind
- Keep doorways, ramps, and pathways clear
- No smoking
- Respect the space and others, clean up after yourself
- No harassment, aggressive or threatening behavior, or weapons

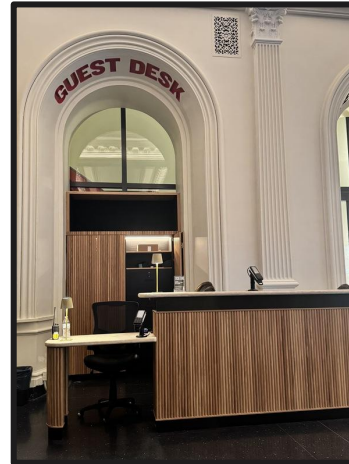


PURCHASING TICKETS

If you're planning to see a show at The Public, we recommend purchasing tickets ahead of time. You can try to purchase tickets on the day of the show, but they may not be available.

You can purchase tickets for any show before your visit by:

- Going to the [Public Theater's website](#)
- Calling Audience Services at 212.967.7555
- Visiting the Public Theater's Guest Desk at 425 Lafayette Street (opens at 5pm Monday-Friday and 1 hour before the first matinee on Saturday & Sunday)



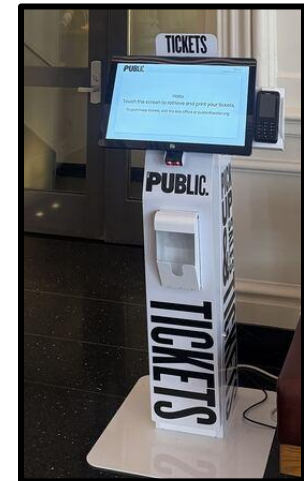
PURCHASING TICKETS

When you purchase a ticket, you can select your seat based on the seats that are available.

Guests are encouraged to contact us at 212.967.7555 or email us at accessibility@publictheater.org to connect about specific access needs or with questions about accessible seating.

If you like to take breaks during an event, you may want to pick a seat close to an exit. Reentry is at the discretion of the Theater House Management.

When you purchase a ticket online, you have the option to have a physical ticket or a digital ticket on your phone. You can pick up your physical ticket at the Guest Desk, or using one of the kiosks throughout the lobby.



ACCESSIBILITY

The Public Theater strives to make its performances, digital content, and facilities accessible to all people.

On each show page we list sound, light, or content sensitivities

For all performances:

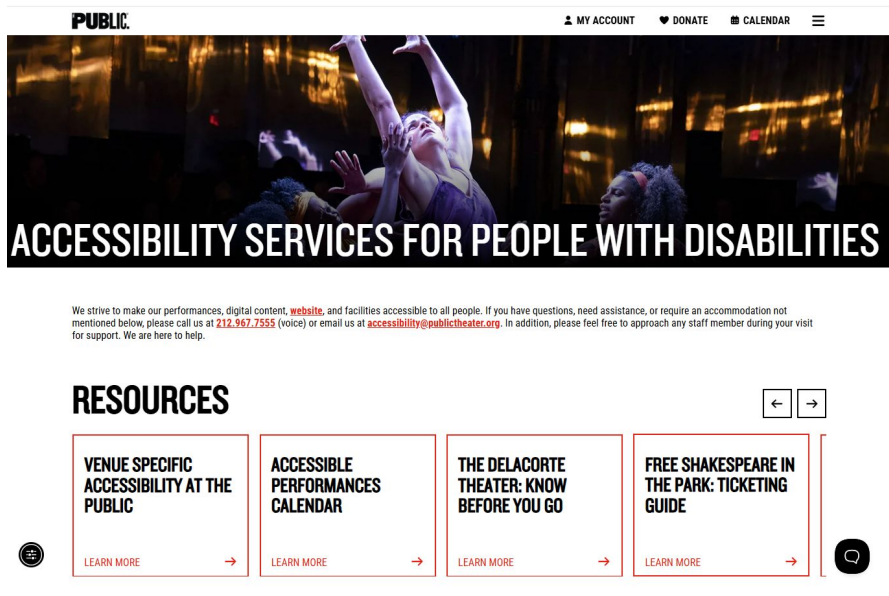
- You may check out ALD (Assistive Listening Device) with a Front of House staff
- Request alternative formats for the Playbill including Large Print, Braille, and online for screen readers at accessibility@publictheater.org before your performance date
- Use an accessible entrances
- Ask Front of House staff for a single-stall all gender restroom
- Courtesy wheelchairs

You can also always call the Audience Services team and ask for more details at (212) 967-7555.

ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES

The Public Theater works with [TAP at TDF.org](https://www.tdf.org/tap) and [Hands On](https://www.hands-on.org) to contract interpreters, captioners, and audio descriptors for Open Captioned Performances, ASL-Interpreted Performances, Audio Described Performances. Select shows have Mask Required or Sensory Adapted Performance.

Please visit our [Accessible Calendar](#) to view each season's performances.



The screenshot shows the Public Theater website's "ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES" page. The header includes the "PUBLIC." logo and navigation links for "MY ACCOUNT", "DONATE", and "CALENDAR". The main image features a performer in a dynamic pose with the text "ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES" overlaid. Below the image is a paragraph of text stating the theater's commitment to accessibility and providing contact information. A "RESOURCES" section follows, containing four cards with links to learn more: "VENUE SPECIFIC ACCESSIBILITY AT THE PUBLIC", "ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES CALENDAR", "THE DELACORTE THEATER: KNOW BEFORE YOU GO", and "FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK: TICKETING GUIDE".

PUBLIC. MY ACCOUNT DONATE CALENDAR

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

We strive to make our performances, digital content, [website](#), and facilities accessible to all people. If you have questions, need assistance, or require an accommodation not mentioned below, please call us at [212.967.7555](tel:212.967.7555) (voice) or email us at accessibility@publictheater.org. In addition, please feel free to approach any staff member during your visit for support. We are here to help.

RESOURCES

- VENUE SPECIFIC ACCESSIBILITY AT THE PUBLIC [LEARN MORE](#)
- ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES CALENDAR [LEARN MORE](#)
- THE DELACORTE THEATER: KNOW BEFORE YOU GO [LEARN MORE](#)
- FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK: TICKETING GUIDE [LEARN MORE](#)

Hands On

tdf

SENSORY-ADAPTED PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Technical Adjustments:

- Lighting, sound, and transition cues are adjusted slightly.
- The house lights remain on and dim throughout the performance.

Sensory Supports:

- A variety of fidgets are available.
- Noise canceling headphones and sunglasses are available.

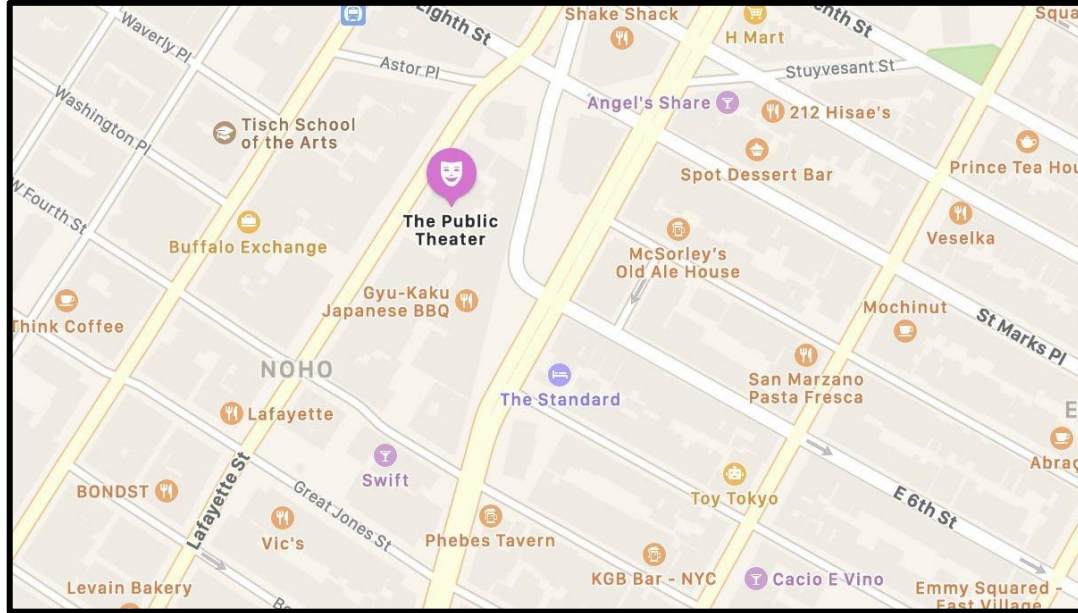
Flexible Expectations:

- The Public is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming space where audience members can be free to be themselves.
- Expectations about audience etiquette are relaxed at this performance. Audience members are invited to react as they need, make sounds, and move around in ways that feel comfortable.
- There will be a break area, audience members are invited to move in and out of the theater as needed.



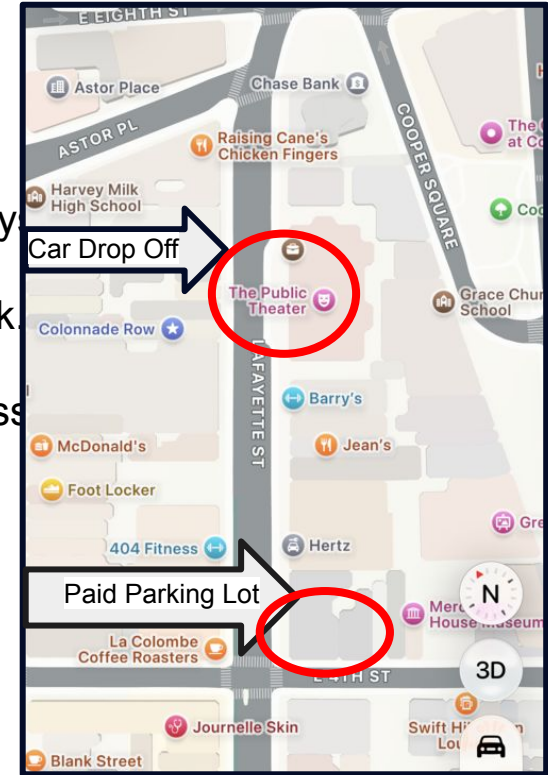
GETTING TO THE PUBLIC

The Public Theater is at 425 Lafayette Street, between Astor Place & 4th Street in the NoHo/East Village neighborhood in Manhattan.



If you are taking a car to The Public Theater:

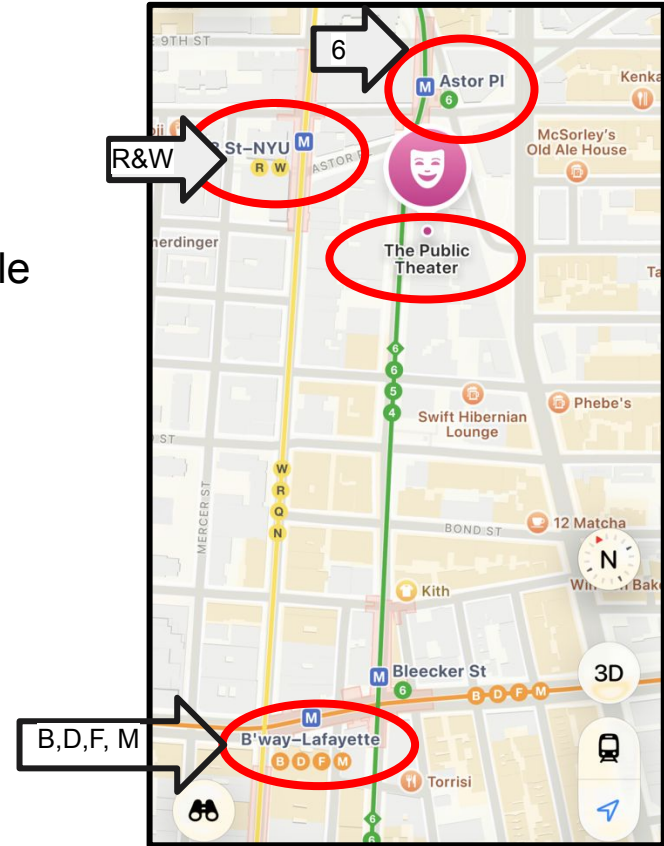
- Taxis, Uber, Lyft, or [Access-a-Ride](#), can drop off and pick up directly in front of 425 Lafayette Street
- [Access-a-Ride](#) is available if you have a disability or health condition that makes it difficult to use public buses and subway and is available in all five boroughs.
- Service is available year-round, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Fares are the same as buses and subways.
- You may remain in the lobby as long as needed within business hours until your ride arrives
- There is a paid parking lot on Lafayette Street and 4th street
- Paid street parking



If you are taking the Subway to The Public Theater

The closest subway stations are:

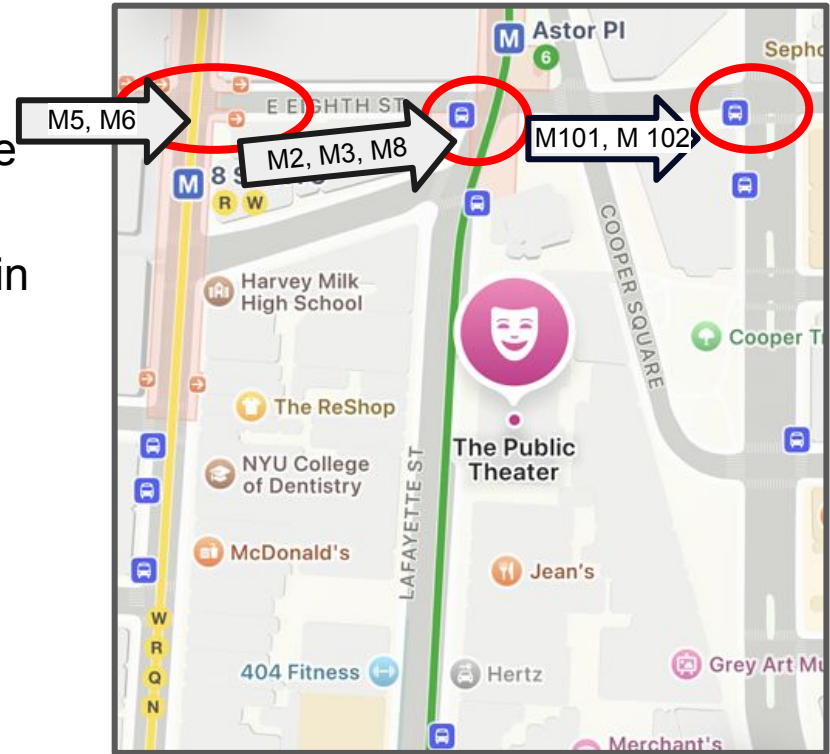
- The 6 train at Astor Place (non-accessible station) 2-3 minute walk to The Public
- The R & W at 8th Street-NYU (non-accessible station) 3-5 minute walk
- The B, D, F & M at Broadway-Lafayette (an accessible station) 7-10 minute walk
- The N, Q, R, W, 4, 5, 6 & L at Union Station (an accessible station) 12-15 minute walk



If you are taking the bus to The Public Theater:

The following bus stops are nearby:

- M2, M3, or M8 to 8th Street and 4th Avenue (2 min walk)
- M5 or M6 to 8th Street and Broadway (3 min walk)
- M101 or M102 to 8th Street and Cooper Square (3 min walk)

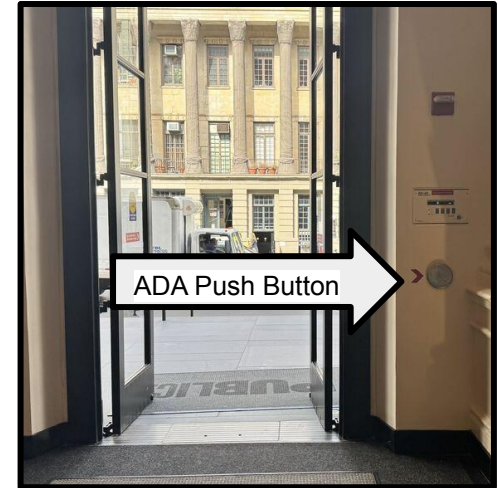


ARRIVING AT THE PUBLIC

When you arrive, there are six stairs or two ramps on either side of the stairs to enter the building.

There are three double doors to enter, the most northern doors have an automatic button to open the door.

Whenever you enter the building, you may be greeted by some of our staff including Front of House or security. You can ask any of our staff any questions. Our Front of House staff wear black shirts that say “The Public”



ARRIVING AT THE THEATER FOR THE PERFORMANCE

As you enter the theater close to curtain time, it can be crowded and loud, sounds may echo.

During the daytime, there is natural light from the glass doors and windows and if needed, soft white lighting. During the evening, the lights are a dim warm yellow.

The art-instillation chandelier has bright flashing LED lights, these can be quite bright and alarming, especially during the evening.

Our Front of House staff can provide earplugs, headphones, or fidgets to help reduce noise and sunglasses to shade bright lights.



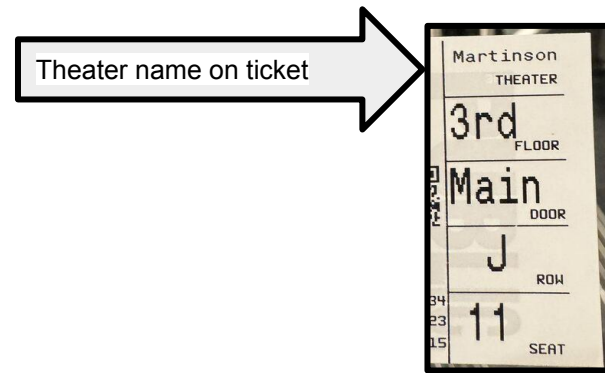
BEFORE THE SHOW

With five stages and Joe's Pub performances, there can be multiple shows at once, with start times close together.

Each theater typically opens its doors for seating approximately 30 minutes before the start time. Some accessibility performances may include early entry to the theater

An announcement will be made over the speaker when each theater opens. You may listen for the show title you are seeing and which theater to go to.

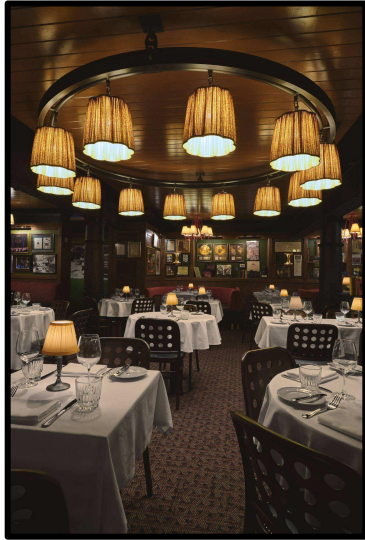
There are also signs and Front of House staff to help guide you to the correct theater.



BEFORE THE SHOW

We recommend arriving about 30 minutes before your ticket show time is to give yourself time would like to give yourself time to find the theater, use the restroom, purchase concessions at Bar Torino (please note, food is not allowed in the theater).

You can sit and relax in the lobby or eat at The Astor on mezzanine level. The cushioned benches have a small backrest and are located in the middle of the lobby, as well as along the walls.



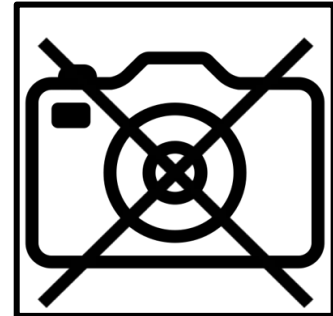
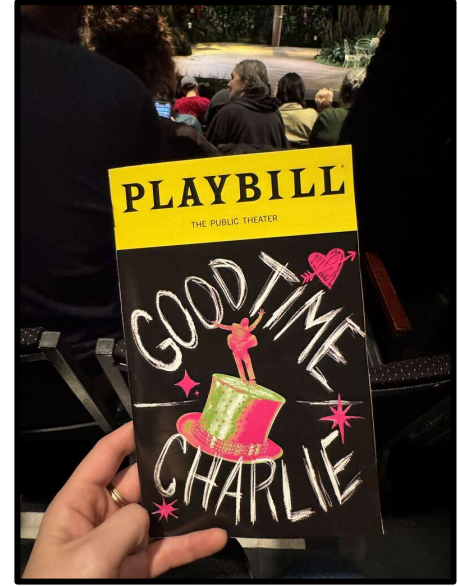
First two photos by Michael Condran

WAITING FOR THE SHOW

While you wait in your seats before the show to begin, you can read the program, sometimes referred to as a Playbill.

The program shares more information about the company and may include a director's note and interviews.

We also encourage you to use this time to silence cell phones. You may take pictures before the show, but during the show, no pictures or videos can be taken of the performance.



AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

When the show is over, the actors will take a bow as people will clap and cheer.

Then, you will exit the theater. This may take some time due to the crowds because the whole audience will be leaving.

You may choose to wait in your seats until it clears more to avoid the crowds.

If you need to access the elevator lift in The Newman, or exit through the accessible pathways in the Barbaralee, please let the Front of House staff know, they will help escort you.





No matter your journey to The Public Theater—whether you're a first-time attendee, new to our theaters, or a frequent patron—you are warmly welcome.

Feel free to engage with the show genuinely: react, vocalize, laugh, or cry. If you need to make some noise, take breaths, stim, or move, that is OK.

We hope to see you again at [The Public Theater](#).