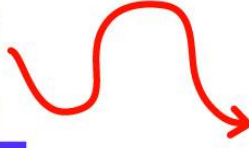


THE PUBLIC.



**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**
press@publictheater.org

ARTIST HEADSHOTS & ARTWORK

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES 2024-25 SEASON

COUNTING AND CRACKING

எண்ணிக்கை, இல்லையேல் கையோங்கு ஞைன் ஞைன்னை நமீ ஞைன் கர்னை

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

PRESENTING A BELVOIR ST THEATRE & KURINJI CO-PRODUCTION

WRITTEN AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTED S. SHAKTHIDHARAN

DIRECTED AND ASSOCIATE WRITTEN BY EAMON FLACK

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NYU SKIRBALL

GOOD BONES

NEW YORK PREMIERE

BY JAMES IJAMES

DIRECTED BY SAHEEM ALI

DEEP HISTORY

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY DAVID FINNIGAN

GATZ

ACCLAIMED PRODUCTION RETURNS TO THE PUBLIC

FOR FINAL NEW YORK CITY RUN

BY ELEVATOR REPAIR SERVICE

TEXT: *THE GREAT GATSBY* BY F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

DIRECTED BY JOHN COLLINS

MA-YI THEATRE COMPANY AND THE PUBLIC THEATER

PRESENT THE NEW YORK PREMIERE

SUMO

BY LISA SANAYE DRING

A CO-PRODUCTION OF MA-YI THEATER COMPANY AND LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE

DIRECTED BY RALPH B. PEÑA

GLASS. KILL. WHAT IF IF ONLY. IMP.

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

OF ALL FOUR PLAYS PRESENTED TOGETHER

BY CARYL CHURCHILL

DIRECTED BY JAMES MACDONALD

TWELFTH NIGHT

DIRECTED BY SAHEEM ALI

TO REOPEN NEWLY REVITALIZED DELACORTE THEATER
FOR FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK IN SUMMER 2025

LET'S KEEP DANCING: A DEATH ROW STORY

WORLD PREMIERE AUDIO PLAY

BY JOHN PURUGGANAN

DIRECTED BY OSKAR EUSTIS

KICKING OFF FALL 2025 SEASON

INITIATIVE

WORLD PREMIERE

BY ELSE WENT

DIRECTED BY EMMA ROSA WENT

FREE MOBILE UNIT TO TOUR FREE PRODUCTION

AROUND THE FIVE BOROUGHES IN SPRING 2025

JOE'S PUB CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF HABIBI FESTIVAL,

NEW YORK VOICES COMMISSIONS, AND NIGHTLY PERFORMANCES

JOSEPH PAPP FREE PERFORMANCES RETURN FOR ALL PRODUCTIONS

May 7, 2024 – The Public Theater’s Artistic Director Oskar Eustis and Executive Director Patrick Willingham announced the line-up today for **The Public’s 2024-25 Season** at their landmark Astor Place home on 425 Lafayette Street and the Summer 2025 production to reopen the beloved Delacorte Theater. The Public will celebrate **Artistic Director Oskar Eustis’** 20th anniversary season with a slate of mission-driven programming, including bold, innovative productions of works from the U.S. and abroad alongside The Public’s year-round artistic programs. An iconic New York theatrical institution producing Free Shakespeare in the Park since 1962 and revolutionary work downtown since 1967, The Public will feature productions by groundbreaking playwright **Caryl Churchill**, **Lisa Sanaye Dring**, **David Finnigan**, Pulitzer Prize winner **James Ijames**, **John Purugganan**, and **S. Shakthidharan** and partnerships with acclaimed theater companies **Belvoir St Theatre**, **Kurinji**, and **NYU Skirball**; **Elevator Repair Service**; and **Ma-Yi Theatre Company** and **La Jolla Playhouse**. Additionally, Emerging Writers Group alumnus **Else Went** will kick off the Fall 2025 season; additional 2025-26 season programming will be announced in 2025.

“In my 20th season at The Public Theater, I’m overjoyed to share programming that is as bold and ambitious as The Public’s mission,” said Artistic Director **Oskar Eustis**. “Two Australian artists anchor the start of the season; S. Shakthidharan brings us an epic Sri Lankan-Australian tale of family and healing, and David Finnigan brings reports from the front lines of climate change. Following his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Fat Ham*, James Ijames returns with a ghostly tale of urban renewal. Rounding out the fall, Elevator Repair Service returns to The Public for a final encore in NYC of their innovative take on *The Great Gatsby*. Lisa Sanaye Dring starts off 2025 with her Public Theater debut about the rarely explored world of the ancient Japanese tradition of sumo. Caryl Churchill, one of the world’s great dramatists, returns to The Public with a quartet of inventive short plays. We will also share an audio play about death row, written by John Purugganan from a maximum security prison.”

Eustis continued, “The season finishes with the reopening of The Delacorte Theater. We’re counting down the minutes until we can celebrate our revitalized home with a joyful production of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. Our first preview of the following season is *Initiative*, Else Went’s professional debut with the play she developed in The Public’s Emerging Writers Group. This next season is a true testament to the

expanse of The Public's tent, where we're honored to bring these extraordinary artists and six acclaimed theater companies to our stages."

After the theater undergoes its most significant revitalization in its 63-year history, The Public will celebrate the opening of the new Delacorte Theater in Summer 2025 with a Free Shakespeare in the Park production of **TWELFTH NIGHT** featuring an all-star cast of Public alumni. The Public's Associate Artistic Director and Resident Director, Tony Award nominee **Saheem Ali** directs this joyful romp welcoming all of New York back to the magic of Central Park's beloved theater.

Public Theater Partner and Supporter Plus tickets for **GOOD BONES, DEEP HISTORY, and GATZ** will go on sale on Tuesday, May 28 and Public Theater Supporter tickets on Thursday, May 30. Full-price single tickets will be available on Tuesday, June 25. Public Theater Supporter and NYU Skirball Member tickets for **COUNTING AND CRACKING** will go on sale on Tuesday, May 14 and full-price single tickets will be available on Tuesday, May 28.

"It's always a thrill to announce an upcoming season of new productions at The Public, and our 24-25 season is no different," said Board Chair **Luis A. Miranda, Jr.** "No matter if it's a North American or New York premiere; a new play or anything in between, the excitement is palpable as we prepare to bring new art to our city, and the world."

In addition to a robust mainstage season downtown at Astor Place, The Public continues its year-round engagement through its vital, mission-driven programs. Focused on furthering The Public's belief that art and culture belong to everyone, these programs and initiatives offer free and low-cost tickets, build community through theater, and develop the next generation of theater artists. In Spring 2025, [Mobile Unit](#) returns to tour the city with free performances of a Shakespeare play across the five boroughs. [Public Works](#) engages year-round with community members by offering classes, free tickets to performances, and more. Throughout the school year, The Public's partnership with the Hunts Point Children's Shakespeare Ensemble continues, where students will tackle a Shakespeare play, culminating in a performance by their fourth, fifth, and sixth grade participants.

The Public also hosts several [artist development programs, residencies, and fellowships](#), including supporting upcoming theater artists and writers through the [Emerging Writers Group](#), [Joe's Pub Working Group](#), [Vanguard Residency](#), [New York Voices Commissioning Program](#), and Jose Solís' [BIPOC Critics Lab](#). Residencies and fellowships include Writer in Residence Suzan-Lori Parks; theater company The Apothetae; Creatives Rebuild New York fellows Julian Goldhagen, Ryan J. Haddad, and Ife Olujobi; and Ntozake Shange Social Justice Playwright in Residence Erika Dickerson-Despenza.

Joe's Pub at The Public, an anchor for experimental and iconic artists in music, comedy, and live performance, celebrates a new season of vibrant nightly performances. Singer-songwriters **Jake Blount** and **Mali Obomsawin** will present the first Joe's Pub **New York Voices** commission of 2024-2025. **Dan Fishback** will present his 2023-2024 New York Voices commission *Dan Fishback is Alive and Unwell and Living in His Apartment* in December. Americana legend **Toshi Reagon** will gather her creative community in a reprise of her Post-Election Day Concert in November. Slide guitar virtuoso **Debashish Bhattacharya** will make his Joe's Pub debut. Applications for the 2024-2025 **Joe's Pub Working Group** are currently open and available at joespub.org, and the 2024-2025 **Vanguard Residency** recipient will be announced this summer.

Additional Joe's Pub performances will include the return of **Habibi Festival**, Kate Siahann-Rigg's **disOrientalism** series, the **DANCE NOW Joe's Pub Festival**, **John Cameron Mitchell & Amber Martin: Cassette Roulette**, and multiple runs with **Justin Vivian Bond**. More information about Joe's Pub's fall season can be found at joespub.org.

This summer, while The Delacorte Theater is closed for a significant revitalization until Summer 2025, The Public will bring free Shakespeare to parks and plazas around the city and screens around the country

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **James Ijames** explores gentrification and the growing price of the American dream in his sharp, funny new play, **GOOD BONES**. A work opportunity to revitalize the blighted neighborhood she grew up in has led Aisha and her chef husband Travis to buy and renovate a charming old house. But as everyone knows, renovation is expensive and stressful—both for buildings and the communities that surround them. Aisha’s young contractor Earl grew up in the area too, but his memories are of more than just dangerous streets and hollowed-out homes. When their purely professional relationship gives way to heated debate about who gets to stay and who must go, Aisha is forced to reckon with the choices she’s made to get ahead and the painful, joyful, complicated ghosts that haunt her dreams... and her dream house. The Public’s Associate Artistic Director **Saheem Ali** directs this New York premiere play about community, change, and the soul of our cities.

North American Premiere

DEEP HISTORY

Written and Performed by David Finnigan
October 5–27, 2024 (Opening: October 10)

At the end of 2019, in the English countryside, Australian playwright **David Finnigan** began writing a play about the six turning points that have brought us to this moment in time—our ecosystems transformed, our planet on the brink of unthinkable climate disaster. But then Finnigan’s hometown of Canberra was hit by bushfires. As an area the size of England burned and one billion animals perished, he started to receive texts from loved ones racing to evacuate amid the devastation. In a performance that interweaves 75,000 years of humanity with the incredibly personal account of his best friend’s escape, Finnigan calls on scientific research, phone footage, and a very personal story to illuminate the transforming planet and how we’ve arrived here. An extraordinary ride through human history, **DEEP HISTORY** is shot through with humor and glowing with hope.

Final NYC Encore of Acclaimed Production

GATZ

By Elevator Repair Service
Text: *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
Directed by John Collins
November 1–December 1 (Opening: November 8)

Ahead of the centennial of *The Great Gatsby*’s publication and more than a decade after its original Obie and Lortel Award-winning engagements, **Elevator Repair Service**’s **GATZ** returns to The Public for a thrilling and final New York City encore of the acclaimed production. One morning in the office of a mysterious small business, an employee finds a copy of *The Great Gatsby* in the clutter of his desk. He starts to read it out loud and doesn’t stop. At first his coworkers hardly notice. But after a series of strange coincidences, it’s no longer clear whether he’s reading the book, or the book is transforming him. Told over a single 6 1/2-hour production created by Elevator Repair Service and directed by Elevator Repair Service Artistic Director **John Collins**, **GATZ** is not a retelling of the Gatsby story but an enactment of the entire novel. Fitzgerald’s American masterpiece is delivered word for word, startlingly brought to life by a low-rent office staff amid their inscrutable business operations. **Scott Shepherd** reprises his award-winning role as the Narrator and is joined by most of the original New York cast. An event not to be missed and a last chance to see this theatrical and literary tour de force by one of the American theater’s most exciting and inventive companies.

The cast of **GATZ** includes **Laurena Allan, Jim Fletcher, Ross Fletcher, Maggie Hoffman, Mike Iveson, Vin Knight, Aaron Landsman, Annie McNamara, Scott Shepherd, Pete Simpson, Susie Sokol, Tory Vazquez,** and **Ben Jalosa Williams**.

Ma-Yi Theatre Company and The Public Theater
Present the New York Premiere

SUMO

By Lisa Sanaye Dring
A Co-Production of Ma-Yi Theater Company and La Jolla Playhouse
Directed by Ralph B. Peña
Winter 2025

Entrenched in an elite sumo training facility in Tokyo, six men practice, eat, love, play, and ultimately fight. Step into the sacred world of sumo wrestling, with the New York premiere of **Lisa Sanaye Dring's** mesmerizing new drama, **SUMO**. Akio arrives as an angry, ambitious 18-year-old with a lot to learn. Expecting validation, dominance, and fame, and desperate to move up the ranks, he slams headlong into his fellow wrestlers. With sponsorship money at stake, their bodies on the line, and their futures at risk, the wrestlers struggle to carve themselves—and one another—into the men they dream of being. **SUMO** is a thrilling new play set in an elite and rarely explored world. Obie Award winner **Ralph B. Peña** directs this powerhouse drama.

North American Premiere of All Four Plays Presented Together

GLASS. KILL. WHAT IF ONLY. IMP.

By Caryl Churchill
Directed by James Macdonald
Spring 2025

A girl made of glass. Gods and murders. A pack of ghosts. And a secret in a bottle. A kaleidoscope of stories, each short play is a testament to how playwright **Caryl Churchill** has “remade the landscape of contemporary drama—and earned herself a place among the greats” (*The Guardian*). **James Macdonald** directs these wildly inventive new works.

WHAT IF ONLY had its North American premiere in 2021 with remote live performances presented by the National Asian American Theatre Company, realized by Les Waters and Jared Mezzocchi.

Free Shakespeare in the Park

TWELFTH NIGHT

Directed by Saheem Ali
Summer 2025

The Public Theater will celebrate the opening of the newly revitalized Delacorte Theater with a Free Shakespeare in the Park all-star cast of Public alumni in a production of **TWELFTH NIGHT**. Join us to revel in the midsummer madness as twins Sebastian and Viola survive shipwreck, revenge plots, and the trick doors of love. The Public's Associate Artistic Director and Resident Director, Tony Award nominee **Saheem Ali** directs this joyful romp welcoming all of New York back to the magic of Central Park's beloved theater. Be there when the stage lights turn on again at The Delacorte—a New York City classic—with this high-powered production of the Bard's classic comedy.

World Premiere

LET'S KEEP DANCING: A Death Row Story

By John Purugganan
Directed by Oskar Eustis
Audio Play

Incarcerated since 1989, **John Purugganan** is committed to reaching past the prison walls, becoming a tutor, mentor, and prolific writer. His audio play **LET'S KEEP DANCING: A Death Row Story** was a prizewinner in the first annual Arts in Corrections Playwriting Contest. Michael Green is 21 years old and has just arrived in the cell he'll inhabit for the rest of his life. His neighbor, Hap Embleton, is 67 and has been imprisoned for most of his life. Over Green's first day and night on death row, he and Hap discuss their fears, their past, and the 50,000 people currently serving life without the possibility of parole—many

for non-violent crimes. The Public's Artistic Director **Oskar Eustis** directs this compelling, world premiere audio play about two souls fighting to survive the row.

FIRST PRODUCTION OF FALL 2025 SEASON:

World Premiere

INITIATIVE

By Else Went

Directed by Emma Rosa Went

Fall 2025

Playwright **Else Went**, alumnus of our acclaimed Emerging Writers Group, brings her transformative new play **INITIATIVE** to The Public in Fall 2025. A bittersweet reflection on adolescence at the dawn of the new millennium, **INITIATIVE** charts the intertwined lives of seven teens from 2000-2004, as they become friends and more than friends, wrestle with their potential, face incalculable loss, and struggle to find their way in (and get out of) "Coastal Podunk, California." **Emma Rosa Went** directs this epic world premiere guaranteed to make you remember the most difficult and beautiful things about growing up.

###

NYU SKIRBALL is located in the heart of Greenwich Village, historically a center of resistance, dissent and free thinking. NYU Skirball's programming reflects this history and embraces today's renegade artists and companies, presenting works that aim to engage, provoke and inspire audiences. NYU Skirball is NYC's home for cutting-edge performance, artistic research, and discourse, holding close to James Baldwin's dictum that "artists are here to disturb the peace." The 800-seat theatre provides a home for internationally renowned artists, innovators, and thinkers and presents ground-breaking events ranging from re-inventions of the classics to cutting-edge premieres, in genres ranging from dance, theatre and performance arts to comedy, music and film. nyuskirball.org

BELVOIR ST THEATRE is a guest on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation (Australia). This is land where stories have always existed, and people have always gathered. In more recent times many new people, new stories and new languages have arrived, and continue to arrive. Belvoir, officially Company B Ltd, was founded in 1984 by a group of artists and audiences drawn together by the idea that a vibrant, open city needs many spaces to tell its many different stories. Our home is an old factory on a side street in Surry Hills which we share with public housing and two parks. For nearly four decades the company has been sustained by the belief that our basic tasks are to entertain audiences, to represent our society, to give artists the freedom to work, and to share our work as openly as possible. Belvoir's ambition is and always has been to honour the depth and breadth of our place and our history in our work. Each year the company presents an annual season of shows for this now-iconic corner stage. New work and new stories sit at the centre of Belvoir's programming, alongside a mix of reinvented classics and international writing, and a foundational commitment to Indigenous stories. In short, Belvoir is about theatrical invention, an open society, and faith in humanity. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Eamon Flack and Executive Director Aaron Beach, Belvoir engages Australia's most prominent and promising theatre-makers. Landmark productions include *Counting and Cracking*, *The Jungle and the Sea*, *The Master and Margarita*, *The Wild Duck*, *FANGIRLS*, *Cloudstreet*, *Barbara and the Camp Dogs*, *The Drover's Wife*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Angels in America*, *Keating!*, *The Sapphires*, and many, many more. Belvoir regularly tours nationally and internationally. Belvoir receives government support for its activities from the Federal Government through Creative Australia and the state government through Create NSW.

KURINJI tells global stories that are epic, intimate, and communal. Our productions are multi-sensory and immerse our audiences in other worlds. Our process is collaborative, and our work is made through respectful collaboration with real people, in real places. Our home is western Sydney, Australia,; the land of the Wangal clan of the Dharug Nation.

ELEVATOR REPAIR SERVICE (ERS) is a New York City-based company that creates original works for live theater with an ongoing ensemble. The company's shows are created from a wide range of texts that include found transcripts of trials and debates, literature, classical dramas, and new plays. Founded in 1991, ERS has created an extensive body of work that includes upwards of 20 original pieces. These have earned the company a loyal following and made it one of New York's most highly acclaimed experimental theater companies. ERS has received numerous awards and distinctions, including Lortel awards, a Bessie award, and an OBIE award for Sustained Excellence, as well as a Guggenheim Fellowship and Doris Duke Performing Artist Award for Artistic Director John Collins. The company's new original work *Ulysses*, an adaptation of James Joyce's masterpiece, premieres at The Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College in June of 2024.

MA-YI THEATER COMPANY is a professional Off-Broadway not-for-profit organization whose primary mission is to develop and produce new and innovative plays by Asian American writers. It is the country's leading incubator of AAPI works, with numerous award-winning productions that include Lloyd Suh's *The Chinese Lady*, Daniel K. Issac's *ONCE UPON A (korean) TIME*, Hansol Jung's *Wolf Play* and *Among The Dead*, Mike Lew's *Teenage Dick* and *Bike America*, Qui Nguyen's *The Inexplicable Redemption of Agent G* and *Soul Samurai (with Vampire Cowboys)*, *Rescue Me* by *Michi Barall*, and Lonnie Carter's *The Romance of Magno Rubio*. Ma-Yi Theater is home to the renowned Ma-Yi Writers Lab, the largest collective of AAPI writers in the country. ma-yitheatre.org and ma-yistudios.com

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside its theatre walls. Led by Tony winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 120 world premieres, commissioning 70 new works, and sending 36 productions to Broadway, garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, plus the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. LaJollaPlayhouse.org

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 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, *Suffs* by Shaina Taub, and *Hell's Kitchen* by Alicia Keys and Kristoffer Diaz. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 60 Tony Awards, 194 Obie Awards, 57 Drama Desk Awards, 63 Lortel Awards, 36 Outer Critics Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 65 AUDELCO Awards, 6 Antonyo Awards, and 6 Pulitzer Prizes. 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 Public also gives our respect to the people of Seneca Village, a community of Black property owners who were removed from their land and whose village was destroyed in the creation of Central Park. We recognize the sacrifice that these ancestors made and honor Seneca Village's legacy.

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

CONNECT WITH US

[Facebook.com/PublicTheater](https://www.facebook.com/PublicTheater)

Instagram | [@PublicTheaterNY](https://www.instagram.com/PublicTheaterNY)

Threads | [@PublicTheaterNY](https://www.threads.net/@PublicTheaterNY)

TikTok | [@PublicTheaterNY](https://www.tiktok.com/@PublicTheaterNY)

#