

**THE PUBLIC THEATER  
BEGINS PREVIEWS  
FOR WORLD PREMIERE  
*MLIMA'S TALE*  
TUESDAY, MARCH 27**

**Written by Lynn Nottage  
Directed by Jo Bonney**

**First Performance Free For All on Tuesday, March 27**

March 15, 2018 - The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) will begin previews on Tuesday, March 27 for the world premiere of *MLIMA'S TALE*, written by two-time Pulitzer Prize winner **Lynn Nottage** and directed by Obie Award winner **Jo Bonney**. *MLIMA'S TALE* continues The Public's Astor Anniversary Season at their landmark downtown home on Lafayette Street, celebrating 50 years of new work and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *HAIR*. The play will run through Sunday, May 20 in The Public's Martinson Hall, with an official press opening on Sunday, April 15. Continuing The Public's mission to make great theater accessible to all, The Public's First Performance "Free for All" continues this spring with free tickets to the first preview on Tuesday, March 27; available beginning March 20, via TodayTix mobile lottery.

The complete cast of *MLIMA'S TALE* features **Ito Aghayere** (*Player 3*), **Jojo Gonzalez** (*Player 2*), **Kevin Mambo** (*Player 1*), and **Sahr Ngaujah** (*Mlima*).

This season, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage returns to The Public with a new drama as moving and incisive as her Broadway debut play *Sweat*. Taking us on a journey that starts in a game park in Kenya and goes around the world, *MLIMA'S TALE* is the story of Mlima, a magnificent elephant trapped in the clandestine international ivory market. Following a trail of greed and desire as old as trade itself, Mlima leads us through memory and fear, history and tradition, and want and need. Obie Award winner Jo Bonney directs this poignant new play that reveals the surprising and complicated deals that connect us all.

*MLIMA'S TALE* features scenic design by Riccardo Hernandez, costume design by Jennifer Moeller, lighting design by Lap Chi Chu, sound design by Darron L West, music composition and direction by Justin Hicks, and movement direction by Chris Walker.

**LYNN NOTTAGE** (*Playwright*) is a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and a screenwriter whose work has been produced widely in the U.S. and throughout the world. Most recently, her play *Sweat* (Susan Smith Blackburn Award, OSF American Revolution Cycle Commission) appeared at The Public Theater and Broadway, winning the Pulitzer Prize. Her other plays include *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk nom.); *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, OBIE, Lortel, NY Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and OCC Award); *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and NYDCC Awards); *Fabulation*, or *The Re-Education of Undine* (OBIE); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*. She recently produced and conceived of *This Is Reading*, a multi-media performance installation at the Franklin Street Railroad Station in Reading, PA. Nottage was a producer/director on the Netflix series, "She's Gotta Have It" and co-founder

of Market Road Films. Nottage is the recipient of a PEN/Laura Pels Master Dramatist Award, Doris Duke Artist Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship, Steinberg "Mimi" Distinguished Playwright Award, Dramatists Guild Hull-Warriner Award, the inaugural Horton Foote Prize and Lee Reynolds Award. Her other honors include the National Black Theatre Fest's August Wilson Playwriting Award, a Guggenheim Grant, Lucille Lortel Fellowship and Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University. She is an Associate Professor at Columbia School of the Arts. She is an artist-in-residence at the Park Avenue Armory, a member of the Dramatists Guild and The American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**JO BONNEY** (*Director*) has directed the Public Lab and main stage productions of *Father Comes Home From the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)*, as well as Danny Hoch's *Some People*, Diana Son's *Stop Kiss*, Anna Deavere Smith's *House Arrest*, Jose Rivera's *References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot*, and Naomi Wallace's *Fever Chart* at The Public. She has directed premieres of plays by Alan Ball, Eric Bogosian, Hammaad Chaudry, Culture Clash, Eve Ensler, Jessica Goldberg, Neil LaBute, Warren Leight, Martyna Majok, Lynn Nottage, Dael Orlandersmith, Darci Picoult, Will Power, John Pollono, David Rabe, *Universes*, and Michael Weller. She has also directed productions of plays by Caryl Churchill, Nilo Cruz, Charles Fuller, Lisa Loomer, John Osborne and Lanford Wilson. She is the recipient of the 1998 Obie Award for Sustained Excellence of Direction; Lucille Lortel Best Revival, Audelco Award for *Father Comes Home*, Lilly Award and is the editor of *Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance Texts from the Twentieth Century* (TCG).

### **ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:**

**THE PUBLIC** is theater of, by, and for the people. Artist-driven, radically inclusive, and fundamentally democratic, 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 Forum, Under the Radar, Public Studio, 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. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 59 Tony Awards, 169 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Desk Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org)

### **DATE AND TICKET INFORMATION**

**MLIMA'S TALE** begins performances in The Public's Martinson Hall on Tuesday, March 27 and runs through Sunday, May 20 with an official press opening on Sunday, April 15. The performance schedule is Tuesday through Friday at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (*There is no 2:00 p.m. performance on Saturday, March 31 and no 8:00 p.m. performance on Tuesday, April 10 or Sunday, April 29. There is an added performance on Monday, April 9 at 7:00 p.m.*)

Public Theater Partner, Supporter Member tickets, and full price tickets, starting at \$65, can be accessed by calling **(212) 967-7555**, visiting [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org), or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street.

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The Library at The Public is open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and Joe's Pub at The Public continues to offer some of the best music in the city. For more information, visit [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org).

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