

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
KICKS OFF
SPRING PUBLIC FORUM
DRAMA CLUB SERIES IN FEBRUARY**

VENUS AND ADONIS

A Poem By William Shakespeare

AN EVENING WITH TEVYE AND CHAVA

Inspired By Alisa Solomon's *Wonder of Wonders:*

A Cultural History of Fiddler on the Roof

THE PEOPLE

By Susan Glaspell

**Readings and Discussions To Include David Brooks,
Sheldon Harnick, Chris Hayes, Harvey Fierstein, Audra McDonald,
Austin Pendleton, Will Swenson, and More**

January 14, 2014 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) will kick off the spring season of **Public Forum Drama Club**, a “book club for plays” that will feature one-night-only readings and discussions of great works of dramatic literature. Curated by Jeremy McCarter, the popular Public Forum series presents the theater of ideas: conversations and performances with leading voices in politics, media, and the arts.

In **Public Forum Drama Club**, authors, musicians, journalists, scholars, and actors come together to give onstage readings that have some special resonance in our lives today. Each reading concludes with a discussion of the hard questions that the evening raises about our politics, our culture, and the way we live now. The series launched last fall and featured Kia Corthron's *Life by Asphyxiation* with Holly Hunter; Tony Kushner's *Only We Who Guard the Mystery Shall Be Unhappy* with Rachel Maddow; and Thornton Wilder's *The Long Christmas Dinner* with Cynthia Nixon.

Public Forum has also released a free podcast version of the Drama Club reading and discussion of Tony Kushner's *Only We Who Guard the Mystery Shall Be Unhappy*, featuring Elizabeth Marvel, Denis O'Hare, and Rachel Maddow. Visit the iTunes Music Store (itun.es/i6FR5x9) to listen for free to the podcast and other Forum programs.

“Public Forum creates a meeting point where our greatest artists and leading thinkers can engage with the most vital issues of our time. Drama Club is our way of rooting that conversation in the shared experience of reading a great work for a live audience,” said **Public Forum Director Jeremy McCarter**.

On **Monday, February 10 at 7:00 p.m.**, Public Forum Drama Club will celebrate Valentine's Day with a reading and discussion of Shakespeare's epic poem about the pleasure and pain of love, ***Venus and Adonis***. The young Adonis is seduced by the goddess Venus, with uncomfortable consequences for all

of us. Reading the poem and discussing love in the modern day will be **Audra McDonald, Will Swenson, Stephin Merritt**, and others.

The next spring Drama Club reading and discussion will be ***An Evening With Tevye and Chava*** on **Monday, March 17 at 7:00 p.m.** Inspired by **Alisa Solomon's *Wonder of Wonders***, a new cultural history of *Fiddler on the Roof*, the evening will trace how successive generations of storytellers used Sholom-Aleichem's characters to reflect changing concerns about family, identity, and more. **Harvey Fierstein**, who played a celebrated Tevye in the 2004 revival of *Fiddler*, will be joined by the show's co-creator, **Sheldon Harnick**, original Broadway cast member **Austin Pendleton**, renowned Yiddish theatermaker **Jenny Romaine**, and **Alisa Solomon** for an unforgettable night of songs, stories, and conversation.

The final spring Drama Club on **Sunday, May 18 at 7:00 p.m.** will feature ***The People*** by **Susan Glaspell**. Can radical writers change the world? In Glaspell's timely but little-known 1917 play, the editor of a struggling revolutionary magazine has to decide whether to keep up the fight – with plenty of not-always-helpful input from his staff and his readers. The evening's special cast will be comprised entirely of our leading political journalists, including **David Brooks** (*The New York Times*), **Ta-Nehisi Coates** (*The Atlantic*), **Michelle Goldberg** (*The Nation*), **Christopher Hayes** (MSNBC), **Hendrik Hertzberg** (*The New Yorker*), **Maria Hinojosa** (NPR), **Reihan Salam** (*National Review*), **Ben Smith** (BuzzFeed), **Bhaskar Sunkara** (*Jacobin*), and more.

Public Theater Member tickets for the spring **Public Forum Drama Club** series at Joe's Pub at The Public are on sale now. Single tickets, starting at \$30, go on sale Thursday, January 16 and can be purchased at **(212) 967-7555**, 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 drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM, now in its fourth year, presents the theater of ideas. Curated by Jeremy McCarter, this series of conversations and performances features leading voices in politics, media, and the arts. Alec Baldwin, Anne Hathaway, Cynthia Nixon, Sam Waterston, and former NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman have hosted its programs, which have featured the insights of Kurt Andersen, David Brooks, David Byrne, Mary Schmidt Campbell, Tony Kushner, Rachel Maddow, Wynton Marsalis, Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Francine Prose, Salman Rushdie, David Simon, Anna Deavere Smith, Stephen Sondheim, Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, the culture writers of *New York Magazine*, and young veterans of the war in Afghanistan - plus performances by Christine Baranski, Matt Damon, Holly Hunter, Wendell Pierce, and Vanessa Redgrave, among others. Current Forum programs include Public Forum Drama Club, Public Forum Duets, Public Forum Solos, and the Public Forum Podcast.

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, the classics, musicals, and contemporary and experimental works 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 and other classic 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; 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. Key elements of the revitalization included infrastructure updates to the 158-year old building, including changes to the main entry, expanded lobby, additional restrooms, and the addition of a new lounge, The Library at The Public, designed by the Rockwell Group. The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities. www.publictheater.org

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There is no food or drink minimum for the Public Forum Drama Club series in Joe's Pub. Please note the final line-up is subject to change.

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

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