# Flat Earth Theatre

# A Bright Room CALLED DAY by Tony Kushner Electronic Press Kit

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - August 23, 2017

Flat Earth Theatre Presents Angels in America playwright Tony Kushner's

### A Bright Room Called Day

#### A Theatrical Fable of Justice, Resistance, and Complicity Set Against the Historical Backdrop of 1930's Germany

#### WHAT

Flat Earth Theatre presents **A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY** by Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award–winning playwright Tony Kushner (Angels in America).

#### WHEN

THREE WEEKS ONLY: Saturday, September 30th @ 8pm; Sunday, October Ist @ 2pm; Monday, October 2nd @ 7:30pm; Thursday, October 5th @ 8pm; Friday, October 6th @ 8pm; Saturday, October 7th @ 8pm; Sunday, October 8th @ 2pm; Thursday, October 12th @ 8pm; Friday, October 13th @ 8pm; and Saturday, October 14th @ 8pm

#### WHERE

The Mosesian Center for the Arts (formerly The Arsenal Center for the Arts) 321 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA, 02472

#### TICKETS

http://www.mosesianarts.org/index.php/shows/visiting-productions/ABrightRoomCalledDay, Box Office Phone: 617-923-8487, Adults – \$25\* | Students – \$12.50\*†

#### PRESS NIGHT

Monday, October 2nd @ 7:30pm

#### FOR PRESS TICKETS

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**WATERTOWN, MA (August 23, 2017)** – From the artistic team behind its Elliot Norton Award–winning Spring 2017 production of *Silent Sky*, Flat Earth Theatre presents *Angels in America* playwright Tony Kushner's lyrical, timely **A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY**, a theatrical fable about justice, resistance, and complicity set against the historical backdrop of 1930's Germany. **A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY** will run September 30th – October 14th, 2017 at the Mosesian Center for the Arts (formerly known as the Arsenal Center for the Arts), 321 Arsenal Street in Watertown, MA. Tickets can be purchased at http://www.mosesianarts. org/index.php/shows/visiting-productions/ABrightRoomCalledDay for \$25, or \$12.50 for students.

Berlin, 1932. A group of bohemian friends struggle to respond as Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party rise to power. Watching their world unravel around them from the uncertain safety of Agnes Eggling's apartment, these artists, activists, and idealists grapple with the responsibility of making moral choices in a time of vanishing options. Hailed by the *Chicago Tribune* as "unabashedly political, thought-provoking, and a little scary,"

<sup>\*</sup> Includes MCA Facilities Fee

<sup>†</sup> Student ID Required

**A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY** by Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award–winning playwright Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*) reverberates across time, from Germany's Weimar Republic to contemporary America, posing timely questions about citizenship, resistance, and complicity.

"A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY speaks to the experience of watching the world we think we know change in front of our very eyes," says director Dori A. Robinson. "We argue about politics, holding onto facts as dearly as possible, banking on common sense and reason. But the play resists passivity; we are actively urged to think critically rather than dwell in any one moment, and ultimately act." Now, as the arts, the country, and the world stand at the brink, **A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY** demands to be performed.

A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY launches Flat Earth's 2017–18 season, "Dissent," Also featuring Antigone, Jean Anouilh's adaptation of the mythic tale of one woman's persistent defiance of a tyrant's decree; and The Nether, emerging powerhouse Jennifer Haley's electrifying examination of morality and reality in a technophilic society, Flat Earth's 12th season poses the question, where does moral responsibility end and where does it begin?

#### **STAFF & CAST**

Helmed by director Dori A. Robinson, director of Flat Earth Theatre's critically acclaimed Spring 2017 production of Silent Sky, as well as Greater Boston Stage Company's Director of Education, **A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY**'s design team includes Tracie Ewing (Set Design), Lila West (Costume Design), PJ Strachman (Lighting Design), Christine A. Banna (Projection Design), Emily Penta (Props Design), and Monica Giordano (Sound Design). The Producers are Coriana Hunt Swartz and Kevin Mullins, the Stage Manager is Molly Burman, the Technical Director is Emily Penta (assisted by Darren Cornell), the Dramaturg is Betsy S. Goldman. The cast features Lindsay Eagle, Noah Simes, Nancy Finn, Juliet Bowler, Isaiah Plovnick, Alissa Cordeiro, Eric McGowan, Lizzie Milanovich, Matt Arnold, and Kim Klasner.

#### **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

Born in New York City in 1956 and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Kushner is best known for his two-part epic, Angels In America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes. His other plays include **A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY**, Slavs!, Hydrotaphia, Homebody/Kabul, and Caroline, or Change, the musical for which he wrote book and lyrics, with music by composer Jeanine Tesori. Kushner has translated and adapted Pierre Corneille's The Illusion, S.Y. Ansky's The Dybbuk, Bertolt Brecht's The Good Person of Sezuan and Mother Courage and Her Children, and the English-language libretto for the children's opera Brundibár by Hans Krasa. He wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols' film of Angels In America, and Steven Spielberg's Munich. In 2012 he wrote the screenplay for Spielberg's movie Lincoln. Kushner is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, an Emmy Award, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, and many others.

#### **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

Dori A. Robinson is an educator, director, dramaturg and playwright. Dori holds a Masters from New York University's Educational Theatre program, having focused on applied theatre, devised work with youth, and Shakespeare. Dori has worked at the New Victory Theatre, Steppenwolf, the Park Avenue Armory, the Theatre Development Fund, Trusty Sidekick, Timeline Theatre, Shattered Globe, the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies, and the New York Student Shakespeare Festival. Directing credits include: *Silent Sky* (Flat Earth Theatre, Elliot Norton Award for Best Production - Small Theatre 2017), *The Merchant of Venice, Die Kleinen, The Lion in Winter, Extremities, Picnic, Into the Woods, The Pajama Game, Flight, and James and the Giant Peach* (2016). Assistant Director credits include: Meet John Doe, Judgement at Nuremberg, The Chosen, Love's Labour's Lost, and The Three Sisters. Dramaturgy: Christmas on the Air (Greater Boston Stage Company), A Season in the Congo (Timeline Theatre), Macbeth (Looking for Shakespeare, NYU). Eleven of Dori's original plays have been produced in New York, Chicago, and Boston, including: The Great Harvest, The Principal Stream, Name of a Woman, and Six Wings to One.

## About the Cast

#### Kim Klasner – Zillah Katz

Kim is excited to be making her Flat Earth Theatre debut as Zillah in A Bright Room Called Day. Some of her recent credits include Peerless (Company One), Miss Penitentiary (Maiden Phoenix Theatre Company), and Language of Angels (Happy Medium Theatre). She would like to thank her friends and family for their constant support, especially B.

#### Eric McGowan – Emil Traum

Eric McGowan has been undergoing temporary dissociative breaks from reality ("acting") for some time now. Since graduating with a Theatre degree from Holy Cross, Eric has been taking part in productions ranging from Shakespeare and other classical plays to brand new works. Some of his favorite roles include Orlando in As You Like It (Merely Players Theatre Co.), Luke #2 in Brilliant Adventures (Apollinaire Theatre Co.), Tony in You Can't Take It With You (Longwood Players), and the ensemble of Desire (Zeitgeist Theatre Co.) During the school year, Eric works with elementary school children, teaching them how it is ok to play pretend even as an adult. Eric is thrilled to be making his debut with Flat Earth Theatre. A huge amount of love and thanks to his parents, brothers, roommate and his favorite Communist dork. Eric could not be more thrilled to be working with such a talented cast and crew!

#### Lizzie Milanovich - Die Alte

Lizzie Milanovich is a Boston area actor, playwright, and teacher. Acting credits include: A Doll's House (Huntington Theatre Co), Lucky Stiff (Stoneham Theatre), Both/And (Central Square Theater/MIT), How Soft the Lining (Bad Habit Productions), It Felt Empty... (Theatre on Fire), That Time the House Burned Down (Fresh Ink), From the Sea... (Flotsam Productions), Boxer Shorts and The Taming of the Shrew (Brown Box Theatre Project), Emily Again (BTM XIX), and various readings and workshops throughout the city. Her writing has been produced with Fresh Ink Theatre Company, Shotz: Boston, and Emerson College. She was named one of Boston's Top-25-Under-25 by the Improper Bostonian in 2016 and received the 2016 ArtsImpulse "Emerging Artist" award. She holds a BA in theatre studies from Emerson College. <u>@lizovich & lizziemilanovich.com</u>

#### Isaiah Plovnick – Vealtninc Husz

Isaiah Plovnick is honored to be appearing in such a play at such a time. He was seen most recently in *Penny Penniworth* (Stryfe / Pinchnose) with Titanic Theatre Company. He has appeared onstage with Salem Theatre Company, Marblehead Little Theatre, Chameleon Dish Theatre, Improv Boston, and Salem State University. Recent credits include *Base Instruments* (Chernofsky), *A Christmas Carol* (Dick Wilkins / Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come), *Angels in America* (Louis), and *Under Milk Wood* (First Voice). Directing and writing credits include *The Thing on the Doorstep*, now published. He hopes that this production either gives you a measure of catharsis, or frustrates you to the point of action.

#### Juliet Bowler – Annabella Gotchling

Juliet is thrilled to return to FET after directing *Fat Pig.* Acting credits include Williamina in the Norton awardwinning *Silent Sky*, Leontes in the IRNE Nominated *Winter's Tale*, Tupolski in the award-winning *The Pillowman, Our Miss Brooks, Rocketman,* and *Bully Dance.* Juliet is also a film actor, improviser and voice artist, serving as the voice of United Way MA and appearing in films such as Clear History. She's performed in a variety of pieces, from the new audiobook Artiface, to the acclaimed PBS documentary Hidden Warriors, to the animated short Kiss Me Quick, along with a variety of serialized dramas, short films and video games. As always, I love you Mom!

#### Nancy Finn – Paulinka Erdnuss

Nancy Finn teaches dramatic literature in the English Department at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and theatre studies in the Performing Arts Department at Emerson College. She earned her Ph.D. in Theatre Studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Recent Boston-area roles include Masha in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (Arlington Friends of the Drama), Anne Hutchinson in Goodly Creatures (Hub Theatre Company), Ruth in Blithe Spirit, Elizabeth in Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (The Company Theatre), and Woman in Woman and Scarecrow (Solas Nua Boston). She also enjoys acting in staged readings, including playing the roles of Mother in True West (Salem Theatre), Mrs. Alving in Ghosts, Christine in A Doll's House, and the Queen in Cymbeline (Hub Theatre Company). She is proud to be a part of this production, her first with Flat Earth Theatre.

#### Lindsay Eagle – Agnes Eggling

Lindsay Eagle is honored and humbled to return to the stage after recently portraying Helen in Flat Earth Theatre's June production of Fat Pig. Additional acting credits include Julius Caesar (Bridge Repertory Theatre), Brewed (Happy Medium Theatre Company), The Good Person of Setzuan (Fort Point Theatre Channel), Enigma Variations, and The Memorandum (Flat Earth). Lindsay is also an acclaimed director with a focus on social justice theatre, feminism, and body image activism; credits include The Good Body by Eve Enlser (Hub Theatre Company), Citizens of the Empire: a Space Opera by Kevin Mullins and From The Deep by Cassie M. Seinuk (Boston Public Works), and the first all-female professional production of Radium Girls by D.W. Gregory (Flat Earth). She would like to thank her Flat Earth comrades for their continued collaboration and support, and the strong women in her life who inspire her every day (DNR, AJE, SKD, CHS, DAR, and JB to name a few). www.lindsayeagle.com

#### Matt Arnold – Herr Gottfried Swetts

Matt Arnold is a Flat Earth company member and has appeared in Blinders (Chris), Tales of a Fourth Grade Lesbo (Billy), The Farnsworth Invention (Stan), Terra Nova (Bowers) and The Memorandum (George). He most recently appeared as The Director in Keith Hamilton Cobb's American Moor at the BCA Plaza Theatre. Other credits include Moonbox Productions' Amadeus (Valet/Ensemble), Come On Over Productions' The Shepherd's Singularity (Givens/ Mak), Two Roads Performance Projects' Letters to Medford (Rev. Charles Brooks) and Unreliable Narrator's Human Contact (Brent Baker). He shares two IRNE Awards (Best Ensemble and Best Play) with the cast and crew of The Farnsworth Invention.

# About the Staff

#### Noah Simes - Gregor Bazwald

Noah Simes is a Boston-based actor, director, and theatrical collaborator. He has appeared on stage with a number of local companies, including Flat Earth Theatre (*The Farnsworth Invention*), Imaginary Beasts (*Knock!*, Winter Pantos), Bad Habit Productions (*Orlando*), and Fresh Ink Theatre (*That Time the House Burned Down*). Recent directing credits include the world premiere of *From the Sea, to Somewhere Else* in 2016. Noah performs regularly with local favorite Sh!t-Faced Shakespeare, and is perhaps best known for portraying homme fatale Peter Nureyev on the popular audiodrama The Penumbra Podcast (*www.thepenumbrapodcast.com*).

#### Alissa Cordeiro – Rosa Malek

Alissa Cordeiro is thrilled to work with Flat Earth Theatre in this production, having previously appeared in What Once We Felt. During her time in Boston, she has worked with various theatre companies including Imaginary Beasts, Boston Public Works, and Titanic Theatre Company. Previously, she lived NYC and toured regionally with Shakesperience Productions, frequently appearing in their spring school tours and summer Shakespeare in the Park tours. Favorite roles include Juliet, Alice in On Ego, Evelyn in The Shape of Things and Janie in Wonder of the World. She has worked as a Teaching Artist for various schools and theatres around the region including the American Repertory Theater and Huntington Theatre Company. She has a degree in Musical Theatre Performance and should really get around to using it one of these days. Many thanks to Dori for the chance to work on such an important piece of theatre. Special thanks to Mom for the unwavering support, advice, and sanity, and Eric for the love and laughter, even when she's at peak neurotic artist.

#### Coriana Hunt Swartz – Co-Producer

Coriana Hunt Swartz has belonged body and soul to Flat Earth Theatre since early 2008, with brief sabbaticals to design for The Commonwealth Opera of Western Mass, Lobsterback Entertainment, and Happy Medium Theatre, and also to act with the Happy Medium Theatre (*Family De-Values*, 2010) and the Independent Drama Society (*Eurydice*, 2011). Within Flat Earth, Coriana has appeared as Thomas in *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All for You* and as Juror #2 of the *Twelve Angry Jurors*. Her costume design credits include *Blood Relations, Pirate Lives! The Musical!, Enigma Variations*, and *Terra Nova*, among others. She has an intermittent habit of producing, has dabbled in stage management and props design, and is the voice of Flat Earth on social media. Coriana is utterly fascinated by the bounded tensions inherent in the construction of wings.

#### Christine A. Banna – Projection Designer

Christine A. Banna is a multidisciplinary artist and educator. She pulls from both modern and traditional methods such as painting, drawing, video, sound, and animation and utilizes them all in her practice.Christine is excited at the opportunity and challenge to create moving image work for the stage with Flat Earth Theatre. Christine received her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University and her BFA in Painting with a minor in Art History from Boston University's College of Fine Art. She is currently working as an adjunct faculty member in the Animation Department at Lesley University's College of Art and Design. To see some of her work visit <u>www.christineabanna.com</u>

#### Molly Burman – Stage Manager

Molly Burman is happy to join Flat Earth Theatre for this incredibly timely production. Favorite credits include *Mary Poppins* (Stoneham Theatre's young company), *Boxer Shorts* (Brown Box Theater Project), *Lab Rats* (Brown Box Theater Project), *Hidden Faces of Courage* (On With Living and Learning), and *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Company One). DB&AT

#### Elizabeth Singer Goldman - Dramaturg

Elizabeth Singer Goldman holds a Ph.D. in Theatre History and Theatre for Social Change from Tufts University, a Master's Degree in Educational Theatre from New York University's Steinhardt School of Education and Human Development, and a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature and Creative Writing from Tufts University. Elizabeth (Betsy) has worked in the arts for over fifteen years as a performer, director, playwright, dramaturg, educator, and scholar.

#### PJ Strachman - Lighting Designer

PJ Strachman has recently designed Flat Earth's Silent Sky and Fat Pig, Boston Public Works' Los Meadows, L.A.B.'s Yellow Bird Chase, Bad Habit's The Real Inspector Hound, How Soft the Lining, A Man of No Importance, Speech and Debate, Six Degrees of Separation, The Goat or, Who Is Sylvia, Orlando, Translations, and Top Girls, Gloucester Stage Company's Every Christmas Story Ever Told and Dueling Divas, Unreliable Narrator's Ultimate Things, Wax Wings' The Man from Willow's Brook, Kevin Cirone's Creative License, and many other area shows. She is the regular designer for Gann Academy and Stonehill College, including two ACTF regional selections. Photos of her work can be seen at <u>www.pjelex.com</u>.

#### Darren Cornell – Assistant Tech Director

Darren Cornell is a recent graduate of Emmanuel College where he studied Theater Arts and Chemistry. Recent credits include A Day in Hollywood/ A Night in the Ukraine (Chico Marx), Xanadu (Sonny Malone), The Laramie Project (Various Roles), and Sweet Charity (Vittorio Vidal). Darren has also worked on the scenic design for productions of Fat Pig with Flat Earth Theatre, A Day in Hollywood/ A Night in the Ukraine, The Laramie Project, Dancing at Lughnasa, and Night of the Living Dead at Emmanuel College. He would like to thank his family and Sammy for their constant support. www.darrencornell.com

#### Monica Giordano – Sound Designer

Monica Giordano is a Boston-based collaborator, who will do just about anything you need her to do that does not require basic logic, or spatial awareness. Sound design /composition credits include: The Winter's Tale (BWW Nomination Best Original Score), Time Stands Still, Closer, Romeo and Juliet, Hand Grenades. Monica is also an award-winning playwright whose work has been produced both in Boston (most recently, by Noah Simes, featuring Lizzie Milanovich!) and nationally. She holds an M.A. from Stella Adler Studios, has acted on Broadway, is currently in Sh\*t-Faced Shakespeare, can next be seen in the film Professor Marston and the Wonder Women, and in her spare time plays with puppies, teaches voice, and takes headshots. See, nothing logical or spatial. <u>www.monicagiordano.com</u>

#### Emily Penta – Tech Director and Props Designer

Emily is thrilled to be working with Flat Earth Theatre as the Technical Director and Properties Designer for Tony Kushner's A Bright Room Called Day. Having previously worked on various productions at her alma mater, Emmanuel College, Emily's credits include Picasso at the Lapine Agile (Stage Manager), Dancing at Lughnasa (Technical Director), and The Night of the Living Dead (Technical Director). In Boston's theater community, Emily has also worked on Shakespeare's Twelfth Night (Feste) with the Winthrop Playmakers, and was a member of the build crew for Flat Earth Theatre's production of Fat Pig this past spring. She would like to thank her friends and family for the endless support, and hopes that you enjoy the show!

#### Dori A. Robinson - Director

Dori A. Robinson is an educator, director, dramaturg and playwright. Dori holds a Masters from New York University's Educational Theatre program, having focused on applied theatre, devised work with youth, and Shakespeare. Dori has worked at the New Victory Theatre, Steppenwolf, the Park Avenue Armory, the Theatre Development Fund, Trusty Sidekick, Timeline Theatre, Shattered Globe, the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies, and the New York Student Shakespeare Festival. Directing credits include: Silent Sky (Flat Earth Theatre, Elliot Norton Award for Best Production - Small Theatre 2017), The Merchant of Venice, Die Kleinen, The Lion in Winter, Extremities, Picnic, Into the Woods, The Pajama Game, Flight, and James and the Giant Peach (2016). Assistant Director credits include: Meet John Doe, Judgement at Nuremberg, The Chosen, Love's Labour's Lost, and The Three Sisters. Dramaturgy: Christmas on the Air (Greater Boston Stage Company), A Season in the Congo (Timeline Theatre), Macbeth (Looking for Shakespeare, NYU). Eleven of Dori's original plays have been produced in New York, Chicago, and Boston, including: The Great Harvest, The Principal Stream, Name of a Woman, and Six Wings to One.

# About the Playwright

Born in New York City in 1956 and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Kushner is best known for his two-part epic, Angels In America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes. His other plays include A Bright Room Called Day, Slavs!, Hydrotaphia, Homebody/Kabul, and Caroline, or Change, the musical for which he wrote book and lyrics, with music by composer Jeanine Tesori. Kushner has translated and adapted Pierre Corneille's The Illusion, S.Y. Ansky's The Dybbuk, Bertolt Brecht's The Good Person of Sezuan and Mother Courage and Her Children, and the English-language libretto for the children's opera Brundibár by Hans Krasa. He wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols' film of Angels In America, and Steven Spielberg's Munich. In 2012 he wrote the screenplay for Spielberg's movie Lincoln. Kushner is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, an Emmy Award, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, and many other awards.

### About Flat Earth Theatre Mission Statement

**F**lat Earth Theatre crafts experiences that challenge the worldview of both artist and audience. Through evocative, intimate staging and visceral, intelligent performances, we inspire the community to question their preconceived notions and expand their perspective. We stage productions of neglected and underperformed scripts, as well as new and in-development pieces, and conceive unique takes on more conventional works. Flat Earth Theatre thrives in its egalitarian approach, engaging the diverse ideas and skills of its company members and collaborators to create thought-provoking theatre that informs and entertains.

### History

Flat Earth Theatre was established in the summer of 2006 by Kevin Mullins and Jake Scaltreto, long-time friends from Watertown seeking a creative outlet. Now in its eleventh season, Flat Earth has grown to eighteen members and established itself as a distinctive voice in Boston theatre. Over the years, the goal organically emerged to focus on challenging audiences to question their preconceived notions about the world. The company focuses on intellectual themes – often scientific, literary, or historical – as well as topical issues that explore elements of society that inspire thought and discussion.

Flat Earth has no Artistic Director. Rather, all decisions from season selection down are made by company consensus. Each member contributes their own talent and perspective to shape the identity of the company. Flat Earth functions as an egalitarian community of artists, a consortium of creative minds brought together in the pursuit of great theatre. Featured productions include our award-winning staging of The Pillowman (2012), the IRNE Awards-sweeping The Farnsworth Invention (2015), and last season's Silent Sky, recipient of the 2017 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Fringe Production.

## **Our Theatre C.R.E.D.**

**Collaborative** – As an egalitarian company, collaboration among production teams and company members is at the core of decision making. All planning starts with discussion in which every member has equal opportunity to express their opinion and be part of the conversation, and all resolutions are determined through the accord of those involved. Flat Earth Theatre's objective is that everyone has ownership of the outcome, whether that be in how a show looks, what plays are selected, or how the company is run.

**Resourceful** – Flat Earth showcases creative approaches to complex theatrical matters, onstage and off. We create productions of formidable quality, but remain budget conscious by pushing our artists to think outside the box, embrace their inventiveness, and be truly original in their work.

**Evocative –** Through our productions and other interactions, Flat Earth Theatre strives to challenge both audience member and artist to reassess what they know about the world around them. Unfamiliar themes and littleknown stories awaken an interest in our audience to learn more and discuss with others, and they leave the theatre transformed by what they have just experienced.

**Daring** – Flat Earth's risk-taking style pushes us in unexpected directions, enabling us to craft theatrical works with an approach unique to our company. Our ambitious choices push us into new, exciting territory and give audiences an experience not often seen on Boston stages.

