

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES UPCOMING LINE-UP FOR POPULAR PUBLIC FORUM SERIES

PUBLIC FORUM: ***A CONVERSATION WITH CHERYL STRAYED*** **MONDAY, DECEMBER 5**

Spring Line-Up Includes 40th Anniversary Reading of Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls*, Explorations of Radical Protest in the LGBT and Feminist Communities, Four-Night Festival of Songwriting in Joe's Pub

November 21, 2016 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) has announced the 2017 Spring Public Forum line-up, featuring an exciting series of one-night-only events and expanded audience engagement programming to explore the ideas and themes presented on The Public Theater's stages. Highlights of the upcoming Forum season include a freewheeling discussion with author Cheryl Strayed, 40th Anniversary reading of Ntozake Shange's groundbreaking choreopoem *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*, two evenings of exploring acts of radical protest, and a four-night songwriting festival in Joe's Pub with Public Forum Director Michael Friedman.

On **Monday, December 5 at 7:00 p.m.**, ***PUBLIC FORUM: A CONVERSATION WITH CHERYL STRAYED*** will be presented in the Shiva Theater. Cheryl Strayed comes to Public Forum on the eve of the opening of *Tiny Beautiful Things*, based on her book of the same name (in turn inspired by her "Dear Sugar" advice column) for a freewheeling conversation with Deborah Needleman, Editor-in-Chief of *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, on feminism, happiness, advice, and more. This event will be livestreamed at publictheater.org.

A limited number of free tickets for ***PUBLIC FORUM: A CONVERSATION WITH CHERYL STRAYED*** will be available via the TodayTix lottery with an entry period of Tuesday, November 29 at midnight to Monday, December 5 at noon. Winners will be notified by email and push notification between 12:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Monday, December 5. For more information, please visit publictheater.org. Tickets for the 2017 Spring Public Forum Season will go on sale at a later date.

Also in December, Public Forum's holiday tradition returns to Joe's Pub on **Sunday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m.** with a brand new cast! In ***PUBLIC FORUM: THE LONG CHRISTMAS DINNER***, the Bayard family experiences one hundred years of Christmas dinners, seeing triumph and heartbreak, birth and death, and a changing world – while some things, like family and tradition, remain constant. The cast will also feature the return of Wilder's nephew and literary executor Tappan Wilder, Eisa Davis, Chef Evan Hanczor, and more.

The Spring Public Forum season will kick off in February with ***PUBLIC FORUM: for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*** by Ntozake Shange on **Monday, February 27 at**

7:00 p.m. in the Newman Theater. Public Forum celebrates the 40th anniversary of Ntozake Shange's groundbreaking choreopoem, which began at The Public, with a star-studded reading and conversation. Women from the arts, media, literature, and more will read the piece and then discuss what it means and has meant to be black, to be female, and to be alive in America.

And then continuing the Fall season's exploration of radical movements in American history, Public Forum will welcome prominent figures in the LGBT community to discuss the past, present, and future of the fight for gay rights with ***PUBLIC FORUM: A CONVERSATION ON THE LEGACY OF RADICAL PROTEST (PART II)*** on **Monday, April 3 at 7:00 p.m.** on the Martinson Theater.

The Public will also explore the radical protest movements of feminism in America with ***PUBLIC FORUM: A CONVERSATION ON THE LEGACY OF RADICAL PROTEST (PART III)*** on **Monday, May 1 at 7:00 p.m.** The evening in the Anspacher Theater will be hosted by journalist Rebecca Traister.

In May, Public Forum takes over Joe's Pub at The Public with ***PUBLIC FORUM: A FESTIVAL OF SONGWRITING***, a four-night series of conversations about the art of songwriting on Wednesday, May 17 at 7:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.; Thursday, May 18 at 7:00 p.m.; Friday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m.; and Saturday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m. Director of Public Forum Michael Friedman will sit down with exciting and unexpected pairings of musicians and songwriters from all genres to discuss what it is that they do when they write a song – and how they make their own particular brand of magic.

ONGOING PUBLIC FORUM POST-SHOW PROGRAMMING

Public Forum also continues its post-show audience engagement work this season with a variety of in-person Talkbacks, Audience Conversations, and Post-Show Discussions, as well as the online idea-exploration resource Digiturgy.

In **Artist Talkbacks**, members of the cast and creative team will take questions from the audience about the show and their process following selected performances during the season. **Post-Show Discussions** present 20-to-30-minute panel discussions with experts on the themes of the show. The live Public Forum programming also includes **Audience Conversations**, where a member of the artistic staff will lead the audience in a conversation with each other about the show and its themes & ideas. For the most up-to-date schedule of Public Forum programming, please visit www.publictheater.org.

Public Forum brings the larger conversations of The Public's stages online as well with **Digiturgy**, the new Forum blog exploring the themes and ideas of The Public's plays via byte-sized digital content – photos, links, songs, videos, GIFs, and more pulled together to make a collage of information and experience that extends beyond the edge of the stage.

PUBLIC FORUM continues its seventh season with a renewed commitment to exploring and expanding the ideas present in The Public Theater's onstage work. Forum produces events ranging from stand-alone evenings of performance and conversation to post-show talkbacks with audiences, artists, and guest speakers as well as digital content. Its live programs have featured insights and performances from the likes of Tony Kushner, Cynthia Nixon, Jeremy McCarter, James Earl Jones, David Miliband, Matt Damon, David Byrne, Audra McDonald, E.L. Doctorow, Rachel Maddow, Wynton Marsalis, Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, Salman Rushdie, Anna Deavere Smith, and many more. The dialogue continues online with Digiturgy, which brings together material from media, politics, and society to deepen an audience's understanding of the worlds of The Public's plays. Through curated conversations, surprising combinations, and exciting content, Public Forum seeks to enrich and expand the minds of The Public's audiences.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:

The Public Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare, the classics, musicals, contemporary and experimental pieces in equal measure. Celebrating his 10th anniversary season at The Public, Eustis has created new community-based initiatives designed to engage audiences like Public Lab,

Public Studio, Public Forum, Public Works, and a remount of the Mobile Unit. The Public continues the work of its visionary founder, Joe Papp, by acting as an advocate for the theater as an essential cultural force, and leading and framing dialogue on some of the most important issues of our day. Creating theater for one of the largest and most diverse audience bases in New York City for nearly 60 years, today the Company engages audiences in a variety of venues—including its landmark downtown home at Astor Place, which houses five theaters and Joe's Pub; the Delacorte Theater in Central Park, home to free Shakespeare in the Park; and the Mobile Unit, which tours Shakespearean productions for underserved audiences throughout New York City's five boroughs. The Public's wide range of programming includes free Shakespeare in the Park, the bedrock of the Company's dedication to making theater accessible to all; Public Works, an expanding initiative that is designed to cultivate new connections and new models of engagement with artists, audiences and the community each year; and audience and artist development initiatives that range from Emerging Writers Group and to the Public Forum series. The Public is located on property owned by the City of New York and receives annual support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; and in October 2012 the landmark building downtown at Astor Place was revitalized to physically manifest the Company's core mission of sparking new dialogues and increasing accessibility for artists and audiences, by dramatically opening up the building to the street and community, and transforming the lobby into a public piazza for artists, students, and audiences. The Public is currently represented on Broadway by the Tony Award-winning acclaimed American musical *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda. The Public has received 59 Tony Awards, 168 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critics Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics Awards, and five Pulitzer Prizes. www.publictheater.org.

PUBLIC FORUM TICKET INFORMATION

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Tickets for the 2017 Spring Public Forum Season will go on sale at a later date. For more information, please visit publictheater.org.

There is no food or drink minimum for the Public Forum series in Joe's Pub. Please note the final line-up is subject to change. The Library at The Public Theater is also open for food and drink nightly beginning at 5:00 p.m.

The Public Theater is located at 425 Lafayette Street. For more information, visit www.publictheater.org

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