

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
ANNOUNCES
CASTING FOR
NEW PUBLIC LAB MUSICAL
VENICE
BEGINNING PERFORMANCES MAY 28**

**Directed by Eric Rosen,
Cast Includes Uzo Aduba, Jennifer Damiano,
Jonathan-David, Claybourne Elder, Leslie Odom, Jr., Victoria Platt,
Angela Polk, Matt Sax, and Haaz Sleiman**

\$15 Tickets On Sale Now

March 20, 2013 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced casting today for the new Public Lab musical **VENICE**, with book by **Eric Rosen**, music by **Matt Sax**, lyrics by **Matt Sax** and **Eric Rosen**, and additional music by **Curtis Moore**. Directed by **Eric Rosen**, **VENICE** will run in The Public's Anspacher Theater beginning on Tuesday, May 28 through Sunday, June 23, with an official press opening on Thursday, June 13.

Single tickets, priced at \$15 are on sale now and can be purchased by calling **(212) 967-7555**, www.publictheater.org, or in person at The Public Theater at Astor Place at 425 Lafayette Street. **The Library at The Public** will also be open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and **Joe's Pub** will continue to offer some of the best music in the city.

The cast of **VENICE** includes **Uzo Aduba** (*Anna Monroe*), **Jennifer Damiano** (*Willow Turner*), **Jonathan-David** (*Theodore Westbrook*), **Claybourne Elder** (*Michael Victor*), **Leslie Odom, Jr.** (*Markos Monroe*), **Victoria Platt** (*Emilia Monroe*), **Angela Polk** (*Hailey Daisy*), **Matt Sax** (*Clown*), and **Haaz Sleiman** (*Venice Monroe*).

An electrifying new musical, **VENICE** will ignite the stage with a fusion of musical styles from hip-hop and rock to soaring anthems of love and hope, tracing a young man's rise as he fights for what's right against a backdrop of deceit and sibling betrayal. Part epic romance, part political tale, **VENICE** will transport you to a fallen city in the not-so-distant future where revolution is in the air, political structures are crumbling, and only the children of the city's fallen heroes can change the course of history.

VENICE features scenic design by **Beowulf Boritt**; costume design by **Clint Ramos**; lighting design by **Jason Lyons**; sound design by **Acme Sound Partners**; projection design by **Jason H. Thompson**; musical direction by **Jim Abbott**; and choreography by **Chase Brock**.

ABOUT PUBLIC LAB

Now in its sixth season, Public Lab at The Public provides audiences with access to new work and Shakespeare with low priced tickets and provides emerging and established artists with a platform to further develop their work on stage and in performances with scaled-down productions (shorter rehearsal periods and smaller budgets). Past Public Lab shows include *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* by Alex

Timbers and Michael Friedman; *The Good Negro* by Tracey Scott Wilson; *Father Comes Home From The Wars (Parts 1, 8 & 9)* by Suzan-Lori Parks; *Neighbors* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins; *Urge for Going* by Mona Mansour; *That Hopey Changey Thing, Sweet and Sad*, and *Sorry* by Richard Nelson; *The Total Bent* by Stew and Heidi Rodewald, and *Detroit '67* by Dominique Morisseau; and the introduction of Shakespeare into Public Lab with Richard Thomas in *Timon of Athens*, Renee Elise Goldsberry in *Love's Labor's Lost*, and Jay O. Sanders in *Titus Andronicus*.

ERIC ROSEN (*Director, Book, and Lyrics*) is Artistic Director of Kansas City Repertory Theatre and was Founding Artistic Director of Chicago's About Face Theatre (AFT). Original projects include *Venice* (Kansas City Rep; CTG; "Best Musical of 2010," *TIME* Magazine); *Wedding Play* (Steppenwolf, AFT, Jeff Nomination); *Winesburg Ohio* (Steppenwolf, AFT, Jeff Award, Arden, Barrymore Award, KC Rep); *Clay* (AFT, Lookingglass, CTG, Kansas City Rep, LCT3, Drama Desk Nomination, Jeff Award); and *Undone, Whitman, and Dream Boy* (Jeff Award). Directing credits include LCT3, KC Rep, CTG, Steppenwolf, Goodman, Lookingglass, Chicago Shakespeare, Alliance, Hartford Stage, 5th Avenue, Prince, Cincinnati, Melbourne (Australia) and workshops at Sundance, O'Neill, Playwrights Horizons, and The Public Theater. He has developed and produced over 40 world premieres, including Doug Wright's Pulitzer Prize and Tony winner, *I Am My Own Wife* and work by Mary Zimmerman, Frank Galati, Stephen Flaherty, Moises Kaufman, among others.

MATT SAX (*Music and Lyrics, Clown*) is a writer, actor and musician. His one man hip-hop musical, *Clay*, was presented by Lincoln Center (Drama Desk and Outer Critics nominations), Lookingglass Theatre/About Face Theatre (Jeff Award), Center Theatre Group (Ovation Award Nomination), Kansas City Rep and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Prior to The Public, *Venice* has been presented by Center Theatre Group and Kansas City Rep. He also writes and performs in the comedy group, *Sax & Dixon*, whose work has been presented by Ars Nova, The Montreal Comedy Festival and The New York Fringe Festival. He is also one half of the music collective, *Fellow Rebel*. He is currently working on, *Up & ADAM*, a new musical he is developing for Center Theater Group.

CURTIS MOORE (*Additional Music*) has composed the score for *Timon of Athens* at The Public, and recently returned from conducting and performing in Sam Mendes' production of *Richard III*, starring Kevin Spacey. With lyricist Thomas Mizer, he was awarded a Jonathan Larson Grant in 2009; together they wrote the musicals *Triangle* (NAMT), *Stagecoach Mary* (NAMT), and *The Bus To Buenos Aires* (EST). He composed and performed songs in the Todd Solondz' film, *Palindromes*, and composed the score for *Clear Blue Tuesday*.

UZO ADUBA (*Anna Monroe*) has appeared on Broadway in the recent revival of *Godspell* and *Coram Boy*. She has also appeared Off-Broadway in *The Seven*. Her television credits include "Blue Blood" and "Orange is the New Black."

JENNIFER DAMIANO (*Willow Turner*) has appeared on Broadway in *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*; *Spring Awakening*; and originated the role of Natalie in *Next to Normal*, for which she received a Tony nomination. She also appeared Off-Broadway in *Next to Normal*. Her film and television credits include "Gossip Girl" and the upcoming film *B-Side*.

JONATHAN-DAVID (*Theodore Westbrook*) has appeared on Broadway in the revival of *Les Miserables*. He has also appeared Off-Broadway in *Iphigenia 2.0*. His television credits include "The Secret Life of the American Teenager," "Shameless," "Hawthorne," and "Numb3rs."

CLAYBOURNE ELDER (*Michael Victor*) last appeared at The Public in *Road Show*. He recently appeared on Broadway in *Bonnie and Clyde*. His additional Off-Broadway credits include *One Arm*, for which he was nominated for a Drama Desk award.

LESLIE ODOM, JR. (*Markos Monroe*) has appeared on Broadway in *Leap of Faith*. His select film and television credits include *Red Tails*; "Smash"; "CSI: Miami"; "Vanished"; "House of Lies"; "NCIS: Los Angeles"; "Supernatural"; and "Gilmore Girls."

VICTORIA PLATT (*Emilia Monroe*) has appeared on Broadway in *Jelly's Last Jam*. Her select film and television credits include *Jonah Hex*, "Guiding Light," "Bones," "The Gates," "The Mentalist," "Castle," "Criminal Minds," and "Switched at Birth."

ANGELA POLK (*Hailey Daisy*) has appeared regionally in *Crowns*; *The Princess & The Black Eyed Pea*; *Once On This Island*; *Permanent Collections*; *Ragtime*; and *Everyday Heroes*; among others.

HAAZ SLEIMAN (*Venice Monroe*) has appeared Off-Broadway in *Food and Fadwa*. His film and television credits include *The Visitor*, "Nurse Jackie"; "Nikita"; "CSI: Miami"; "Covert Affairs"; "24"; "The Promise"; and "ER."

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER'S DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Completed in October 2012, the revitalization of The Public Theater's downtown home at Astor Place physically manifests the Company's core mission of sparking new dialogues and increasing accessibility for artists and audiences by dramatically opening up its landmark building to the street and community, and transforming the lobby into a public piazza for artists, students, and audiences. Designed by Ennead Architects and constructed by Westerman Construction, the project encompasses enhancements to the building's interior and exterior while preserving the historic structure. Key elements of the design include infrastructure updates to the 158-year old building, as well as construction of new exterior entry stair and glass canopy; installation of ramps for improved accessibility; an expanded and refurbished lobby; the addition of a mezzanine level with a new lounge, The Library at The Public, designed by the Rockwell Group; expansion and remodeling of restroom facilities; and comprehensive exterior restoration, ensuring stability of the landmark façade.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER AT ASTOR PLACE

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham, The Public Theater is the only theater in New York that produces Shakespeare and the classics, musicals, contemporary and experimental pieces in equal measure. 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 its beloved, 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, new and experimental stagings at The Public at Astor Place, and a range of artist and audience development initiatives including its Public Forum series, which brings together theater artists and professionals from a variety of disciplines for discussions that shed light on social issues explored in Public productions. The Public Theater is located on property owned by the City of New York and receives annual support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

www.publictheater.org

TICKET INFORMATION

VENICE, a Public Lab production, begins performances in The Public's Anspacher Theater on Tuesday, May 28 and runs through Sunday, June 23, with an official press opening on Thursday, June 13.

Member tickets, priced at \$12 are on sale now. Single tickets, priced at \$15 are on sale now and can be purchased by calling **(212) 967-7555**, www.publictheater.org, or in person at The Public Theater box office.

The performance schedule is Tuesdays through Sundays at 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. (There is no 2 p.m. performance on Saturday, June 1).

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

#