

ALLEY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Alley Theatre Presents the Historical Drama *Camp David*

*The Alley's production of **Camp David** by Texas playwright Lawrence Wright is directed by Public Theater's Artistic Director, Oskar Eustis*

“...it's not just reciting history or framing the debate; it's also showing us how to understand why intractable adversaries might have lowered their guards, gazed at their bitterest enemy and begun to conceive of a way forward.”

– *Washington Post*

HOUSTON – The Alley Theatre and Artistic Director **Rob Melrose** will present a new production of *Camp David* by Texas playwright **Lawrence Wright** and directed by the **Public Theater's** Artistic Director, **Oskar Eustis**. The Alley's Associate Producer & Casting Director, **Brandon Weinbrenner**, will serve as the Assistant Director. *Camp David* runs February 14 - March 15 in the Neuhaus Theatre. Tickets are available at alleytheatre.org or by calling the Box Office at 713.220.5700.

Lawrence Wright, the playwright of the Alley smash-hit *Cleo*, offers a behind-the-scenes look at a historical moment whose legacy continues to resonate 41 years later. In the tumultuous 1970s, Middle East peace seemed nearly as impossible as it does today. Yet during 13 days in 1978, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, with the powerful help of U.S. President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter, hammered out an agreement that inspired the entire world. Wright's play delivers a tremendously human look at both the hope and the cost of that historic moment.

“Lawrence Wright is not only a wonderful playwright, he's one of America's greatest journalists. This play about the only successful peace treaty in the Mideast since the creation of Israel is revelatory, powerful, and immensely important,” said Oskar Eustis. “I am so proud to be working with Rob Melrose and the Alley in bringing this show to Houston.”

"*Camp David* was already an exciting project with Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Lawrence Wright, Tony Award®-winning set designer David Rockwell, and director and American theatre legend Oskar Eustis. Now, by partnering with the casting department at the Public Theater in New York City, we have a stellar cast of actors to realize this important play,” said Rob Melrose. “I'm especially excited to welcome back **Elijah Alexander** who stunned Alley audiences with his powerful performance of Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, who will now radically shift gears to play Anwar Sadat.”

The cast includes **Elijah Alexander** (*The Winter's Tale*) as Anwar Sadat, **Rebecca Brooksher** (*The Monster at the Door*, Public Theater: *Love's Labour's Lost*) as Rosalynn Carter, and four actors making their Alley debuts: **Sam Khazai** (Atlantic Theater Company: *Tosca Tehran*, Flea Theater: *Echo & Narciss*) as Mohammed Ibrahim Kamel, **Jordan Lage** (Broadway: *Inherit the Wind*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*) as Menachem Begin, **Stephen Thorne** (Resident Acting Company Member at Trinity Repertory Company: *Othello*, *Little Shop of Horrors*) as Jimmy Carter, and **Mark Zimmerman** (Broadway: *Rocky*, *West Side Story*) as Moshe Dayan.

Camp David's creative team includes Scenic Design by **David Rockwell** (Broadway: *Kinky Boots*, Tony Award®-winner for *She Loves Me*), Costume Design by **Paul Tazewell** (Tony Award®-winner for *Hamilton*), Lighting Design by **Xavier Pierce** (Oregon Shakespeare Festival: *Shakespeare in Love*), Sound Design by **Darron L West** (Broadway: *Peter and the Starcatcher*), Casting by **Heidi Griffiths, CSA** and **Jordan Thaler, CSA**, Stage Manager **Rebecca R. D. Hamlin**, Assistant Stage Manager **Katie Leigh Creeggan**, and NY Assistant Director **Johanna Gruenhut**.

In addition to *Camp David*, Lawrence Wright has written six previous plays including *Cleo*, which had its world-premiere at the Alley in 2018. Wright is also an accomplished author and screenwriter. He has been a staff writer for *The New Yorker* since 1992, where he has won two National Magazine Awards. Wright is the author of 10 books, one of which, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction and was named by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 greatest nonfiction books ever written. Wright co-produced a television series based on that book, starring Jeff Daniels, Alec Baldwin, and Tahar Rahim, currently airing on Hulu. His bestselling book *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief* (2013) was nominated for the National Book Award and won the Investigative Reporters and Editors Award.

Director Oskar Eustis has served as the Artistic Director at the Public Theater since 2005, after serving as the artistic director at Trinity Repertory Company in Providence, RI from 1994 to 2005. Throughout his career, Eustis has been dedicated to the development of new work that speaks to the great issues of our time and has worked with countless artists in pursuit of that aim, including Tony Kushner, Suzan-Lori Parks, David Henry Hwang, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Richard Nelson, Rinne Groff, Tarell Alvin McCraney, and Lisa Kron. In the last five years, Eustis has produced two Tony Award®-winning Best Musicals—*Fun Home* and *Hamilton*—and back-to-back winners of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Hamilton* and *Sweat*. He is currently a professor at New York University and has held professorships at UCLA, Middlebury College, and Brown University.

Camp David begins previews February 14, opens February 20, and runs through March 15 in the Neuhaus Theatre. Performances of *Camp David* are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. *Camp David* is recommended for mature audiences, ages 14 and up.

SPONSORS: The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2019-20 Season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre. *Camp David* is generously sponsored by Beth Madison and Rand Group.

TICKETS: Tickets to *Camp David* are now on sale and start at \$47. Discounted tickets are available for military, seniors, and any student, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for designated performances. Tickets can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700).

ALLEY CHAT: The Alley Theatre will present a post-show discussion following the Saturday, February 22 at 2:30 p.m. performance, which will feature civic leaders, distinguished academics, and area professionals discussing the themes of the play and how they are reflected in our lives today. The *Camp David* cast will be featured during a post-show discussion following the Tuesday, February 25 at 7:30 p.m. performance.

DESIGNER TALK: An hour before the Sunday, February 16 matinee preview performance (2:30 p.m.), a member of the artistic staff will lead a discussion with the production's creative team to give audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the design process. This pre-show talk will offer audiences an exclusive opportunity to ask questions about the designers' work and learn how they brought the script to life. The Designer Talk will take place in the Texas Room.

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ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley produces at least 16 plays each year in its newly renovated Theatre, ranging from the best current work, to re-invigorated classic plays, to new plays by contemporary writers. The Alley is home to a Resident Acting Company. In addition, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

Alley's Hubbard Theatre features a 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Matched with the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre, the Alley offers nearly 500 performances each season. The Alley Theatre reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance and education programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

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