

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
BEGINS FREE PERFORMANCES
FOR PUBLIC WORKS
MUSICAL ADAPTATION OF
TWELFTH NIGHT
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**

**Conceived by Kwame Kwei-Armah and Shaina Taub
Directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah
Music and Lyrics by Shaina Taub**

**200 New Yorkers From All Five Boroughs
Will Share the Delacorte Stage
With Nikki M. James, Andrew Kober, Jose Llana,
Jacob Ming-Trent, Shaina Taub,
Community Partners, and Cameo Groups**

August 22, 2016 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) will begin performances for the free Public Works musical adaptation of *TWELFTH NIGHT*, conceived by **Kwame Kwei-Armah** and **Shaina Taub**, with music and lyrics by Shaina Taub on Friday, September 2. Directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah, *TWELFTH NIGHT* will once again feature over 200 actors and community members alongside five equity actors, including this year **Nikki M. James** as Viola and **Jose Llana** as Orsino. Part of the global 400th anniversary celebration of William Shakespeare's life and death, this unforgettable Public Works musical adaptation will run for four nights only from Friday, September 2 to Monday, September 5 at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. Free tickets will be distributed, two per person, at 12:00 p.m. on the day of the show at the Delacorte Theater and via the TodayTix virtual ticketing lottery.

Public Works, The Public's local and national initiative that invites diverse communities across New York to join in creating ambitious works of theater, celebrates its fourth year with an enchanting new musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *TWELFTH NIGHT*. Professional artists and community members from partner organizations in all five boroughs perform together on stage in this love story that follows the young heroine Viola, who disguises herself as a man when she washes up on the shores of Illyria. When Viola's new boss, Duke Orsino, sends her to win over his unrequited love, the Countess Olivia, Viola's disguise proves too effective, and the Countess falls for the young girl dressed as a boy instead.

TWELFTH NIGHT features equity actors **Nikki M. James** (*Viola*); **Andrew Kober** (*Malvolio*); **Jose Llana** (*Orsino*); **Jacob Ming-Trent** (*Sir Toby Belch*); and **Shaina Taub** (*Feste*); along with cameo group performances by **COBU**, **Jambalaya Brass Band**, **The Love Show**, **New York Deaf Theatre**, **United States Postal Carrier**, and **Ziranmen Kungfu Wushu Training Center**.

The Public Works community partner organizations are **Brownsville Recreation Center** (Brooklyn), **Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education** (Bronx), **Center for Family Life in Sunset Park** (Brooklyn),

DreamYard Project (Bronx), **Fortune Society** (Queens), and **Military Resilience Project** (all boroughs), along with alumni partners **Children's Aid Society** and **Domestic Workers United**.

"*Twelfth Night* promises to be an absolutely wonderful continuation of the great Public Works tradition," said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. "This is a cast that represents the brilliance, diversity, and glory of New York City."

Tickets to **TWELFTH NIGHT** are free, continuing The Public Theater's long-standing tradition of free programming and community engagement. Tickets are distributed, two per person (age 5+), at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park beginning at 12:00 p.m. on the day of each performance. All performances are at 8:00 p.m. The Public continues its partnership with **TodayTix**, who now offers the exclusive Mobile Ticket Lottery for Public Works at the Delacorte, replacing the virtual lottery from previous years. Tickets will be distributed by random mobile lottery on the TodayTix app each date that there is a public performance at the Delacorte Theater. You may also become a Summer Supporter a tax-deductible donation, starting at \$75, and receive a reserved seat to the event. For information and to donate, call 212-967-7555.

Since the opening of the Delacorte in 1962, more than five million people have enjoyed more than 150 free productions of Shakespeare and other classical works and musicals at The Public's Central Park venue. The Delacorte Theater is accessible by entering at 81st Street and Central Park West, or 79th Street and Fifth Avenue.

TWELFTH NIGHT features scenic design by David Zinn; costume design by Andrea Hood; lighting design by Amith Chandrashaker; sound design by Mark Menard; hair and wig design by Dave Bova and J. Jared Janas; and choreography by Lorin Latarro.

Lead support for **PUBLIC WORKS** is provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Ford Foundation, The Stavros Niarchos Foundation, New York City Theater Subdistrict Council, and The Tow Foundation. Additional support is provided by the New York Community Trust, New York State Council on The Arts, The One World Fund, The SHS Foundation, David Rockefeller Fund, and Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi, LLP. The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation provides lead support for The Public's access and engagement programming. The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

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, to attend classes, to attend productions, and to become involved in the daily life of The Public. Under the leadership of Public Works Director Lear deBessonet, 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. In June 2016, The Public announced the expansion of Public Works with ACTivate, a new tier of the groundbreaking initiative designed to bind our community together by creating acts of participatory theater to examine the great issues and dilemmas of our time, which culminated in a new devised work, *Troy*.

PUBLIC WORKS PARTNER BIOS:

BROWNSVILLE RECREATION CENTER (*Brooklyn*) is one of 36 public Recreation Centers managed by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. With extensive resources for youth and seniors, the

center offers a vibrant space to tap into pursuits artistic and athletic alike. Over the course of three years partnering with Public Works, senior citizens participated in dance, theater, storytelling, and scene study classes led by Public Theater teaching artists. The group has performed featured dances in *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Odyssey* at the Delacorte Theater. The seniors also performed various pieces they've developed in classes many times at The Public Theater and the Brownsville Recreation Center. In the spring of 2015, the center hosted the first ever Public Works Palooza, featuring community performances from all the Public Works partner classes, including their own adaptation of *Steel Magnolias*. The Brownsville Recreation Center received the last six Mobile Unit tours and members regularly attend performances at The Public.

CASITA MARIA CENTER FOR ARTS AND EDUCATION (*Bronx*). Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education's mission is to empower youth and their families by creating a culture of learning through high quality social, cultural, and educational opportunities. It is one of the few organizations in the South Bronx that welcomes kids at the age of six and stays with them until college while providing family learning through the arts. It is also different in the plurality of ways in which it can attract community members to utilize its services. Students introduce their parents to the Center's cultural programs, while public programs guide parents to the wide ranging educational programs offered. This is Public Works' first year partnering with Casita Maria. As part of Public Works, Casita Maria youth participate in class in performing Shakespeare. The Casita Maria community received the Mobile Unit tour of *Romeo and Juliet*. Learn more at casitamaría.org.

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY (*Manhattan*) helps children in poverty to succeed and thrive by providing comprehensive support and critical services to children and their families in targeted high-needs New York City neighborhoods. As part of Public Works, the Children's Aid Society Chorus (a group of teenage girls led by Kelly Campbell) attended shows at Joe's Pub, attended regular Public Theater performances, and received master classes in singing, songwriting, movement, and acting. The chorus performed various songs they've developed in classes many times at The Public Theater and other events. In 2015, Public Works also partnered with the CAS Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teen program, where deaf and hard of hearing youth studied the intersection of Shakespeare poetry and sign language. Their work culminated in a community performance of excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet*.

CENTER FOR FAMILY LIFE IN SUNSET PARK (*Brooklyn*). The Center for Family Life Sunset Park's mission is to "promote positive outcomes for children, adults and families in Sunset Park through the provision of a comprehensive range of neighborhood-based family and social services." Programs include family counseling and neighborhood-based foster care; cultural, educational and recreational programs at neighborhood public schools, adult and youth employment programs; and an emergency single stop storefront for food, advocacy, and legal aid. Through these programs, CFL serves over 15,000 individuals in over 8,000 families each year. This is Public Works's first year partnering with Center for Family Life Sunset Park. As part of Public Works, parents and children from Sunset Park participated in a series of theater workshops conducted in Mandarin and English. The Center for Family Life community received the Mobile Unit tour of *Romeo and Juliet* as well as regularly attended performances at The Public. Learn more at www.cflsp.org.

DOMESTIC WORKERS UNITED (*All Boroughs, including Staten Island*) is a city-wide organization of Caribbean, Latina and African nannies, housekeepers, and elderly caregivers in New York, organizing for power, respect, and fair labor standards, and to help build a movement to end exploitation and oppression for all. As part of Public Works, members have read and discussed dozens of plays in a monthly play reading and luncheon group. Plays have included *Eurydice*, *For Colored Girls...*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Antigone*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, and many others. Members also attend regular performances at The Public.

DREAMYARD PROJECT (*Bronx*) is an arts and social justice organization dedicated to working with Bronx youth, families, schools and communities to build pathways toward equity and opportunity. DreamYard was recognized by President Obama with a 2012 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. The organization provides transformative arts education for youth in the Bronx through school-based partnerships and out-of-school programs and supports young people as they work

toward higher learning, meaningful careers and social action. As part of Public Works, DreamYard youth have participated in workshops and intensives in performing Shakespeare, and in generative movement led by artists from The Public, along with attending performances in The Public's season. The parents of DreamYard students also participate in weekly Shakespeare scene study classes led by Public Theater artists. The group has studied, rehearsed and performed scenes from *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, and *As You Like It*. This group has performed excerpts from all three plays multiple times at The Public Theater, the DreamYard Art Center, and other partner sites. The DreamYard Project received the last six Mobile Unit tours.

FORTUNE SOCIETY (*Queens*) is a nonprofit social service and advocacy organization, founded in 1967, whose mission is to support successful reentry from prison and promote alternatives to incarceration thus strengthening the fabric of their communities. Drawing upon the life experience of Fortune's formerly incarcerated staff and clients, they offer a holistic, "one-stop" model which includes: alternatives to incarceration, counseling, employment services, education, housing services, HIV/AIDS-case management, substance abuse and mental health treatment, family services, and lifetime aftercare, among other services. As part of Public Works, members participate in a full year of classes in playwriting, acting, improvisation, storytelling, clown, and production. The Fortune Tellers, the group that has emerged from these classes, has performed their original pieces many times at The Public Theater, the Fortune Society campuses, and other partner sites. The Fortune Society community received the Mobile Unit tours and regularly attends performances at The Public.

MILITARY RESILIENCE PROJECT (*All Boroughs*) has a strong belief that resiliency and reintegration has as much to do with us in the community as it does with those who have served. The mission of the Military Resilience Project is to create opportunities for men and women who have served in the military to engage in community based events that honor their unique experiences, while also allowing them to become part of a shared narrative. This is Public Works' first year partnering with Military Resilience Project. As part of Public Works, MRP community members are given the opportunity to participate in a series of theater workshops as well as regularly attend performances at The Public. Learn more at milresilience.com.

TWELFTH NIGHT COMPANY:

KWAME KWEI-ARMAH OBE (*Conceiver and Director*) is an award-winning British playwright, director, actor, and broadcaster. At The Public, he has directed the Mobile Unit productions of *The Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and the Public Lab production of *Detroit '67*. He is currently the Artistic Director of Baltimore's Center Stage and most recently he wrote and directed the world premiere of *Marley*, a musical based on the life and legacy of Bob Marley. At Center Stage he also directed *One Night in Miami*; *Amadeus*; *dance of the holy ghosts* (City Paper Top Ten Productions, 2013); *The Mountaintop*; *An Enemy of the People*; *The Whipping Man*, for which he was named Best Director; and Naomi Wallace's *Things of Dry Hours*. In 2014, he was named Best Director in City Paper's Best of Baltimore, and was a finalist for SDC's Zelda Fichandler Award for Best Theater Director. Among his works as playwright are *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Let There Be Love*, as well as *A Bitter Herb*, *Statement of Regret*, and *Seize the Day*. *Beneath's Place* debuted at Center Stage in 2013 as part of the groundbreaking *Raisin Cycle*. His other directorial credits include Dominique Morisseau's *Skeleton Crew* at the Lark Play Development Center and the world premiere of *The Liquid Plain* at Oregon Shakespeare Festival and its New York premiere at Signature Theater. He has served on the boards of The National Theatre and The Tricycle Theatre, both in London, and as Artistic Director for the World Arts Festival in Senegal. He was named the Chancellor of the University of the Arts London, and in 2012 was named an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

SHAINA TAUB (*Conceiver, Music & Lyrics; Feste*) is a Vermont-raised, New York-based songwriter and performer. Winner of a Jonathan Larson Grant and Ars Nova's 2012 Composer-in-Residence, she made her Lincoln Center solo concert debut in their 2015 American Songbook series. She wrote songs 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 Princess Mary in *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, performed and arranged the songs of Tom Waits in A.R.T.'s production of *The Tempest*, directed by Teller of Penn & Teller, and recently appeared in the original cast of *Hadestown* at New York

Theatre Workshop. She has received fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, the Yaddo Colony, and the Sundance Institute. Her songs have been performed by Audra McDonald and Sutton Foster, and she writes songs for *Sesame Street*. She's currently writing a new musical about Alice Paul and the American women's suffrage movement. Her new album *Visitors* is available now. www.shainataub.com.

NIKKI M. JAMES (*Viola*) is a Tony Award-winning actress currently starring in CBS' "Braindead." She recently had a guest arc on "The Good Wife" and most famously, originated the role of Nabalungi in Broadway's *Book of Mormon*, for which she won a Tony Award. After her award-winning performance, she went on to star as Éponine in the 2014 Broadway revival of *Les Misérables*. She has also performed several sold out one-woman cabaret shows at popular New York City venues such as 54 Below and Joe's Pub at The Public. Her additional theater credits include *All Shook Up* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* on Broadway, as well as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Caesar and Cleopatra* alongside Christopher Plummer, *The Wiz*, *Bernarda Alba*, *House of Flowers* and *Walmartopia*. James has appeared in numerous films and TV shows including *Lucky Stiff*, *The Disappearance of Eleanor Rigby*, "30 Rock," "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," "Third Watch," and "The Jury."

ANDREW KOBER (*Malvolio*) has appeared on Broadway in *She Loves Me*, *Les Miserables*, and *Hair* and in the West End production of *Hair*. He has toured nationally in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and appeared regionally at Shakespeare in the Park, Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Theatre Workshop, The Old Globe, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Bucks County Playhouse, The Denver Center Theater, and Barrington Stage Company. His television credits include "House of Cards," "Boardwalk Empire," "Blue Bloods," and "Pan Am." His recordings include *Hair* (2009 Revival Cast Recording), *She Loves Me* (2016 Revival Cast Recording), Bobby Cronin's "Reach the Sky," Drew Gasparini's "I Could Use A Drink," and David Are's "A Few for Friends."

JOSE LLANA (*Orsino*) most recently completed his return as The King of Siam in Lincoln Center's *The King & I*. His other Broadway credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Drama Desk Award), *Wonderland*, *Flower Drum Song*, *RENT*, *Streetcorner Symphony* and the 1996 revival of *The King & I*. Off-Broadway he has appeared at The Public in David Byrne & Fat Boy Slim's *Here Lies Love* (Lortel nom.), *On the Town*, and Adam Guettel's *Saturn Returns*. His regional credits include *Oliver!* (Papermill), *Martin Guerre* (Guthrie *Ballad of Little Jo* (Steppenwolf, Jefferson nom.) and *Candide* (Prince Theater, Barrymore nom.). His film and television credits include "Sex and the City" and *Hitch*. He is a best-selling recording artist on the VIVA Philippines label, as well as his American Solo Album debut *Altitude* on Yellow Sound Label based on his concert for Lincoln Center's American Songbook Series.

JACOB MING-TRENT (*Sir Toby Belch*) appeared on Broadway in *Hands on a Hardbody* and *Shrek the Musical*. His Off-Broadway credits include *Cymbeline*, *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Lortel Award for Best Supporting Actor), and *The Tempest* (The Public); Julie Taymor's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merchant of Venice* (TFANA); *On the Levee* (Lincoln Center); *Mother Courage* (CSC); *Dispatches from (A)mended America*, *Widowers' Houses*, (Epic Theatre Ensemble). He has appeared regionally at American Repertory Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theater, Dallas Theater Center, A.C.T., Williamstown Theatre Festival, New York Stage and Film, The O'Neil, and the Acting Company. His film and TV credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Forbidden Love*, *Fort Greene*, *Law & Order*, *Bored to Death*, *30 Rock*, *Unforgettable*, *high maintenance*, and most recently he played Mose on AMC's "Feed the Beast."

CAMEO APPEARANCES:

COBU was created as a Live Rhythm Performing Arts Group in 2000. Founder Yako Miyamoto is a veteran member of the Off-Broadway-hit STOMP. COBU is a live rhythm performing arts group, combining elements of Japanese traditional Taiko drumming with NY-style street dancing. COBU's motto is "Dance like Drumming, Drum like Dancing," inspired by the combined sounds of New York and traditional Japanese culture. Their signature sound is created organically through acoustic instruments rather than digital transcription. COBU has been featured in major venues including Madison Square Garden; the Colosseum, MGM Arena, Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas; and the Key Arena in Seattle. Winner of the Wella International Trend Talent Award, COBU also won the Audience Favorite Award at the 2011 New York

Fringe Festival, received the Grand Prize by K-ollaboration, performed for an NBA half time show, and was listed as one of the 30 shows to see by Time Out. Director Duane Adler also directed a 3D film based on Yako Miyamoto, [Make Your Move].

JAMBALAYA BRASS BAND. These seasoned New York purveyors of authentic American ‘roots’ music play a spicy musical gumbo of New Orleans fare from the last 100 years to their own modern sounds. The Band’s traditional and original arrangements are all conceived with imagination and wit. The Jambalaya Brass Band’s two CDs, *It’s a Jungle Out There* and *On The Funky Side* charted in the top five of the *CMJ Jazz* charts, *JazzWeek* and the *Roots Music Report*. Recent performances include Caesar’s in Atlantic City, two Southern Comfort commercials, Memorial for Allen Toussaint, Funeral for the ‘Old’ Coney Island, d.b.a. New Orleans, Mermaid Parade, B.B. King’s as well as many colleges and other concerts around the country.

THE LOVE SHOW is a theatrical dance company based in Brooklyn that combines cabaret, ballet, rock, comedy, burlesque and theater into creative performances all over the U.S. and beyond. The Love Show has entertained all audiences and was commissioned to create and perform original choreography for Banksy, Bacardi, Veuve Clicquot, Dom Perignon, Vogue Magazine, The National Arts Club, and more. An active presence on the New York art scene, The Love Show was also awarded a residency with Chashama, and presented seven seasons of their popular holiday show, "Nutcracker: Rated R," which they also performed in Tokyo. The Love Show also has three other full length productions, "Dance Mayhem: A Grindhouse Ballet", "SEVERED: The Tragic Loves of Frankenstein's Monster", and "Boomstick Ballet: A Bruce Campbell Dance Opera in 3 Acts."

NEW YORK DEAF THEATRE (NYDT) was established over 35 years ago by Deaf theatre artists to create opportunities for the production of a dramatic art form that was not found elsewhere in New York City: plays in American Sign Language (ASL). NYDT’s main goal is to give Deaf and hard of hearing artists in the New York City area a cultural, creative, and artistic home. We strive to create theatre that gives more opportunities for Deaf artists (actors, creators, and designers) and see our audiences expand and have a deeper appreciation and understanding of our beloved Deaf culture. www.NewYorkDeafTheatre.org

ZIRANMEN KUNGFU WUSHU TRAINING CENTER. At age 10, Kungfu Wushi founder Sifu Chen Ying went to the local martial arts school to study. For two years, his instructor taught him various forms including Long Zu Zhuang, Shaolin Di Long Quan, Wu Zu Quan, and others. In 1980, the Fujian Physical Education College accepted Sifu Chen into their Wushu program and he was introduced to the famous Wushu master Wan Lai Sheng. He accepted Sifu Chen Ying as his disciple and personally guided him through six years of training in various styles. In 1990, Sifu Chen migrated to Tokyo to teach and study martial arts and then in 1994 he moved once again to Philadelphia. In 1996, Shaolin monk Shi Yan Ming invited Master Chen to the New York Shaolin Temple to teach modern Wushu and in 1997 Master Chen started his own martial arts academy in New York City, where he currently teaches tai chi, chi gong, contemporary Wushu, and traditional Shaolin Liu He Men. He has created a welcoming place with a family oriented atmosphere for all to learn at any level. This school is the last remaining gem in Chinatown where students can learn from a true master who has a love of imparting kung fu knowledge, and life wisdom all in one.

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 *Fun Home* and Lin-Manuel Miranda's acclaimed American musical *Hamilton*. The Public has received 59 Tony Awards, 168 Obie Awards, 52 Drama Desk Awards, 48 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critics Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics Awards, and five Pulitzer Prizes. www.publictheater.org.

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