

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
ANNOUNCES
COMPLETE CASTING FOR
2018 FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK
PRODUCTION OF
*OTHELLO***

**Directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson
Featuring Chukwudi Iwuji as Othello,
Heather Lind as Desdemona, and Corey Stoll as Iago
May 29-June 24**

**BANK OF AMERICA & THE JEROME L. GREENE FOUNDATION
RETURN AS SEASON SPONSORS OF FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK**

April 23, 2018 - The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced complete casting today for the 2018 Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *OTHELLO* beginning Tuesday, May 29 at the Delacorte Theater, continuing a 56-year tradition of free theater in Central Park. Directed by Tony Award winner **Ruben Santiago-Hudson**, *OTHELLO* will officially open on Monday, June 18 and will run through Sunday, June 24.

The complete cast of *OTHELLO* features **Peter Jay Fernandez** (*Duke of Venice*); **Motell Foster** (*Roderigo*); **Andrew Hovelson** (*Lodovico*); **Chukwudi Iwuji** (*Othello*); **David Kenner** (*Ensemble*); **Heather Lind** (*Desdemona*); **Tim Nicolai** (*Ensemble*); **Flor De Liz Perez** (*Bianca*); **Miguel Perez** (*Brabantio*); **Thomas Schall** (*Montano*); **Caroline Siewert** (*Ensemble*); **Corey Stoll** (*Iago*); **Babak Tafti** (*Cassio*); **Peter Van Wagner** (*Gratiano*); and **Alison Wright** (*Emilia*). The non-equity ensemble will feature **Kevin Rico Angulo**, **Christopher Cassarino**, **Lily Santiago**, and **Allen Tedder**.

Tony winner **Ruben Santiago-Hudson** returns to Free Shakespeare in the Park to direct a sumptuous new production of *OTHELLO*. Set amid war and palace intrigue in the 17th-century Mediterranean, this classic drama about a noble Black Venetian general whose marriage is sabotaged by theater's most infamous villain, Iago, remains Shakespeare's most urgent and relevant tragedy today. A lush, romantic vision gives way to the violent tangle of love and jealousy, race and revenge in this must-see production of Shakespeare's great tragedy, *OTHELLO*.

OTHELLO will feature scenic design by Rachel Hauck, costume design by Toni-Leslie James, lighting design by Jane Cox, sound design by Jessica Paz, and music composition by Derek Wieland.

The summer season will continue with a reimagined staging of the critically-acclaimed Public Works musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *TWELFTH NIGHT* (July 17-August 19), conceived by **Kwame Kwei-Armah** and **Shaina Taub**, with music and lyrics by Shaina Taub, choreography by **Lorin Latarro**, and

directed by **Oskar Eustis** and Kwame Kwei-Armah. **TWELFTH NIGHT** will begin performances on Tuesday, July 17 and run through Sunday, August 19 with an official press opening on Tuesday, July 31.

Ato Blankson-Wood joins the cast of **TWELFTH NIGHT** in the role of “Orsino.” The previously announced **TWELFTH NIGHT** cast members include **Nikki M. James** (*Viola*), **Andrew Kober** (*Malvolio*), **Jacob Ming-Trent** (*Sir Toby Belch*), and **Shaina Taub** (*Feste*). Equity actors and two rotating ensembles of community members from all five boroughs will perform together on the Delacorte stage in this enchanting comedy. Complete casting will be announced at a later date.

In celebration of five extraordinary years of Public Works, a Public Theater initiative that invites diverse communities across New York to create ambitious works of participatory theater, Free Shakespeare in the Park presents a re-imagining of Public Works’ 2016 musical adaptation of **TWELFTH NIGHT** for a full five-week run in Central Park. Professional artists and two rotating ensembles of community members from all five boroughs will perform together on the Delacorte stage in this enchanting comedy about, a young heroine who washes up on the shores of Illyria, disguises herself as a man, is sent to court a countess, and falls in love with a Duke. Featuring music and lyrics by critically-acclaimed songwriter **Shaina Taub**, this very special **TWELFTH NIGHT** is a unique partnership between two Public Theater programs that exemplify The Public’s commitment to radical inclusion. **Oskar Eustis**, The Public’s Artistic Director, and **Kwame Kwei-Armah**, incoming Artistic Director of London’s Young Vic, helm this unforgettable musical about love in all its many disguises.

TWELFTH NIGHT will feature scenic design by Rachel Hauck, costume design by Andrea Hood, lighting design by John Torres, and sound design by Jessica Paz.

Public Works is a national and international initiative currently affiliated with four theaters throughout the U.S. and Europe to create ambitious works of participatory theater in the Public Works model. The current theaters are **Dallas Theater Center in collaboration with SMU Meadows School of the Arts**; **Seattle Repertory Theatre**; **Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit**; and **The National Theatre in London**. In March 2017, Dallas Theater Center presented their inaugural Public Works Dallas production, *The Tempest*, directed by DTC Artistic Director Kevin Moriarty and featuring 200 Dallasites. Seattle Repertory Theater presented their inaugural Public Works Seattle production of *The Odyssey* in September 2017, directed by Marya Sea Kaminski. In October 2017, London’s National Theatre announced a new partnership with The Public, **PUBLIC ACTS**, inspired by The Public’s successful Public Works model. The partnership launches with a new staging of *Pericles* performed on the National Theatre’s Olivier stage in August 2018, directed by National Theatre resident director Emily Lim. The Public Works productions of *The Tempest*, *The Winter’s Tale*, and *The Odyssey* are also available to be produced through Theatrical Rights Worldwide.

The Public Works Shakespeare in the Park musical adaptation of **TWELFTH NIGHT** will run for five weeks during the summer in an expansion of the model that has been presenting Public Works pageant shows for limited performances in early September over the past five years at the Delacorte. The expanded five-week run this summer will allow 50,000 more New Yorkers to see this inspiring community initiative.

This season, The Public proudly welcomes the return of **The Jerome L. Greene Foundation** and **Bank of America** as season sponsors. The generous support of **Bank of America** and **The Jerome L. Greene Foundation** helps to sustain The Public’s mission of inclusion, creating great theater, boldly conceived, and free for all.

Tickets to The Public Theater’s Free Shakespeare in the Park are distributed, two per person, at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park on the day of the show. The Public continues its partnership with **TodayTix**, who will again be offering the exclusive Mobile Ticket Lottery for Free Shakespeare in the Park. Tickets will be distributed by mobile lottery on the TodayTix app each date that there is a public performance at the Delacorte Theater. On each public performance date, a limited number of vouchers for that night’s performance will also be distributed via an in-person lottery at The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette Street at Astor Place. Borough distribution information, as well as information about ADA accessible performances, will be available at a later date.

Since 1962, over five million people have enjoyed more than 150 free productions of Shakespeare and other classical works and musicals at the Delacorte Theater. Conceived by founder Joe Papp as a way to make great theater accessible to all, The Public's Free Shakespeare in the Park continues to be the bedrock of the Company's mission to increase access and engage the community.

The Delacorte Theater in Central Park is accessible by entering at 81st Street and Central Park West or at 79th Street and Fifth Avenue. To learn more, or to make a contribution, call **(212) 967-7555**, or visit www.publictheater.org.

RUBEN SANTIAGO-HUDSON (*Othello Director*) has appeared on The Public's stage in *Lackawanna Blues* (Obie, Helen Hayes), *The Winter's Tale*, *Henry VIII*, *Measure for Measure*, and *East Texas Hot Links*. His directing credits include *Jitney* (Tony Award, Drama Desk, Drama League, NY Drama Critics, Outer Critics Circle), *The Piano Lesson* (Lucille Lortel, Obie, Audelco), *The Happiest Song Plays Last*, *My Children My Africa*, *The First Breeze Of Summer*, *Seven Guitars*, *Your Blues Ain't Sweet Like Mine*, *Two Trains Running*, *Jitney*, *Things Of Dry Hours*, *Gem Of The Ocean*, and *Radio Golf*. As an actor, he has appeared on Broadway in *Seven Guitars* (Tony Award), *Stick Fly*, *Gem of the Ocean*, and *Jelly's Last Jam*. His additional Off-Broadway credits include *How I Learned What I Learned* and *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*.

SHAINA TAUB (*Twelfth Night Conceiver and Music & Lyrics, Feste*) is a Vermont-raised, New York-based songwriter and performer. Taub created last September's musical adaptation of Public Works' *As You Like It* with director Laurie Woolery at the Delacorte, in which she played Jaques. In 2016, she created the Public Works production of *Twelfth Night* at the Delacorte, also appearing as Feste. She is a winner of the Fred Ebb Award, the Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award, and a Jonathan Larson Grant. Taub's work was featured in Lincoln Center's American Songbook concert series and she recently made her Carnegie Hall debut performing her music with the New York Pops. She wrote the score for and co-starred in Bill Irwin and David Shiner's *Old Hats*, directed by Tina Landau at the Signature Theatre and A.C.T. She earned a Lucille Lortel Award nomination as Mary in the Off-Broadway run of *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, and appeared in the original cast of *Hadestown* at New York Theatre Workshop. Her songs have been performed by Audra McDonald and Sutton Foster, and she wrote the theme song for Julie Andrews' Netflix series *Julie's Greenroom*, performed on the show by Sara Bareilles. She is an artist-in-residence at Joe's Pub where she plays a monthly concert. Her album *Visitors* is available now and her new record will be released this spring. She's currently writing a new musical about Alice Paul and the American women's suffrage movement. www.shainataub.com

OSKAR EUSTIS (*Twelfth Night Co-Director*) has served as the Artistic Director of The Public Theater since 2005. In the last three years, he has produced two Tony Award-winning Best Musicals (*Fun Home* and *Hamilton*), and back to back winners of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Hamilton* and *Sweat*. He came to The Public from Trinity Repertory Company in Providence, RI where he served as Artistic Director from 1994 to 2005. Eustis served as Associate Artistic Director at Los Angeles' Mark Taper Forum from 1989 to 1994, and prior to that he was with the Eureka Theatre Company in San Francisco, serving as Resident Director and Dramaturg from 1981 to 1986 and Artistic Director from 1986 to 1989. Eustis is currently a Professor of Dramatic Writing and Arts and Public Policy at New York University, and has held professorships at UCLA, Middlebury College, and Brown University, where he founded and chaired the Trinity Rep/Brown University Consortium for professional theater training. At The Public, Eustis directed the New York premieres of Rinne Groff's *Compulsion* and *The Ruby Sunrise*; Larry Wright's *The Human Scale*; and most recently *Julius Caesar* at Shakespeare in the Park. He has founded numerous groundbreaking programs at The Public, from Public Works and Public Forum to the Emerging Writers Group and the Mobile Unit. At Trinity Rep, he directed the world premiere of Paula Vogel's *The Long Christmas Ride Home* and Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul*, both recipients of the Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Production. While at the Eureka Theatre, he commissioned Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, and directed its world premiere at the Mark Taper Forum. Eustis has also directed the world premieres of plays by Philip Kan Gotanda, David Henry Hwang, Emily Mann, Suzan-Lori Parks, Ellen McLaughlin, and Eduardo Machado, among many others.

KWAME KWEI-ARMAH (Twelfth Night *Conceiver and Co-Director*) is the incoming Artistic Director of the Young Vic in London. He is also the outgoing Artistic Director of Baltimore Center Stage where he has directed Toni Morrison's *Jazz*, *Marley*, *One Night in Miami*, *Amadeus*, *dance of the holy ghosts*, *The Mountaintop*; *An Enemy of the People*, *The Whipping Man*, and *Things of Dry Hours*. At The Public, he has directed *Twelfth Night*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Detroit '67*. His other credits include *The Liquid Plain*, *Porgy and Bess*, *One Night in Miami*, *Lady from the Sea*, *One Love*, and the upcoming *Soul: The Stax Musical* at Baltimore Center Stage. Kwei-Armah was Artistic Director for the *Festival of Black Arts and Culture: Senegal, 2010*. His works as playwright include *Marley*, *Beneath's Place*, *Elmina's Kitchen*, *Fix Up*, *Statement of Regret*, *Let There Be Love*, *Seize the Day*. He is an Associate Director of The Donmar Warehouse and has served on the boards of The National Theatre, The Tricycle Theatre and T.C.G. He was Chancellor of the University of the Arts London (2010-15), and in 2012 was awarded an OBE for services to drama. In 2012-2013 and 2014, Kwei-Armah was named Best Director in City Paper's "Best of Baltimore," and nominated for the Stage Directors and Choreographers' Zelda Fichandler Award for Best Regional Artistic Director. In 2016 he was awarded the Urban Visionary Award alongside House Representative Elijah Cummings by the Center for Urban Families for his work in the Baltimore community. His production of *One Night in Miami* was nominated for the Oliver Award for "Best New Play of 2016."

LORIN LATARRO (Twelfth Night *Choreographer*) has previously choreographed the Public Works productions of *Twelfth Night* and *The Odyssey*. Broadway credits includes *Waitress*; *Dangerous Liaisons*; *Waiting For Godot*, *Curious Incident Of...*; and *American Idiot* (Associate). Additional choreography includes Lin-Manuel Miranda's *21 Chump Street*; *Peter and The Wolf* (BAM); *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater* (Encores); and *Queen Of The Night* (Drama Desk Award). Select regional credits include *Beaches* and *Kiss Me Kate*. Select Opera includes *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, and *Die Zauberflote*. Bucks County Playhouse Artistic Associate. Performed in 12 Broadway shows, plus Tharp, Momix, Graham. Latarro is also a graduate/adjunct professor at Juilliard.

ABOUT PUBLIC WORKS:

PUBLIC WORKS is a major initiative of The Public Theater that seeks to engage the people of New York by making them creators and not just spectators. Working with community partner organizations in all five boroughs, Public Works invites members of diverse communities to participate in theater workshops, attend classes, attend productions, and become involved in the daily life of The Public. Founded by Resident Director Lear deBessonet and currently led by Public Works Director Laurie Woolery, 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 exemplifies The Public's long-standing commitment to community engagement that is at the core of the theater's mission. It is animated by the idea that theater is a place of possibility, where the boundaries that separate us from each other in the rest of life can fall away. It seeks to create a space where we can not only reflect on the world as is, but where we can actually propose new possibilities for what our society might be.

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

ABOUT BANK OF AMERICA:

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For almost four decades The Jerome L. Greene Foundation has supported leading New York City institutions that advance education, healthcare, the arts and social justice. The Foundation invests in organizations that are transformative to the life of New York City and beyond, with a particular focus on providing access to the arts and education.

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