

**THE PUBLIC THEATER  
BEGINS PREVIEWS FOR  
NEW YORK PREMIERE OF  
*SEA WALL / A LIFE*  
February 1-March 31**

**Written by Simon Stephens and Nick Payne  
Directed by Carrie Cracknell  
Featuring Jake Gyllenhaal and Tom Sturridge**  
**Joseph Papp Free Preview Performance on  
Friday, February 1**

January 24, 2019 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) will begin previews for the New York premiere of ***SEA WALL / A LIFE*** with a Joseph Papp Free Preview performance on Friday, February 1. Written by **Simon Stephens** and **Nick Payne** respectively, and directed by **Carrie Cracknell**, ***SEA WALL / A LIFE*** will run through Sunday, March 31 in The Public's Newman Theater with an official press opening on Thursday, February 14. ***SEA WALL / A LIFE*** features **Jake Gyllenhaal** and **Tom Sturridge** in their Public Theater debuts.

Continuing The Public's mission to make great theater accessible to all, the Joseph Papp Free Preview Initiative continues this spring; free tickets to the first preview on Friday, February 1 will be available beginning January 26 via TodayTix mobile lottery, and on February 1 via the lottery in the lobby of The Public Theater at Astor Place, with entries starting at 11:00 a.m. and winners drawn at 12:00 p.m. (Noon).

Academy Award nominee Jake Gyllenhaal and Tony Award nominee Tom Sturridge make their Public Theater debuts in an unforgettable and incredibly intimate evening of theater. Sturridge, in his third collaboration with Tony and Olivier Award winner Simon Stephens, performs ***SEA WALL***, an astonishing monologue about love and the human need to know the unknowable. Gyllenhaal continues his artistic collaboration with Olivier Award-nominated playwright Nick Payne in ***A LIFE***, a meditation on how we say goodbye to those we love most. Directed by Carrie Cracknell, this heart-filled exploration of the beauty of life and meaning of love is a must-see evening of dramatic storytelling at its best.

***SEA WALL / A LIFE*** features scenic design by Laura Jellinek, costume design by Kaye Voyce, lighting design by Peter Kaczorowski, sound design by Fabian Obispo, and original music by Stuart Earl.

**NICK PAYNE** (A Life Playwright). Payne's theater credits include *If There Is I Haven't Found It Yet* (Bush Theatre and Roundabout Theatre Company, New York); *Wanderlust* (Royal Court Theatre); Sophocles' *Electra* (Gate Theatre); *One Day When We Were Young* (Paines Plough/Sheffield Theatres and Shoreditch Town Hall); *Lay Down Your Cross* (Hampstead Theatre); *Constellations* (Royal Court Theatre, Duke of York's and UK tour); *The Same Deep Water As Me* (Donmar Warehouse); *Blurred Lines* (The Shed, National Theatre); *Incognito* (Nabokov/Live Theatre, Newcastle); *The Art of Dying* (Royal Court

Theatre); and *Elegy* (Donmar Warehouse). His film and television credits include *The Sense of an Ending* (BBC Films/Origin Pictures) and "Wanderlust" (BBC One/Netflix).

**SIMON STEPHENS** (*Sea Wall Playwright*)'s many plays have been widely translated and produced throughout the world. *Harper Regan*, *Bluebird*, *Punk Rock*, *Heisenberg*, *On the Shore of the Wide World*, and his English language version of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* have played in New York. His adaptation of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* ran for two years on Broadway and won the Tony Award for Best Play. He is Associate Playwright at London's Royal Court Theatre and Professor of Scriptwriting at Manchester Metropolitan University.

**CARRIE CRACKNELL** (*Director*) was Artistic Director at the Gate from 2007 to 2012 and was an Associate Director at the Young Vic and the Royal Court. Her theater work includes *Julie*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Medea* and *Blurred Lines* (National Theatre); *Oil* (Almeida); *Birdland*, *Searched*, and *Pigeons* (Royal Court); *A Doll's House* (also West End and BAM), *Elektra* and *Macbeth* (Young Vic); *Breathing Irregular*, *Hedda*, *I am Falling* (also at Sadler's Wells), *The Sexual Neuroses of our Parents*, and *Armageddon* (Gate Theatre); *Dolls* (NTS). Her opera credits include *Wozzeck* for English National Opera and her film credits include *Britain Isn't Eating* (short) and *Nora* (short).

**JAKE GYLLENHAAL**. An Academy Award-nominated actor, Gyllenhaal has established himself as one of the finest actors of his generation. With his production company Nine Stories, he is on his way to becoming a filmmaker of note – sourcing material, developing it from the ground up, collaborating with bold storytellers, and shepherding the projects through release. On stage, Gyllenhaal most recently starred on Broadway in an acclaimed revival of Stephen Sondheim's Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece *Sunday in the Park with George* opposite Tony winner Annaleigh Ashford. The musical re-opened the historic Hudson Theatre and played a sold-out 10-week engagement, becoming one of the most successful productions in Sondheim's esteemed history. His other Broadway productions include *Constellations* (Drama League Award nomination) and *Little Shop of Horrors*. He has appeared Off-Broadway in *If There Is I Haven't Found It Yet* and on the West End in *This Is Our Youth* (Evening Standard Award). Gyllenhaal can next be seen in Dan Gilroy's *Velvet Buzzsaw* which will be released on Netflix on February 1 and *Spider Man: Far From Home* which Sony will release on July 5. Most recently he starred in Jacques Audiard's first English language feature *The Sisters Brothers* and Paul Dano's directorial debut *Wildlife*, which Gyllenhaal also produced. *Sea Wall/A Life* marks Gyllenhaal's third collaboration with playwright Nick Payne.

**TOM STURRIDGE** will next be seen in Dan Gilroy's *Velvet Buzzsaw* alongside Jake Gyllenhaal, Rene Russo, John Malkovich, Toni Collette, Zawe Ashton, Billy Magnussen, and Daveed Diggs. He most recently starred on Broadway in *1984*, the stage adaptation of George Orwell's dystopian novel produced by Scott Rudin and Sonia Friedman. Sturridge starred as Winston Smith alongside Olivia Wilde and Reed Birney. He was nominated for an Olivier Award for his outstanding performance in *American Buffalo* on the West End in London opposite John Goodman and Damian Lewis. He was previously nominated for a Tony for his role in *Orphans* on Broadway, opposite Ben Foster and Alec Baldwin. Sturridge stars in *Mary Shelley* opposite Elle Fanning and *Journey's End* with Paul Bettany and Sam Claflin. In television, Sturridge starred in the acclaimed and award-winning BBC series "The Hollow Crown," playing Henry IV alongside Benedict Cumberbatch and Judi Dench. Other notable performances include playing Allen Ginsberg in Walter Salles' *On the Road*, starring opposite Carey Mulligan in Thomas Vinterberg's *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Song to Song* directed by Terrance Malick, and *Pirate Radio* opposite Phillip Seymour Hoffman.

### **ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:**

**THE PUBLIC** is theater of, by, and for all 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, 170 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 54 Lortel Awards, 32 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org)

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

***SEA WALL / A LIFE***, which was originally scheduled to begin performances on February 26, will now begin performances in The Public's Newman Theater on Friday, February 1. The new play will run through Sunday, March 31 with an official press opening on Thursday, February 14.

Public Theater Partner, Public Supporter, and Member tickets are available now. Full price tickets, starting at \$110, can be accessed by calling **(212) 967-7555**, visiting [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org), or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street.

The performance schedule is Tuesday through Friday at 8:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (*There is no 2:00 p.m. performance on Saturday, February 2; Sunday, February 3; and Saturday, February 9. There is no 8:00 p.m. performance on Sunday, February 10; and Friday, February 15. There is an added performance on Monday, February 11 at 8:00 p.m.*).

The **open captioning** performance will be at **2:00 p.m.** on **Saturday, February 16**. The **audio described** performance will be at **2:00 p.m.** on **Saturday, February 23**.

The Library at The Public is open nightly for food and drink, beginning at 5:30 p.m., and Joe's Pub at The Public continues to offer some of the best music in the city. For more information, visit [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org).

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