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CAST & CREATIVE HEADSHOTS
DELACORTE THEATER PHOTOS

THE PUBLIC THEATER ANNOUNCES CASTING FOR THE FREE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK PRODUCTION OF *RICHARD III*

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Robert O'Hara
June 17–July 17

Complete Cast Includes Maleni Chaitoo, Wyatt Cirbus, Sanjit De Silva, Sam Duncan, Thaddeus Fitzpatrick, Skyler Gallun, Danai Gurira, Sarah Nina Hayon, Monique Holt, Matthew Jeffers, Matt Monaco, Gregg Mozgala, Paul Niebanck, Xavier Pacheco, Marcus Raye Pérez, Grace Porter, Michael Potts, Ariel Shafir, Heather Alicia Simms, N'yomi Stewart, Ali Stroker, Sharon Washington, and Daniel J. Watts

April 25, 2022 – The Public Theater (Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis; Executive Director, Patrick Willingham) announced complete casting today for the Free Shakespeare in the Park production of **RICHARD III**, kicking off the 60th Anniversary Season at The Delacorte Theater. The complete cast joins the previously announced **Danai Gurira**, who will play Richard III. Directed by Tony Award nominee **Robert O'Hara**, **RICHARD III** will begin performances at The Delacorte on Friday, June 17 and run through Sunday, July 17, with an official press opening on Thursday, June 30.

Tony Award nominee **Robert O'Hara** (*Slave Play*, *The Public's Barbecue*) brings his sharp wit and story-telling genius to The Delacorte with a bold new production of **RICHARD III**. One of Shakespeare's most indelible villains, Richard is determined to be King. Following his lust for power and the throne, he manipulates, kidnaps, and kills all who stand between him and his throne, using brilliant words and dark charm to conceal his dismantling of government and justice. This masterful dive into the muddy middle between political genius and violent power grab will open Free Shakespeare in the Park's 60th Season with piercing relevancy and electrifying drama.

The complete cast of **RICHARD III** will include **Maleni Chaitoo** (*Ensemble*), **Wyatt Cirbus** (*Prince of Wales*), **Sanjit De Silva** (*Buckingham*), **Sam Duncan** (*Duke of York*), **Thaddeus Fitzpatrick** (*Ensemble*), **Skyler Gallun** (*Ensemble*), **Danai Gurira** (*Richard III*), **Sarah Nina Hayon** (*Ensemble*), **Monique Holt** (*Duchess of York*), **Matthew Jeffers** (*Ensemble*), **Matt Monaco** (*Ensemble*), **Gregg Mozgala** (*King Edward IV/Richmond*), **Paul Niebanck** (*George*), **Xavier Pacheco** (*Ensemble*), **Marcus Raye Pérez**

(*Ensemble*), **Grace Porter** (*Ensemble*), **Michael Potts** (*Lord Stanley*), **Ariel Shafir** (*Lord Hastings*), **Heather Alicia Simms** (*Queen Elizabeth*), **N'yomi Stewart** (*Ensemble*), **Ali Stroker** (*Anne*), **Sharon Washington** (*Queen Margaret*), and **Daniel J. Watts** (*Catesby Ratcliffe*).

RICHARD III will feature scenic design by Myung Hee Cho, costume design by Dede Ayite, lighting design by Alex Jainchill, sound design and composition by Elisheba Ittoop, hair and wig design by Mia Neal, fight direction by Teniece Divya Johnson and Jeremy Sample, intimacy direction by Teniece Divya Johnson, direction of artistic sign language by Neil Sprouse, and movement direction by Byron Easley. Bryan Bauer will serve as production stage manager and Heather Englander will serve as stage manager.

RICHARD III Director **Robert O'Hara** said, "It has been over 30 years since *Richard III* was produced at The Delacorte and I'm excited to bring one of drama's all-time favorite villains back onto the Central Park stage. *Richard III* speaks to the dangerous machinations that we have witnessed by leaders throughout history, but most acutely in recent years in our own government. While navigating the projections of those around him by his decision to 'prove the villain,' Richard is our unreliable narrator, protagonist, and antagonist, drawing us deeper and deeper into his murderous mayhem. I am thrilled to collaborate again with the brilliant, multi-talented Danai Gurira as she returns to The Delacorte in the title role of this infamous usurper King, full of bloody confrontations, political intrigue, and familial toxicity."

RICHARD III has been previously staged at The Delacorte four times. It was last seen 32 years ago in a 1990 production featuring Denzel Washington in the title role and Sharon Washington as Lady Anne, directed by Robin Phillips. The 1983 production, directed by Jane Howell, featured Kevin Kline as Richard III, David Alan Grier as Richmond, and Ving Rhames as Hastings. In 1970, the production was directed by Stuart Vaughan and featured Donald Madden as Richard III. Four years after The Delacorte opened, the 1966 production, directed by Gerald Freedman, featured Joseph Bova as Richard III, Penny Fuller as Lady Anne, and Philip Bosco as Duke of Buckingham.

Free tickets will be distributed in a variety of ways across all five boroughs, including the in-person line at The Delacorte Theater, the in-person lottery at The Public Theater, and borough distribution sites. Additionally, **TodayTix** will return as The Public's partner for the free virtual ticket lottery distribution.

The Public will welcome audiences back to The Delacorte at full capacity this summer. Proof of a complete COVID-19 vaccination by the date of attendance will be required for access to the facility and theater. Face masks are not required, but are recommended, while in attendance. Public Theater staff and artists are subject to a mandatory vaccination and booster policy, in addition to onsite testing protocols when working within all facilities. For more information on the health and safety protocols this season, please visit thepublic.nyc/safeinthepark.

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

The Public Theater, in partnership with Central Park Conservancy and the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, is embarking on a much-needed revitalization of the 60-year-old Delacorte Theater in Central Park. The plan—a major investment in outdoor cultural space as part of New York's economic recovery—will dramatically improve the home of Free Shakespeare in the Park, addressing critical infrastructure, accessibility, and theatrical needs. The key approved design which will begin construction in Fall 2022 includes accessible and comfortable space for audiences and artists with disabilities, streamlined backstage operations and improved comfort for cast and crew, a revitalized exterior for a more

dynamic aesthetic experience, a focus on resilience and sustainability, and lighting improvements, among other benefits. For more information on The Delacorte's revitalization, visit publictheater.org.

The Public Theater's Annual Gala will be celebrated on **Tuesday, May 24** at The Delacorte Theater with a rain date on Wednesday, May 25. For more information on The Public Theater's Gala, visit publictheater.org/gala22 or email gala@publictheater.org.

ROBERT O'HARA (Richard III *Director*) is the Tony-nominated director of *Slave Play* and is currently working on several film, television, and theater projects. He's a two-time Obie Award and two-time NAACP Award Winner whose work has been seen around the country. Among his recent and upcoming projects are writing *Camp* for Warner Bros, to be directed by Billy Porter; directing *Long Day's Journey Into Night* at Audible/Minetta Lane Theater; and directing the revival of Anthony Davis' opera, *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* in a co-pro of the MET, Michigan, Omaha, and Seattle Opera. SDC, WGA, DGA, AGMA.

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 and the revival of Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf*. Their programs and productions can also be seen regionally across the country and around the world. The Public has received 59 Tony Awards, 184 Obie Awards, 55 Drama Desk Awards, 58 Lortel Awards, 34 Outer Critic Circle Awards, 13 New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards, 58 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 **Jerome L. Greene Foundation** is the proud season sponsor of Free Shakespeare in the Park.

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

FREE TICKET INFORMATION

Performances of **RICHARD III** will begin on Friday, June 17 and run through Sunday, July 17 in The Delacorte Theater, with an official press opening on Thursday, June 30.

Tickets to The Public Theater's Free Shakespeare in the Park are distributed in a number of ways. On the day of each public performance, free tickets may be acquired in person at The Delacorte Theater, in person at a borough distribution site, via an in-person lottery in the lobby of The Public Theater at 425 Lafayette

Street, or through a digital lottery via the TodayTix mobile app or website. All tickets are subject to availability.

The **Audio Described** performance will be on Saturday, July 9 at 8:00 p.m. The **American Sign Language Interpreted** performances will be on Wednesday, July 13 and Saturday, July 16 at 8:00 p.m. The **Open Caption** performance will be on Sunday, July 17 at 8:00 p.m.

A limited number of tickets are also available via advance reservation by making a contribution in support of Free Shakespeare in the Park. To learn more, or to make a contribution, call **212.967.7555**, or visit publictheater.org.

The full performance calendar can be found at publictheater.org and complete ticket distribution details can be found at thepublic.nyc/parktix22.

The Delacorte Theater in Central Park is accessible by entering at 81st Street and Central Park West or at 79th Street and Fifth Avenue.

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