

# Mosaic Theater Company Media Release

Ari Roth, *Founding Artistic Director* • Serge Seiden, *Managing Director & Producer*



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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August 1, 2016

### **MOSAIC THEATER COMPANY OF DC LAUNCHES SEASON TWO WITH TERRY TEACHOUT'S ONE-MAN HIT *SATCHMO AT THE WALDORF*, A GRIPPING LOOK AT THE LIFE AND CAREER OF JAZZ ICON LOUIS ARMSTRONG**

*Local favorite Craig Wallace plays Armstrong, Jewish manager Joe Glaser,  
and fiercely critical trumpeter Miles Davis, under direction of Eleanor Holdridge*

*Production kicks off discussion series "Race and Music: Blacks, Jews, and the Independent Artist,"  
examining complex relationship between African Americans & American Jews in the entertainment industry*

*August 25 — September 25, 2016*

(Washington, DC) Mosaic Theater Company of DC launches its momentous second season with **Terry Teachout's Off-Broadway hit, *SATCHMO AT THE WALDORF* (August 25 — September 25, 2016)**, a one-man, three-character powerhouse play set in March of 1971 on the night of Armstrong's last public performance. The play takes a hard look at the life of a musical icon both praised and criticized for his role in the Civil Rights Movement, diving into the fascinating relationships with irascible manager Joe Glaser, responsible for making and commoditizing Armstrong's legendary career, and with rival and jazz artist Miles Davis.

*Satchmo at the Waldorf* is the first play from Teachout, longtime drama critic for *The Wall Street Journal*, and draws on the assiduous research from his 2009 biography, *Pops — A Life of Louis Armstrong*. The production stars local favorite **Craig Wallace** (*When Father Comes Home From the Wars*, *District Merchants*) under the direction of **Eleanor Holdridge** (*Queens Girl in the World*, *The Who & The What*).

"Mosaic Theater's Season Two is all about *Clamorous Encounters*, and I couldn't imagine a more celebratory way to ignite the series than with Terry Teachout's towering encounter between three American giants at the center of a cultural revolution," says Founding Artistic Director **Ari Roth**. "Terry's meticulously researched play (and biography) lend a critic's careful eye to the life and career of an American master—a working man with an artist's soul and activist's heart. But it's the relationship with Joe Glaser, the combative manager behind Armstrong's meteoric rise in white culture, that exposes a complex, troubled, and deeply unresolved history between African American artists and Jewish producers and managers that continues to play out in the arts and entertainment industries today. I couldn't be happier to have Craig Wallace and

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## Mosaic Theater launches Season Two with Off-Broadway hit *Satchmo at the Waldorf*—Page 2

Eleanor Holdridge at the heart of this project, two of the finest theater artists working in DC today and collaborating now for the first time in their careers.”

“I’ve known and admired Craig Wallace for almost twenty years, and I have always adored Louis Armstrong,” shares director **Eleanor Holdridge**. “Craig’s talent wedded to this stunning material is a truly remarkable opportunity and I jumped at the chance. Reading the play, a complex and brilliant man rises to the surface; Teachout brings a compelling human perspective to the turbulent decades in which the great man lived. It will be thrilling to work with Craig to bring all the nuances and ambitious arc of the play to life.”

The production is a DC premiere. *Satchmo at the Waldorf* originally debuted in 2011 in Orlando Florida at Lowndes Shakespeare Center, later running Off-Broadway at Westside Theatre in 2014, starring John Douglas Thompson. This production will feature previously deleted text between Armstrong and Miles Davis, included with authorization from the playwright, focusing on Davis’ criticisms of Armstrong’s gregarious performance style before white audiences.

“Louis Armstrong was the greatest jazz musician of the twentieth century,” shares playwright **Terry Teachout**, “a phenomenally gifted and imaginative artist and an entertainer so irresistibly magnetic that he knocked the Beatles off the top of the charts four decades after he cut his first record. Offstage he was witty, introspective, and unexpectedly complex, a beloved colleague with an explosive temper whose larger-than-life personality was tougher and more sharp-edged than his worshiping fans ever realized. That’s what *Satchmo at the Waldorf* is about—it’s the story of the Louis Armstrong you *don’t* know.”

*Satchmo at the Waldorf* kicks off big Season Two themes of race and inter-culturalism—continuing with Kristen Greenidge’s *Milk Like Sugar*, Philip Dawkins’ *Charm*, and the world premiere of Tarrance Arvelle Chisholm’s *Hooded: Or Being Black for Dummies*—four necessary examinations on the past and present of race in America.

This production is complemented with **Race and Music: Blacks, Jews, and the Independent Artist**, a recurring discussion series that culminates with the first in Mosaic’s 16-17 workshop series, **Stacey Rose & Alexis Spiegel’s** brutally-honest **THE BLACK JEW THING**, under the direction of **Logan Vaughn** (returning later this season on the Mosaic stage as the director of *A Human Being Died That Night*), which runs during the closing weekend of *Satchmo at the Waldorf*. The series will include a wide array of post show panels and conversations, featuring noted jazz scholar and DJ Rusty Hassan, representatives from the DC Jazz Fest, and a host of panelists speaking to issues of race and identity including law Professor Shari Motro, poet and attorney Richael Faithful, Ohev Sholom’s Ruth Balinsky Friedman, and others. Both the discussion series and workshop series are new artistic offerings under the **Reva and David Logan Foundation Community Engagement Initiative**, and reflect a ‘mosaic’ that continues to expand in ambition, inclusion, and radical hospitality.

**Terry Teachout (Playwright)** is an American critic, biographer, librettist, author, playwright, and blogger. He is the drama critic of *The Wall Street Journal*, the critic-at-large of *Commentary*, and the author of "Sightings," a column about the arts in America that appears biweekly in the Friday *Wall Street Journal*. He blogs at *About Last Night* and has written about the arts for many other magazines and newspapers, including the *New York Times* and *National Review*.

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## Mosaic Theater launches Season Two with Off-Broadway hit *Satchmo at the Waldorf*—Page 3

**Eleanor Holdridge (Director)** has been Founding Artistic Director for the Red Heel Theatre Company, Resident Assistant Director at the Shakespeare Theatre, and Resident Director at New Dramatists. She has directed and taught students at the Yale School of Drama, NYU's graduate program, and the Juilliard School, among others. Her credits include: Off-Broadway productions include *Steve & Idi*, (Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre), *Cycling Past The Matterhorn* (Clurman Theatre), *The Imaginary Invalid*, and *Mary Stuart* (Pearl Theatre Company). Regional credits include *Other Desert Cities* (Triad Stage), *Selma '65* (LaMaMa), *I and You* (Geva Theatre); *Gee's Bend* (Arden Theatre); *Hamlet*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *Lettice And Lovage*, *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, *Taming Of The Shrew* (Shakespeare & Company). *The Crucible* (Perseverance Theatre), *Educating Rita*, *Noises Off and Art* (Triad Stage), *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* (Milwaukee Shakespeare), *Two Gentlemen Of Verona* (Alabama Shakespeare), *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare St. Louis), *Henry V* (Shakespeare on the Sound), *Betrayal* (Portland Stage), and *Lion In Winter* (Northern Stage). DC area productions include *The Tale of the Allergists Wife* (Theatre J), *I and You* (Olney Theatre), *Zorro*, which she co-wrote (Constellation Theatre), *Double Indemnity* (Roundhouse Theatre), *The Gaming Table* (Folger), *God of Carnage* and *Pygmalion* (Everyman Theatre); *Something You Did* and *Body Awareness* (Theatre J); and *After the Revolution* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Taffety Punk).

**Craig Wallace (Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, Joe Glaser)** Olney Theatre Center: *A Raisin in the Sun*. Shakespeare Theatre Company: Affiliated Artist. Numerous productions including *Henry IV* part 1 & part 2, *The Government Inspector*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Tamburlaine*, *Edward II*. Theater J: *Tommy J and Sally* (co-production with Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company). Ford's Theatre: *The Laramie Project*, *Our Town*, *Necessary Sacrifices*, *Sabrina Fair*, *Jitney*; Round House Theatre: *Permanent Collection*, *Tabletop*, *The Little Prince*; Folger Theatre: *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Cyrano*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Othello in Othello*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Measure for Measure*; Arena Stage: *K2*, *All My Sons*, *The Great White Hope*, *Hot-n-Throbbing*; Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company: *The Last Orbit of Billy Mars*, *Our Lady of 121st Street*, *Starving*; Everyman Theatre: *Cherry Orchard*, *The Soul Collector*; Signature Theatre: *Angels in America*, Parts 1&2 (Helen Hayes Award nomination for Part 2); Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey; Actor's Theatre of Louisville; Shakespeare Santa Cruz; Hangar Theatre. TRAINING: Howard University: BFA; The Pennsylvania State University: MFA; Royal National Theatre, London.

The creative team for *Satchmo at the Waldorf* includes set designer **Andrew Cohen**, lighting designer **Alberto Segarra**, sound designer **Christopher Baine**, costume designer **Brandee Mathies**, properties designer **Timothy Jones**, scenic artist **Lucianna Stecconi**, technical director **William Woodard**, and stage manager **Jeanette Buck**.

For full company bios and additional production information visit [mosaictheater.org/satchmo](https://mosaictheater.org/satchmo).

Full company information is included below.

### ***Satchmo at the Waldorf* Opening Night:**

Monday, August 29 at 7:30 PM

### **Production Information**

*Satchmo at the Waldorf*

By Terry Teachout

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## **Mosaic Theater launches Season Two with Off-Broadway hit *Satchmo at the Waldorf*—Page 4**

Directed by Eleanor Holdridge  
August 25—September 25, 2016

**ABOUT:** It's March 1971 at the Waldorf Astoria, and Louis Armstrong has just played one of the final performances of his extraordinary career. Unwinding backstage, the legendary 'Satchmo' recounts the events—and regrets—that led him to a place of stature in danger of being stripped away. Helmed by **Eleanor Holdridge** and starring DC-favorite **Craig Wallace**, this one-man, three-character powerhouse play with music dives into the complicated relationships between Armstrong, his embattled Jewish manager Joe Glaser, and his fiercest competitor and critic, trumpeter Miles Davis. "Fascinating...seamless, and full of surprises" (*Chicago Sun Times*), ***Satchmo at the Waldorf*** is an uplifting play about the price of success, the birth of jazz, and the soul of Satchmo—as you've never heard it before!

### **CAST:**

Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, and Joe Glaser: Craig Wallace

### **CREATIVE TEAM:**

Author: Terry Teachout  
Director: Eleanor Holdridge  
Set Designer: Andrew Cohen  
Lighting Designer: Alberto Segarra  
Sound Designer: Christopher Baine  
Costumes Designer: Brandee Mathies  
Properties Designer: Timothy Jones  
Scenic Artist: Lucianna Steconi  
Technical Director: William Woodard  
Stage Manager: Jeanette Buck

### **Plan Your Visit:**

**TICKETS:** Tickets for *Satchmo at the Waldorf* are \$40-\$60, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as student discounts, neighborhood nights, military and first responder discounts, and others, visit [mosaictheater.org/tickets](http://mosaictheater.org/tickets). Tickets may be purchased online at [mosaictheater.org](http://mosaictheater.org), or by phone at 202-399-7993 ext. 2, or at the Atlas Performing Arts Center Box Office at 1333 H Street NE, Washington DC 20002.

Atlas Performing Arts Center Box Office: 202-399-7993 ext. 2

### **PRICING TIERS:**

**General:** \$40-\$60 tickets  
**NE & SE Neighbors:** \$30 tickets  
**Under 30 and student:** \$20 tickets  
**Senior:** 10% discount  
**Military and first responder:** 10% discount

### **PERFORMANCE DATES:**

Preview performances at 8PM Thursday 8/25 (Pay-What-You-Can), Friday 8/26, and Saturday 8/27, and 3PM on Sunday, 8/28

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## Mosaic Theater launches Season Two with Off-Broadway hit *Satchmo at the Waldorf*—Page 5

Opening night at 7:30 PM on Monday 8/29  
Thursdays and Fridays at 8PM  
Saturdays at 3PM and 8PM  
Sundays at 3PM  
Sunday 9/11 at 3PM and 7:30PM  
Wednesday 9/21 at 8PM  
Student matinee at 11AM on Thursday 9/15  
Closing performance at 3PM on Sunday 9/25  
Full calendar: [mosaictheater.org/satchmo](http://mosaictheater.org/satchmo)

**DC STREETCAR:** Mosaic Theater Company performs at the Atlas Performing Arts Center, 1.2 miles from DC's Union Station. Patrons arriving at the Union Station Metro Station (Red Line) can catch the new DC Streetcar by exiting the station, and following the signs to the bus-level parking garage. Exit the back of the garage and turn right onto H Street, where the Eastbound Streetcar can be caught in the middle of the bridge. **The DC Streetcar is free until further notice.**

For more information, visit: [mosaictheater.org/getting-here](http://mosaictheater.org/getting-here).

**METRO AND METROBUS:** If coming by the Metro Center or Chinatown Metro Stations, patrons can catch the X2 or X9 busses, getting off at H St & 14<sup>th</sup> St NE.

Additional directions: [mosaictheater.org/getting-here](http://mosaictheater.org/getting-here).

**PARKING:** Mosaic Theater Company has partnered with the Atlas and H Street Parking to provide valet parking throughout the season for nearly every performance (Thursday through Saturday evenings; weekend matinees as well). Patrons can pre-purchase valet parking for \$20, which can either be used at the nearby valet drop-off, or as a self-parking voucher at the lot at 1008 H Street NE.

For more information, or to purchase valet parking: [mosaictheater.org/getting-here](http://mosaictheater.org/getting-here).

**Mosaic 8, First 8, and Mosaic Workshop** packages are now on sale and may be purchased by calling the Atlas Performing Arts Center box office at 202-399-7993 ext 2, or by visiting [mosaictheater.org](http://mosaictheater.org).

*Mosaic Theater Company of DC is committed to making powerful, transformational, socially-relevant art, producing plays by authors on the front lines of conflict zones and providing audiences with a dynamic new venue for the dramatizing and debating of ideas including an annual intercultural festival, like our acclaimed Voices From a Changing Middle East series.*

*With an emphasis on the playwright's vibrant voice, muscular structures and a powerful collaborative fusion with directors of vision and story-telling integrity, Mosaic plays marry a love of ideas, character, conflict, immediacy, and personal and public resonance, working with the finest actors in our city to create thrilling performances that matter. Our plays speak truth to power and to the private parts of our soul prompting reflection, discussion and uplift, while creating lasting impression; in short, we make art with a purpose and strive for impact.*

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## Mosaic Theater launches Season Two with Off-Broadway hit *Satchmo at the Waldorf*—Page 6

### Opening Nights for Mosaic Theater Company of DC's second season:

***Satchmo at the Waldorf***: Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

***Milk Like Sugar***: Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

***Charm***: Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

***Hooded: Or Being Black for Dummies***: Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

***The Blood Knot***: Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 PM

***A Human Being Died That Night***: Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

***Ulysses on Bottles***: Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 PM

***The Return***: Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM

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• [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/MosaicTheaterDC): instagram.com/MosaicTheaterDC • [Blog](http://mosaictheater.org/blog): mosaictheater.org/blog