



PRESS CONTACT:

press@publictheater.org // 212-539-8624

**THE PUBLIC THEATER
CONTINUES
58 YEARS OF
FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK
AT THE DELACORTE THEATER**

RICHARD II
Directed by Saheem Ali
May 19-June 21

**Return of Public Works' Musical Adaptation of
*AS YOU LIKE IT***

**Adapted by Shaina Taub & Laurie Woolery
Music & Lyrics by Shaina Taub
Original Choreography by Sonya Tayeh
Directed by Laurie Woolery
July 14-August 8**

**THE JEROME L. GREENE FOUNDATION &
BANK OF AMERICA RETURN AS SEASON SPONSORS OF
FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK**

January 30, 2020 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced the line-up today for the 2020 Free Shakespeare in the Park season, continuing a 58-year tradition of free theater in Central Park. Since 1962, over five million people have enjoyed more than 150 free productions of Shakespeare and other classical works and musicals at The Delacorte Theater. Conceived by founder Joseph Papp as a way to make great theater accessible to all, The Public's Free Shakespeare in the Park continues to be the bedrock of the Company's mission to increase access and engage the community.

This summer, Free Shakespeare in the Park will feature the rarely seen drama ***RICHARD II*** (May 19-June 21), directed by **Saheem Ali** and appearing at The Delacorte for the first time in over 30 years. The summer season will continue with the return of the free Public Works musical adaptation of ***AS YOU LIKE IT*** in a full four-week production (July 14-August 8), adapted by **Shaina Taub** and Director of Public Works **Laurie Woolery**, with music and lyrics by Shaina Taub, original choreography by **Sonya Tayeh**, and directed by Laurie Woolery.

“There is no issue in the world that can’t be helped by a little Shakespeare. This summer, *Richard II* explores the extraordinary danger and possibility of regime change and *As You Like It* celebrates a Forest of Arden where all refugees are welcome,” said **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis**. “Laurie Woolery and Saheem Ali make their Shakespeare in the Park directing debuts and these brilliant artists will prove to us, once again, that Shakespeare is the most democratic of dramatists.”

The last of the divinely anointed monarchs ascends to the throne in Shakespeare’s **RICHARD II**. When King Richard banishes his cousin Henry Bolingbroke and deprives him of his inheritance, he unwittingly creates an enemy who will ultimately force him from the throne. One of the Bard’s only dramas entirely in verse, this epic and intimate play presents the end of the Medieval Age and the rise of the house of Lancaster through a riveting tale of lost sovereignty, political intrigue, and psychological complexity. Directed by **Saheem Ali**, this beautiful and cutting play returns to The Delacorte for the first time in over three decades.

RICHARD II has been staged at The Delacorte only once before, in a 1987 production directed by Shakespeare in the Park founder Joseph Papp and featuring Peter MacNicol as Richard II, Marian Seldes as Duchess of Gloucester, Tony Shalhoub as Sir William Bagot, John Bedford Lloyd as Henry Bolingbroke, Tom Aldredge as John of Gaunt, and Rocky Carroll as Sir Henry Green.

This summer, Public Works’ acclaimed musical production of **AS YOU LIKE IT** returns to The Delacorte for a full four-week production. Adapted by **Shaina Taub** and Director of Public Works **Laurie Woolery**, featuring music and lyrics by Taub, this ambitious work of participatory theater features an ensemble of both professional actors and community members from across New York, brought together through The Public Theater’s groundbreaking initiative Public Works. Named on *The New York Times*’ Best Theater of 2017, Public Works’ **AS YOU LIKE IT** is an immersive tale of faithful friends, feuding families, and lovers in disguise. Forced from their homes, Orlando, Duke Senior, his daughter Rosalind, and niece Celia escape to the Forest of Arden, a fantastical place of transformation, where all are welcomed and embraced. Banished into the forest, they find community and acceptance under the stars. Laurie Woolery directs this magical adaptation of a beloved classic.

The cast of **AS YOU LIKE IT** will include **Darius de Haas** (*Duke Senior*), **Joél Pérez** (*Touchstone*), and **Shaina Taub** (*Jaques*), reprising their roles from the original Public Works production. They will be joined by two rotating ensembles of community members from all five boroughs to perform together on The Delacorte stage in this enchanting comedy. Complete casting will be announced at a later date.

PUBLIC WORKS, a major program of The Public Theater, aims to restore and build community by connecting people through theater—both performing it and experiencing it—reminding us that we’re all in this together. Working with partner organizations in all five boroughs, Public Works invites community members to take classes, attend performances, and join in the creation of ambitious works of participatory theater. It 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 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.

The Public Works community partner organizations are **Brownsville Recreation Center** (Brooklyn), **Center for Family Life in Sunset Park** (Brooklyn), **DreamYard** (Bronx), **The Fortune Society** (Queens), and **Military Resilience Foundation** (all boroughs), along with alumni partners **Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education** (Bronx), **Children’s Aid** (all boroughs), and **Domestic Workers United** (all boroughs).

In 2019, Public Works welcomed seven new Public Works National Affiliates, including Long Wharf Theatre (New Haven, CT), Pittsburgh Public Theater (Pittsburgh, PA), Theatre Under The Stars (Houston, TX), Trinity Repertory Company (Providence, RI), Tulsa Performing Arts Center and Trust (Tulsa, OK), Virginia Stage Company (Norfolk, VA), and Williamstown Theatre Festival (Williamstown, MA). These National Affiliates joined the Founding Public Works National and International Partners—Dallas Theater Center

(Dallas, TX), the National Theatre's Public Acts program (London and nationally, United Kingdom), and Seattle Repertory Theatre (Seattle, WA). This network of theaters gathers to share practices and help build momentum around community-based theater nationwide. Collectively, they are seeking to put theater at the heart of every community, and community at the heart of every theater.

All 10 Public Works National Partners and Affiliates will present community-based productions this year, from *Twelfth Night* in Dallas, TX, to *A Tale of Two Cities* in Providence, RI, to *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* in Doncaster, U.K.

This season, The Public proudly welcomes the return of **The Jerome L. Greene Foundation** and **Bank of America** as season sponsors. The generous support of **The Jerome L. Greene Foundation** and **Bank of America** helps to sustain The Public's mission of inclusion, creating great theater, boldly conceived, and free for all.

"We couldn't be happier to once again partner with The Public Theater on Free Shakespeare in the Park," said **Chris McInerney, President and CEO of the Jerome L. Greene Foundation**. "The Public brings high quality theater to city audiences for free, making it a true treasure of New York."

"Bank of America is proud to return for the 14th year as season sponsor of Free Shakespeare in the Park, building on our shared belief that the arts should be accessible to everyone," said **Anne Walker, New York City president, Bank of America**. "As one of the largest corporate supporters of arts and culture programming, we believe in the power of the arts to help economies thrive, educate, inspire, and enrich societies, and create greater cultural understanding."

Become a Public Supporter today with a gift starting at \$500, and we'll reserve you a pair of seats. Public Supporters also enjoy early access to the Astor Season, and more benefits throughout the year. You can join online at publictheater.org or by calling [212.967.7555](tel:212.967.7555).

The Public Theater's Annual Gala, **PUBLIC SINGS!**, will be celebrated on **Monday, June 1** at the Delacorte Theater. To receive an invitation to The Public Theater's Gala, please call (212) 539-8634 or email gala@publictheater.org.

BIOS

SAHEEM ALI (Richard II *Director*) is a proud immigrant from Kenya. His recent productions include *Fires in the Mirror* (Signature Theatre), *The Rolling Stone* (Lincoln Center Theater), *The New Englanders* (MTC), *Passage* (Soho Rep), *Fireflies* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Dangerous House* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Sugar in Our Wounds* (MTC), *Tartuffe* (Playmakers Rep), *Where Storms Are Born* (WTF), *Twelfth Night* (The Public Theater's Mobile Unit), *Kill Move Paradise* (National Black Theater), *Nollywood Dreams* (Cherry Lane), and *Dot* (Detroit Public Theater). He has workshopped new plays at Playwrights Horizons, Playwrights Realm, MCC, New York Stage & Film, Page 73, and The Lark. He is a Usual Suspect at New York Theatre Workshop, Sir John Gielgud SDCF Fellow, and Shubert Fellow.

SHAINA TAUB (*As You Like It Adapter and Music & Lyrics/Jaques*) is an Emmy and Drama Desk-nominated songwriter and performer. She is a winner of the Kleban Prize, the Fred Ebb Award, the Jonathan Larson Grant, the Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award, and the ASCAP Lucille & Jack Yellen Award. She is an artist-in-residence at The Public Theater, where she performs regularly in concert at Joe's Pub. Her Public Works adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* was part of the 2018 Shakespeare in the Park season, and both her Shakespeare musicals have since been produced nationally and internationally, most recently at the Young Vic and the National Theatre in London. She is currently writing lyrics for the upcoming Broadway musical *The Devil Wears Prada*, with music by Sir Elton John, as well as a new musical about the American women's suffrage movement. Taub made her Lincoln Center debut with a solo evening in their American Songbook concert series and she has performed her music with the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall. Other Off-Broadway credits include *Old Hats*; *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Lucille Lortel nomination); and *Hadestown*. Her two albums are available on all music platforms. www.shainataub.com

SONYA TAYEH (As You Like It *Original Choreography*) is an award-winning choreographer currently represented on Broadway with *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* (her Broadway debut) and the upcoming Broadway transfer of the new musical *Sing Street* (New York Theatre Workshop). Other credits include “Rent: Live” (Fox), *The Lucky Ones* (Ars Nova), *Face the Torrent* for Malpaso Dance Co., *You’ll Still Call Me By Name* (commissioned by Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival and New York Live Arts), Martha Graham Dance Company’s *Lamentation Variation Series* (The Joyce), *Hundred Days* (The Public’s Under the Radar Festival and NYTW), *The Skin of Our Teeth* (TFANA), *The Wild Party* (City Center Encores!), and *Kung Fu* (Signature Theatre). Her accolades include Lortel, Obie, Emmy, and Drama Desk. Tayeh has directed and choreographed for world-renowned musical artists such as Madonna, Florence and the Machine, and Miley Cyrus. www.sonyatayeh.com

LAURIE WOOLERY (As You Like It *Adapter and Director*) is a theater director, playwright, and community artist. As a first-generation Latinx, she works with regional theaters and communities to create theater and build sustainable art practices. As an artist, she has worked at The Public Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Cornerstone Theater Company, South Coast Repertory, and Los Angeles Philharmonic, among others. Woolery has directed world premieres of plays by Tanya Saracho, Mary Kathryn Nagle, Charise Castro Smith, Marisela Treviño Orta, Aditi Kapil, K.J. Sanchez, and more. Currently, Woolery is the Director of Public Works, a major initiative of The Public Theater that seeks to engage the people of New York by making them creators and not just spectators. In 2015, Woolery launched ACTivate, a program that puts community members in the artistic driver’s seat. In 2017, with collaborator Shaina Taub, Woolery created a new musical adaptation of *As You Like It* at The Delacorte Theater featuring 200 New Yorkers. That production topped *The New York Times*’ “The Best Theater in 2017.” She is the former Associate Artistic Director of Cornerstone Theater Company and former Conservatory Director at South Coast Repertory. Woolery has taught at Princeton, NYU, Brown, and more, and serves on the Board of the Latinx Producers Action Network and Latinx Theatre Commons. She is also one of the founding members of The Sol Project, a recipient of the Fuller Road Fellowship for Female Directors of Color, and was recently named a 2020 United States Artist Fellow. www.lauriewoolery.com

DARIUS de HAAS (*Duke Senior*) has appeared on Broadway in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Carousel*, *Rent*, *The Gershwins’ Fascinating Rhythm*, *Marie Christine*, and *Shuffle Along*. His Off-Broadway credits include *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin* (Playwrights Horizons), *Saturn Returns* (The Public), and *Running Man* (Music Theater Group, Obie Award winner). Regional includes shows at A.R.T., The Goodman, Westport Country Playhouse, The Alliance, and many others. Recent TV: “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel” (the singing voice of “Shy Baldwin”), “Dietland.” As a concert artist he has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center Songbook, London’s Royal Festival Hall, Boston Pops, Disney Concert Hall, and with numerous symphonies, as well as receiving great acclaim for his solo concerts performed all around the country. He is featured on several recordings, most recently *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel Season 3 Soundtrack*, *Quiet Please*, *Day Dream (Variations on Strayhorn)*, and many original cast recordings. Please visit www.dariusdehaas.com

JOÉL PÉREZ (*Touchstone*) has appeared on Broadway in *Fun Home* and Off-Broadway in *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*, *Sweet Charity* (The New Group, Lortel Award winner); *Oedipus El Rey*, Public Works’ *As You Like It*, *Fun Home*, *Wild Goose Dreams* (Public Theater); *Raw Bacon from Poland* (Abrons Art Center); and Broken Box Mime Theater. His regional and touring credits include *Kiss My Aztec!* (Berkeley Rep and La Jolla), *In the Heights* (1st National). Television credits include “Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert,” “Odd Mom Out,” “The Big C,” “The Outs.” Writer/Performer in *SHIZ* and actor in sketch team Peach at UCB. 2019 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow in Playwriting from NYFA. Education: Tufts University, BADA, SpringboardNYC. www.joelperez.com, @MisterJoelPerez

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, 178 Obie Awards, 53 Drama Desk Awards, 56 Lortel Awards, 34 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. publictheater.org

ABOUT BANK OF AMERICA ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE:

At Bank of America, we're guided by a common purpose to help make financial lives better, through the power of every connection. We're delivering on this through responsible growth with a focus on our environmental, social and governance (ESG) leadership. ESG is embedded across our eight lines of business and reflects how we help fuel the global economy, build trust and credibility, and represent a company that people want to work for, invest in and do business with. It's demonstrated in the inclusive and supportive workplace we create for our employees, the responsible products and services we offer our clients, and the impact we make around the world in helping local economies thrive. An important part of this work is forming strong partnerships with nonprofits and advocacy groups, such as community, consumer and environmental organizations, to bring together our collective networks and expertise to achieve greater impact. Learn more at about.bankofamerica.com, and connect with us on Twitter (@BofA_News).

ABOUT THE JEROME L. GREENE FOUNDATION:

For over four decades, the Jerome L. Greene Foundation has supported leading organizations that advance the arts, education, medicine, and social justice. Founded by Jerome L. Greene to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers, the Foundation recognizes the power of innovative thinking by working with leaders who are committed to positive social change. In the arts, the Foundation primarily invests in organizations that provide free or affordable access to live performance through ticket subsidy programs, helping further the transformative experience the arts provide.

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Lead support for **PUBLIC WORKS** is provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, The Tow Foundation, the Abrams Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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