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**Joe Morton Stars in
the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts' Production of
a Radical Reinvention of Shakespeare's**

KING LEAR

Directed by John Gould Rubin

**Theatrically Adventurous Production,
with Full Score, Videos, and Projections That Transform the Theater
into a Not-Too-Distant-Future World Ravaged by Environmental Catastrophes**

**Cast also Features Mark Harelik , River Gallo, Zach Solomon,
Brie Eley, Emily Swallow, Rafael Jordan,
Miguel Perez, Stanley Jackson, and Danielle Thorpe**

May 14–June 5, 2022

(Beverly Hills, CA, UPDATED May 15, 2022) – The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts presents a radical reinvention of Shakespeare's *KING LEAR*, starring Emmy® Award and NAACP Image Award winner Joe Morton (ABC's "Scandal," the legendary *Brother from Another Planet*, Netflix's "The Politician," *Justice League*) and directed by John Gould Rubin, opening Saturday, May 14 and running through Sunday, June 5, 2022, in The Wallis' Bram Goldsmith Theater. This theatrically adventurous production of perhaps the greatest play in English literature features original music, videos, and projections that will transform the theater into a not-too-distant-future United States ravaged by environmental catastrophes. Joining Morton in the cast are Mark Harelik (*The Normal Heart* on Broadway, *Trumbo*, "The Morning Show," "Star Trek Voyager") as Gloucester; River Gallo (GLAAD Media Rising Star Award, *PONYBOI*) as Cordelia and Fool; Zach Solomon ("Better Things") as Edgar and King of France; Brie Eley ("9-1-1," "The Goldbergs," "Saved by the Bell") as Regan; Emily Swallow ("The Mandalorian," "The Mentalist") as Goneril; Rafael Jordan ("Law & Order SVU," "Blue Bloods," "One Life to Live") as Edmund; Miguel Perez ("9-1-1," "The Goldbergs," "Saved by the Bell") as understudy for Lear and Gloucester; Stanley Jackson (*And In This Corner: Cassius Clay*) as understudy for Edgar/King of France and Edmund; and Danielle Thorpe ("Star Trek: Picard," "Power") as understudy for Cordelia/Fool, Regan, and Goneril.

Morton, following his award-winning, sold-out performance as Dick Gregory in *Turn Me Loose*, returns to The Wallis in the title role of Shakespeare's tragedy as a man who has brought his country through turmoil, but at what cost? Forced to grapple with violent power struggles and a dysfunctional family, Lear wrestles with the betrayal of his two older daughters who, have banished him to the wilderness, and his own betrayal of his youngest daughter, exiled for the sin of honesty. Turbulence and fury combine to turn a skilled geopolitical master into a dazed, naked wanderer, exposed to the elements.

Of this timeless tale of truth, love, and power, with a glimpse of redemption, director Rubin says, "By immersing the audience in a future of looming environmental apocalypse, where identity is fluid, and salvation can only be found through self-knowledge, our *King Lear* confronts us with a looming apocalypse which is the America – indeed the world – we must strive to avoid."

Audience members are encouraged to wear light-colored clothing for each performance to enhance the production design which will be projected throughout the entire auditorium.

Paul Crewes, the Wallis' former Artistic Director is Creative Producer. Dramaturgical Consultant is Morgan Jenness, known for work at The Public Theater under both George C. Wolfe and Joseph Papp in roles ranging from literary manager to Director of Play Development to Associate Producer of the New York Shakespeare Festival. The production team, comprised of an extraordinary range of creative artists, includes Ursula Kwong-Brown and Danny Erdberg as Composers/Sound Designers, both with international credits and making their debuts at The Wallis. Broadway, national, and international award-winning Steven Strawbridge is Lighting Designer and Tony® Award-winner Chris Barreca is Scenic Designer. X Hill, known for her surrealistic and experimental designs and her work at REDCAT, is Costume Designer. Los Angeles-based media artist and video designer Keith Skretch is Projection Designer. CSA six-time Artios Award-winner Amy Lieberman is Casting Director; The Wallis' Programming Manager, Camille Jenkins, is Assistant Director; and Taiwanese set and production designer Chun-Wei Wang is Assistant Scenic Designer. Shawna Voragen is Production Stage Manager, and Jenny Park is Assistant Stage Manager.

"John Gould Rubin, Paul Crewes, and I, formed a very powerful and successful collaboration around *Turn Me Loose*, during which, we began discussing *King Lear* as a play that throws into stark relief two very highly dysfunctional families, a world in which mankind inexorably effects nature, where old age is vulnerable to cruelty, and the imperceptive conflict between fatherhood and royalty is an incompatibility that becomes a tempest of madness and desolation," says Morton. "John, Paul, and I are full of expectation, excitement, and energy as we begin this next chapter of our partnership."

This production was made possible by generous support from Michael and Meeghan Nemeroff/Vedder Price.

Ticket prices are \$39-\$125 per person. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills. AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE interpretation will be offered at the Saturday, May 21, 2 pm, performance. To purchase tickets and for more information, please call 310-746-4000 (Monday – Friday, 10 am to 6 pm) or visit TheWallis.org/lear.

The Wallis is closely monitoring the ever-changing local health and safety environment carefully and addressing known health factors at the moment. Should plans change and any performance be required to be postponed or cancelled or if venue capacity limitations are instituted, ticket holders will be notified immediately with options for their purchased tickets per The Wallis' ticketing policies.

The health and safety of patrons, our staff, and artists inside and outside our venue are a top priority for The Wallis, which is requiring all patrons to provide, upon entry, proof of full vaccination or a negative PCR test result within 48 hours or a verifiable Antigen test within 24 hours from your performance date, along with a government issued photo ID. Facial masks, covering both the mouth and nose, are still required at all times while within the venue. The Wallis' health and safety protocols are also subject to change at the venue's sole discretion or in accordance with LA County and City of Beverly Hills regulations. Our current Health & Safety Protocols and updates may also be accessed at TheWallis.org/Safety.

John Gould Rubin (director), Artistic Director of The Private Theater, for which he directed a site-specific *Hedda Gabler*, a radical deconstruction of Strindberg's *Playing With Fire* at The Box and *Rocco, Chelsea, Adriana, Sean, Claudia, Gianna, Alex* at HERE; and former co-Artistic and Executive Director of LAByrinth, for which he directed 7 plays including premieres by John Patrick Shanley and Erin Cressida Wilson. He's directed throughout NYC at Rattlestick (*Little Doc*, with Adam Driver), Ma-Yi, and The Public among others, notably: *Turn Me Loose* (w/Joe Morton) at The Westside (nominated Best Director Jos. Callaway Award/SDC), The Wallis, and Arena Stage in DC; *Peer Gynt* at The International Ibsen Festival in Oslo, Norway, *Queen For A Day* (w/David Proval & Vinnie Pastore off-Broadway,) *The Cherry Orchard* (w/Ellen Burstyn at The Actor's Studio,) *American Buffalo* (w/Treat Williams and Stephen Adly Guirgis.) Current projects: *A Doll House* radically re-imagined w/The Private Theatre, *Godless* by Michael Ricigliano, Jr. off-Broadway (with Harry Lennix and Elizabeth Rodriguez,) and a new film, *The Court of Oyer and Terminer* to be shot this August.

Paul Crewes (Creative Producer) was named the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts' first Artistic Director in 2015, and he guided the Beverly Hills performing arts venue artistically to a new level of prominence until stepping down in December 2021. Each season, he brought an eclectic mix of local, national and international artists and companies to The Wallis' stages in theater, dance music and film. Over the years, The Wallis produced many works of theater, with *King Lear* being Crewes' final production of his tenure for the venue. Prior to joining The Wallis, Crewes was, for twelve years, Chief Executive and Executive Producer of Kneehigh Theatre, the internationally recognized U.K. company. He brought Kneehigh's *Brief Encounter*, a "stunning, first-rate" production combining film with theater and adapted/directed by Emma Rice, to The Wallis for its inaugural 2013/2014 Season. He also worked throughout the U.K. in Producer and Executive Producer roles at The Lowry, Phoenix Dance Theatre, Crewes Gale Productions, which he formed, and West Yorkshire Playhouse (now Leeds Playhouse). He worked in the producing departments at Theatre Royal Plymouth, London Contemporary Dance Theatre, Paines Plough-new writing company and Bristol Old Vic, as well as Director of Technical Training at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA).

Joe Morton (King Lear) is an Emmy® Award winner and recipient of multiple NAACP Image Awards for his role as Rowan/Eli Pope in Shonda Rhimes' critically acclaimed series "Scandal." Currently, Morton can be seen as the wily Teddy Franklin in the FOX drama "Our Kind of People," and as co-host (and co-producer) on "Inside The Black Box," an interactive interview show, on "Crackle TV," which explores the experiences of black artists within the world of entertainment. In film, Morton is widely recognized as the mute alien in the title role of John Sayle's *The Brother from Another Planet*, and as the ill-fated scientist, Miles Dyson, in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. Morton was last seen as Cyborg's dad, Dr. Silas Stone, in *Batman vs. Superman*, and Zack Snyder's *Cut of Justice League*. Morton debuted on Broadway in *Hair*, and received a Tony® nomination and Theatre World Award for his portrayal of Walter Lee Younger in *Raisin*. His Off-

Broadway portrayal of comedian/civil-rights activist, Dick Gregory, in *Turn Me Loose*, earned him the Off-Broadway Alliance, the AUDELCO, the LA Critics Circle, and the prestigious Lucille Lortell Award, for Outstanding Lead Actor in a play.

Mark Harelik (Gloucester) Actor: Broadway: *The Normal Heart*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Off-Broadway: *Old Money*, *The House in Town*, *The Beard of Avon*. Film: *Battle of the Sexes*, *Trumbo*, *42*, *For Your Consideration*, *Election*, *The Job*, *Meeting Spencer*, *Timer*, *Eulogy*, *Watching the Detectives*, *Jurassic Park III*, *Barbarians at the Gate*. Television: "The Morning Show," "Perry Mason," "Preacher," "Castle Rock," "Imposters," "Getting On," "The Leftovers," "Snowfall," "Breaking Bad," "Grace and Frankie," "Monk," "The Big Bang Theory," "Pushing Daisies," "Grey's Anatomy," "ER," "Sleeper Cell," "He-ros," "Medium," "Desperate Housewives," "Will and Grace," "Seinfeld," "Star Trek Voyager." Playwright: *The Immigrant*, *Hank Williams – Lost Highway*, *What the Jews Believe*

River Gallo (Cordelia/Fool) (they/them) is a GLAAD award-winning Salvadoran-American filmmaker, actor, writer, model and intersex advocate. They are the writer, director, and star of the short film *PONYBOI* which premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival and was executive produced by Stephen Fry and Emma Thompson. *PONYBOI* is the first narrative film created by and starring an out intersex person in cinema history. Recently, Gallo starred in an episode of "Love, Victor" on Hulu. They have modeled for Abercrombie and Fitch, Maison Margiela, and was one the "Faces of NYC Pride" 2019. Gallo won a GLAAD Rising Star Media Award, was named one of the "Most Exciting Queer People to Follow" by Out Magazine, and was featured in a *HUNGER* magazine spread. Gallo is currently developing *PONYBOI* into a feature at Drake's production company 30,000 FT., with actor Ezra Miller attached as producer.

Zach Solomon (Edgar/King of France) is thrilled and humbled to be joining this production under the direction of John Gould Rubin, performing alongside such an incredible cast. Originally from Atlanta, Solomon got his start acting when his mother forced him to audition for his 4th grade production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, in which he played the titular role of Children's Chorus Member Number 21. He received his BFA in acting from NYU Tisch and the Stella Adler Studio of acting and continued his on camera training with Anthony Abeson, Vance Barber, Lesly Kahn, and Joel Johnstone. He recently wrapped shooting Pamela Adlon's "Better Things" on FX, playing the role of Push.

Brie Eley (Regan) is thrilled to make her Wallis debut with *King Lear*. This marks her return to classical theater after studying at the British American Drama Academy in Oxford and performing Viola in *Twelfth Night* (Kings County Shakespeare). Theater highlights include Skylight Theatre, The Classical Theatre of Harlem, The Kennedy Center, and two world premieres at the Humana Festival of New Plays. Recent TV: "The Rookie," "9-1-1," "The Goldbergs," "Saved by the Bell" (peacock). As a content-creator in the sketch-comedy world, she's performed throughout Los Angeles, and screened her original content at NBC Universal's Short Cuts and Austin Comedy Festival, among others. Eley is also the founder of Here and Ready, a networking collective for Black actresses that programs enrichment seminars, casting workshops and supports more than 1,200 members nationwide. She is a proud native of Sugar Land, Texas, and HSPVA graduate. For Dad, a true king.

Emily Swallow (Goneril) is thrilled to be back on the stage after appearing with Joe Morton in 2018's LA Shakespeare Center Production of *Henry IV, Parts 1&2*. Previous LA theater includes Ovation-award-winning productions of Molly Smith Metzler's *Cry it Out* (Echo Theater), Ayad Akhtar's *Disgraced* (Mark Taper Forum) and Donald Marguiles' *The Country House* (Geffen Playhouse). Other theater: *High Fidelity* (Broadway); *Much Ado About Nothing* (NYSF/Public Theater); *Nice Fish*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Guthrie Theater); *The Taming of the Shrew*, *King Lear* (Old Globe). On Television and Film, Swallow can be seen and/or heard as The Armorer on *The Mandalorian* and *The Book of Boba Fett*, Amara on *Supernatural*, Lisa Tepes on Netflix's animated *Castlevania*, Dr. Natalie Pierce on *SEAL Team*, Agent Fischer on *The Mentalist*, as well as on *Forget Me Not*, *The Haunting of the Mary Celeste*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Instinct*, *Elementary*, *Man with a Plan*, *Flight of the Conchords*, *NCIS*, and more. MFA: Tisch/NYU.

Rafael Jordan (Edmund) is thrilled to be onstage at The Wallis for the first time. New York: Off-Broadway at the Lion and Harold Clurman Theatres. Regional: Shakespeare Theatre of DC, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, City Theatre of Pittsburgh. Jordan has played Will in *Shakespeare in Love*, Macbeth in a covid-inspired radio play, Blue in *Paradise Blue*, Bobby in *American Buffalo*, Ben Gun in the world premiere of *runboyrun* by Mfoniso Udofia. TV credits: "Law & Order SVU," "Blue Bloods," "Godfather of Harlem," "One Life to Live." The short film *Christmas Eve* can be seen now on Amazon. Jordan is co-creator of the sketch series #HashtagTheShow available exclusively on Lil Rel's KweliTV. He holds an MFA in Acting from American Conservatory Theatre. IG: @Rafaeliscoolbutrude, @hashtagtheshow; Twitter: @Blackachusetts

Miguel Pérez (Lear and Gloucester Understudy) was born and raised in San Jose, California. After high school graduation in 1975, he joined the Marines. Honorably discharged in 1979, he moved to New York City to begin his acting career. His graduation from the National Shakespeare Conservatory was followed by engagements with many regional theaters including the Asolo State Theatre, South Florida Shakespeare Company, American Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory, Hartford Stage, and others. In New York he appeared with the Classic Stage Company, The New York Shakespeare Festival, and in an array of productions on and off Broadway. On film Pérez has appeared in dozens of features including BLOW, UNBROKEN:Path To Redemption, *Oceans 11* and *Million Dollar Baby*. His television credits include guest star roles on "Seinfeld," "Madam Secretary," "ER," "The Resident," "Designated Survivor," "Fear The Walking Dead," and many others. He coaches actors privately and teaches acting at the Art of Acting Studio in Hollywood. He lives in downtown Los Angeles and continues to work in theatre, film and television. Website - miguelperezactor.com; Twitter - @MPproActor; Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/miguelperezactor>

Stanley Jackson (Understudy - Edgar/King of France and Edmund) was born in New Orleans, LA and raised in Houston, TX. He graduated from Carver Magnet High School, has a BFA from Howard University, and an MA in Classical Acting from The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Jackson performed Shakespeare with the Pop-up Globe Theatre Company for two years in Auckland, New Zealand and Melbourne, Australia. Jackson now lives in Los Angeles because of his desire to transition into film and television. Some of his credits include: International—New Zealand/Australia—Pop-up Globe Theatre Company: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Henry V*, *As You Like It*; London—Embassy Theatre: *The Suicide*, Webber Douglas Theatre: *Revenge's Tragedy*; Regional—Baltimore Center Stage: *A Wonder In My Soul*; Stages: *NSFW* (Sam), *Swimming While Drowning*; Ensemble Theatre Houston: *And In This Corner: Cassius Clay*; Source Theatre Company: *Dontrell*, *Who Kissed the Sea*.

Danielle Thorpe (understudy - Cordelia/Fool, Regan, and Goneril) Los Angeles theatre credits include *Henry IV Part One* (Antaeus Theatre Company); *Roman Holidays* (The Getty Villa, Troubadour Theatre Company); *Oedipus the King*, *Mama!* (Falcon Theatre, Troubadour Theatre Company); *Three Sisters* (dir. Kate Burton). Regional theatre: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Tape*, *Lydie Breeze*, *Comedy of Errors* (Williamstown). TV: "Star Trek: Picard," "The Morning Show," "Power," "Living Biblically," "The Affair." MFA: USC. For Lindsey.

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:

The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 350 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as "au courant" (*LaLa Magazine*), The Wallis was lauded by *Culture Vulture*, which proclaims, "If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis." Its programming has been nominated for 79 Ovation Awards and nine L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed

by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff and Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Rachel Fine.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

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EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

WHAT:

Joe Morton Stars in
The Wallis Production of
KING LEAR
By William Shakespeare
Directed by John Gould Rubin
Bram Goldsmith Theater

WHEN:

May 14–June 5, 2022
Wednesdays-Saturdays, 7:30 pm
Saturday matinees, 2 pm
Sundays, 2 pm and 7 pm

Previews May 10-13, 2022

CAST:

Joe Morton	King Lear
Mark Harelik	Gloucester
River Gallo	Cordelia/Fool
Zach Solomon	Edgar/King of France
Brie Eley	Regan
Emily Swallow	Goneril
Rafael Jordan	Edmund
Miguel Perez	Understudy - Lear and Gloucester
Stanley Jackson	Understudy - Edgar/King of France and Edmund
Danielle Thorpe	Understudy - Cordelia/Fool, Regan, and Goneril

PRODUCTION:

John Gould Rubin	Director
Paul Crewes	Creative Producer
Morgan Jenness	Dramaturgical Consultant
Ursula Kwong-Brown	Composer/Sound Designer
Danny Erdberg	Composer/Sound Designer
Steven Strawbridge	Lighting Designer
Chris Barreca	Scenic Designer
X Hill	Costume Designer
Keith Skretch	Projection Designer

Amy Lieberman	Casting Director
Camille Jenkins	Assistant Director
Chun-Wei Wang	Assistant Scenic Designer
Shawna Voragen	Production Stage Manager
Jenny Park	Assistant Stage Manager

RUN TIME:

Approximately three hours, including a 15-minute intermission.

This production was made possible by generous support from Michael and Meeghan Nemeroff/Vedder Price.

TICKET PRICES AND INFORMATION:

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