

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES LINE-UP AND CASTING FOR FIFTH SEASON OF PUBLIC STUDIO

TWO NEW PLAYS THIS SPRING
ALL TICKETS ONLY \$15

MASCULINITY MAX by MJ Kaufman
Directed by Dustin Wills

AIN'T NO MO' by Jordan E. Cooper
Directed by Stevie Walker-Webb

March 6, 2018 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced the fifth season of **PUBLIC STUDIO** today, which will present two new plays this spring. Continuing The Public's commitment to nurturing new playwrights, the two plays will run in succession in The Public's Shiva Theater and be presented as pared-down productions with the low ticket price of \$15. This vital program continues The Public's mission of making new work by emerging artists accessible to all audiences.

In this fifth year, **PUBLIC STUDIO** will present **MASCULINITY MAX** by Public Theater Emerging Writers Group alum MJ Kaufman, directed by Dustin Wills, running Thursday, March 15, through Sunday, March 18. With great humor and humanity, **MASCULINITY MAX** is a new comedy that explores how to live as a man and still be a good person.

Complete casting for **MASCULINITY MAX** includes **Ty Defoe, Patrena Murray, Shakina Nayfack, Mary Neufeld, Aneesh Sheth,** and **Luke Zimmerman.**

The second new play **AIN'T NO MO'** by Jordan E. Cooper, directed by Stevie Walker-Webb, will run Thursday, March 29, through Sunday, April 1. **AIN'T NO MO'** explores the value of black lives in a country hurtling away from the promise of a black president.

Complete casting for **AIN'T NO MO'** includes **Fedna Jacquet, Christian O. Jiménez, Crystal Lucas-Perry, Ebony Marshall-Oliver, Blake Anthony Morris,** and **Simone Recasner.**

Public Supporter, Member, Partner tickets and single tickets, priced at \$15, are available now, and can be accessed by calling **(212) 967-7555**, visiting www.publictheater.org, or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street. The Library at The Public is open nightly for food and drinks, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and Joe's Pub at The Public continues to offer some of the best music in the city.

MASCULINITY MAX features scenic design by Kimie Nishikawa; costume design by Ntokozo Fuzunina Kunene; lighting design by Kate McGee; and sound design by Emma Wilk.

AIN'T NO MO' features scenic design by Kimie Nishikawa; costume design by Ásta Bennie Hostetter; lighting design by Kate McGee; sound design by Emma Wilk; and hair & wig design by Cookie Jordan.

PUBLIC STUDIO is a performance series dedicated exclusively to developing the work of emerging writers. In a laboratory environment, writers rehearse with actors and a director, incorporate bare-bones design elements, and open the process to an audience over a series of performances. More than a reading or workshop, but not a full production, this middle step affords early-career writers the important opportunity to deepen their experience of working collaboratively over an extended rehearsal period and to see their work staged in front of an audience. Previous Public Studio plays include *On the Grounds of Belonging* by Ricardo Pérez González, *Wild Goose Dreams* by Hansol Jung, *Pretty Hunger* by Patricia Lone Lloyd, *Teenage Dick* by Mike Lew, *Ping Pong* by Rogelio Martinez, *Fidelis* by Christina Gorman, *Manahatta* by Mary Kathryn Nagle, and *The Urban Retreat* by A. Zell Williams.

PUBLIC STUDIO was founded with support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Time Warner Foundation. Continued support for Public Studio is provided by Time Warner Foundation.

ABOUT MASCULINITY MAX:

Max is a trans guy who recently transitioned, and to celebrate, the men of his family decide to throw him a big Super Bowl party. But what if the guys in his family aren't the kind of men he wants to be? **MJ Kaufman's MASCULINITY MAX** is an irreverent comedy that follows Max as he stumbles through dating, navigates trouble with roommates, and boosts his career at the bike cooperative, all while struggling with the gender traps he once fought against.

From playwright MJ Kaufman, a recent alum of the Public's Emerging Writers Group, and director **Dustin Wills** comes **MASCULINITY MAX**, a new comedy that explores how to live as a man and still be a good person.

MJ KAUFMAN (*Masculinity Max* Playwright) is a playwright and devised theater artist working in New York and Philadelphia. Their work has been produced and developed by The Public Theater, New York Theater Workshop, the New Museum, Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, Page73, Colt Coeur, Yale School of Drama, Lark Play Development Center, InterAct Theater, Huntington Theater and performed in Russian in Moscow. Kaufman is part of WP Theater Lab, a resident playwright at New Dramatists and a Colt Coeur member. Originally from Portland, Oregon, MJ attended Wesleyan University and Yale School of Drama. Kaufman is co-founder of Trans Lab with Kit Yan, supported by The Public and WP.

DUSTIN WILLS (*Masculinity Max* Director)'s recent projects include *Frontières Sans Frontières* (Bushwick Starr), *Orange Julius* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre & PAGE 73), *O' Earth* (The Foundry), *Awful Event!* (Baryshnikov Arts Center). Wills has also developed plays with New York Theatre Workshop, Vineyard Theatre, Ars Nova, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Berkeley Rep, Yale Rep, Paper Chairs, and Salvage Vanguard Theatre; created large-scale community puppet projects with Creative Action; and devised new work for Teatro L'Arciliuto in Rome, Italy. He is a recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Theatre, a Drama League and Boris Sagal directing fellow.

ABOUT AIN'T NO MO':

AIN'T NO MO' is an odyssey portraying the great exodus of black Americans out of a country plagued with injustice. In a kaleidoscope of scenes of the moments before, during, and after this outrageous departure, **Jordan E. Cooper's** masterful new satire explores the value of black lives in a country hurtling away from the promise of a black president. **Stevie Walker-Webb** directs this wildly imaginative and emotionally charged new play from the fresh perspective of young playwright Jordan E. Cooper.

JORDAN E. COOPER (*Ain't No Mo'* Playwright) is an award-winning playwright who resides in Brooklyn, NY by way of Hurst, TX. He is currently obtaining his BFA degree at The New School For Drama. His work has most recently been seen at The Fire This Time Festival as well as New York Theatre Workshop's Summer

Residency at Dartmouth. His short film, *americanmother*, won the Audience Choice award at Dallas Video Fest and can currently be viewed on Vimeo.

STEVIE WALKER-WEBB (*Ain't No Mo'* Director) is a director, performing artist, and cultural worker, a 2050 Fellow at New York Theatre Workshop and recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Theatre. He's served as the Founding Artistic Director of the Jubilee Theatre. He's created art and Theatre in Madagascar, South Africa, Mexico, and across America. He's worked as the Outreach Coordinator for Theatre of the Oppressed-NYC and holds an MFA from The New School, a BS in Sociology from the University of North Texas, and is an Emerge-NYC alumnus.

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

DATES AND TICKET INFORMATION

MASCULINITY MAX will begin performances in The Public's Shiva Theater on Thursday, March 15, and runs through Sunday, March 18. **AIN'T NO MO'** will begin performances in The Public's Shiva Theater on Thursday, March 29, and runs through Sunday, April 1.

Public Supporter, Member, Partner tickets and single tickets, priced at \$15, are available now, and can be accessed by calling **(212) 967-7555**, visiting www.publictheater.org, or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street.

The performance schedule is Thursday through Sunday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

The Library at The Public is open nightly for food and drinks, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and Joe's Pub at The Public continues to offer some of the best music in the city. The Public Theater is located at 425 Lafayette Street. For more information, visit www.publictheater.org

#