

# THE PUBLIC

**FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE**

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## PHOTOS: CAST & CREATIVE HEADSHOTS



Francois Battiste



Toussaint Battiste



John Clay III



Calvin Dutton



Mister Fitzgerald



Perri Gaffney



Skyler Gallun



Paige Gilbert



Mandi Masden



Camden McKinnon



Jesse Pennington



Tonya Pinkins



N'yomi Stewart

## **CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR LORRAINE HANSBERRY'S HISTORIC PUBLIC THEATER DEBUT: NEW REVIVAL OF *A RAISIN IN THE SUN***

**Written by Lorraine Hansberry  
Directed by Robert O'Hara**

**Cast includes Francois Battiste, Toussaint Battiste,  
John Clay III, Calvin Dutton, Mister Fitzgerald, Perri Gaffney,  
Skyler Gallun, Paige Gilbert, Mandi Masden, Camden McKinnon, Jesse  
Pennington, Tonya Pinkins, and N'yomi Stewart**

**Performances Will Begin With a Joseph Papp Free Performance  
On Tuesday, September 27 and Will Run Through Sunday, November 6;  
Official Press Opening on Wednesday, October 19**

August 22, 2022 – The Public Theater (Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director and Patrick Willingham, Executive Director) announced casting today for the upcoming revival of **A RAISIN IN THE SUN** written by **Lorraine Hansberry** and directed by Tony Award nominee **Robert O’Hara**. This revival marks Hansberry’s Public Theater debut as the theater’s Astor Place home celebrates its 55th season producing work by groundbreaking artists. The production will begin performances in the Newman Theater with a Joseph Papp Free Performance on Tuesday, September 27 and will run through Sunday, November 6. **A RAISIN IN THE SUN** will officially open on Wednesday, October 19.

The cast of **A RAISIN IN THE SUN** will include **Francois Battiste** (*Walter Lee Younger*), **Toussaint Battiste** (*Travis Younger alternate*), **John Clay III** (*Joseph Asagai*), **Calvin Dutton** (*Bobo*), **Mister Fitzgerald** (*George Murchison*), **Perri Gaffney** (*Mrs. Johnson*), **Skyler Gallun** (*Understudy*), **Paige Gilbert** (*Beneatha Younger*), **Mandi Masden** (*Ruth Younger*), **Camden McKinnon** (*Travis Younger alternate*), **Jesse Pennington** (*Karl Lindner*), **Tonya Pinkins** (*Lena Younger*), and **N’yomi Stewart** (*Understudy*).

**Lorraine Hansberry’s A RAISIN IN THE SUN** comes to Astor Place this fall in Hansberry’s Public Theater debut. Directed by Tony Award nominee **Robert O’Hara**, this fresh look at a classic proves to be as provocative and powerful today as it was in 1959. Lena Younger has decided to use her late husband’s life insurance to move her family out of their cramped apartment on Chicago’s South Side. Her son, Walter Lee, has other ideas. This innovative new production of an American classic fearlessly interrogates the American dream in the face of racial and economic strife.

“I am filled with curiosity and excitement by what this tremendous cast that The Public has assembled will bring to a play I consider simply the best ever written,” said director **Robert O’Hara**. He continues, “having them all with me and our brilliant designers in this exploration of this essential classic and doing it at The Public Theater where I debuted as a writer and director is a dream come true. A dream that I didn’t have to defer because there were works like *A Raisin in the Sun* that I held as my guiding light and which blazed the path for me and countless others.”

The production will feature scenic design by Clint Ramos, costume design by Karen Perry, lighting design by Alex Jainchill, sound design by Elisheba Ittoop, sound system design by Will Pickens, hair and wig design by Nikiya Mathis, video design by Brittany Bland, prop management by Claire M. Kavanah, fight and intimacy direction by Teniece Divya Johnson, and movement direction by Rickey Tripp. Clarissa Marie Ligon will serve as production stage manager and Andie Burns will serve as stage manager.

In addition to **A RAISIN IN THE SUN**, The Public’s 55th anniversary season at Astor Place will also include Elevator Repair Service’s **BALDWIN AND BUCKLEY AT CAMBRIDGE** in the Anspacher Theater. The production is a profoundly relevant presentation of the legendary debate between virtuosic writer James Baldwin and father of American conservatism William F. Buckley, Jr. In October, **WHERE WE BELONG** begins in the LuEsther Hall—an intimate and exhilarating solo piece written and performed by Madeline Sayet and directed by Mei Ann Teo, co-produced with Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in association with Folger Shakespeare Library. Sayet’s story is a celebration of the indigenous community and an in-depth exploration of colonialism that asks us what it means to belong in an increasingly globalized world. The Public will close out the fall in Joe’s Pub with the World Premiere of Suzan-Lori Parks’ **PLAYS FOR THE PLAGUE YEAR**, both a personal story of one family’s daily lives, as well as a sweeping account of all we faced as a city, a nation, and a global community. Working in collaboration with Niegel Smith as director, Parks’ groundbreaking new work is brimming with humanity, bears witness to what we’ve experienced, and offers inspiration as we look ahead.

The Public requires proof of complete COVID-19 vaccination for access to the facility, theaters, and the restaurant. A booster dose is not required. Approved face masks are still required, including while watching a performance, with exceptions for attendees in Joe’s Pub and The Library at The Public, who are actively eating and drinking. Learn more at [Safe At The Public](#).

The Library at The Public serves food and drink Tuesday through Sunday, beginning at 5:00 p.m. and closing at midnight. The Library is closed on Mondays. For more information, visit [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org).

## **ABOUT THE PUBLIC THEATER:**

**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 Lab, 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 60 Tony Awards, 184 Obie Awards, 56 Drama Desk Awards, 59 Lortel Awards, 34 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 58 AUDELCO Awards, 6 Antony Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org)

The Public Theater stands in honor of the first inhabitants and our ancestors. We acknowledge the land on which The Public and its theaters stand—the original homeland of the Lenape people. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. We honor the generations of stewards and we pay our respects to the many diverse indigenous peoples still connected to this land.

**The LuEsther T. Mertz Legacy Trust** provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

**A RAISIN IN THE SUN** begins performances in The Public's Newman Theater on Tuesday, September 27 and will run through Sunday, November 6, with an official press opening on Wednesday, October 19.

Public Theater Partner, Supporter, and full-price single tickets can be accessed by visiting [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org), calling **212.967.7555**, or in person at the Taub Box Office at The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette Street.

The Public's Joseph Papp Free Performance initiative will offer free tickets to the performance on Tuesday, September 27 through TodayTix. The Lottery will open for entries on Tuesday, September 20 and will close at 12PM Noon on the day of the performance. Winners will be notified by email and push notification anytime from 12PM to 4PM, and if selected, winners will have one 1 hour to claim their tickets.

The performance schedule is Tuesday through Sunday at 7:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. (*The performances on Thursday, September 29; Wednesday October 12; and Tuesday, October 25 will be at 8:00 p.m. There will be no 1:00 p.m. performances on Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2.*)

The **Open Captioned** performance will be at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 29. The **American Sign Language Interpreted** performance will be at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 5.

The full performance calendar can be found at [publictheater.org](http://publictheater.org).

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