



MEDIA CONTACT:
Leah Yoon Frelinghuysen
Director of Marketing and Communications

press@fords.org

Ford's Theatre
511 Tenth Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004
www.fords.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Ford's Theatre Announces 2025-2026 Public Programs

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Ford's Theatre today announced its lineup of **2025-2026 Public Programs**, featuring thought-provoking conversations, tours, workshops and community events that illuminate connections between the past and present. Programs will explore American democracy, civil rights, the lives of First Ladies, Civil War history and the art of crafting plays inspired by history.

"At Ford's Theatre, we strive to connect the lessons of history to the conversations of today. This season's public programs invite audiences to reflect on the voices that shaped our democracy, from Lincoln and the Civil War to Dr. King and the Civil Rights movement, and to consider how those legacies continue to guide us," said Paul R. Tetreault, director of Ford's Theatre. "Whether through walking tours, community workshops, or conversations with artists, we hope to inspire meaningful dialogue and deeper engagement with our shared history."

"Ford's Theatre has reached an exciting milestone with a full season of public programs that embody our mission in action," said Tricia Patrick, Ford's Theatre Irani Foundation Director of Education. "These events create space for reflection, dialogue and foster active engagement with history and its ongoing relevance to today's world."

A full list of public programs is available at: fords.org/whats-happening/public-programs

Fall 2025 Public Programs

Cabinet Conversations: Echoes from the Steps

September 27, 12:30-1:30 p.m. | Online only

History often highlights a few names, but lasting change in American democracy is powered by many voices. Explore some of the unsung heroes of the civil rights movement, the challenges of preserving their stories, and the enduring inspiration of the "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial. Join with **Dr. Dayo F. Gore**, associate professor of Black Studies at Georgetown University, playwright **Chess Jacobs** and director **Aaron Posner** from the Ford's Theatre World Premiere production of *The American Five* for this enlightening conversation.

From Lincoln to MLK: A Walking Tour on the National Mall

October 4, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

The National Mall is home to iconic memorials that recognize pivotal American leaders and have served

as stages for defining moments in American history. Join Ford's Theatre and **National Mall and Memorial Parks** for an interpreted tour of the Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorials. Together we'll consider how our memorial landscape shapes the way we remember the nation's founding, the Civil War and the Civil Rights movement.

Reading American Life Narratives: First Ladies

October 25, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

As America approaches its 250th anniversary in 2026, we invite you to reflect on our history through the life narratives of First Ladies **Mary Lincoln, Julia Grant, Lady Bird Johnson and Nancy Reagan**. This three-hour community workshop, facilitated by **MaryBeth Matthews**, will use selected readings and guided exercises to explore the intersection of personal voice and historical moments, offering a multilayered lens into American history.

Civil War Forts Hike

November 8, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

When the Civil War began, Washington, D.C. was surrounded by slave-holding states and Confederate sympathizers. By the summer of 1861, 68 forts were hastily constructed to defend the capital. These remnants remain part of the city today. This two-mile outdoor hike from **Fort DeRussy to Fort Stevens and Battleground National Cemetery** has become an annual favorite, and we are excited to welcome participants back this year.

Winter 2026 Public Programs

From Quill to Curtain: Crafting Plays Inspired by History

January 17, 31 and February 14 | Saturdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

This three-part workshop series invites writers of all levels to explore the craft of playwriting through the lens of historical figures and events. Participants will develop narrative structure, use of primary sources and character development while considering how the past connects to the present. Facilitated by **Howard University Professor of Dramaturgy and Playwriting Denise Hart**, the series culminates with a sharing of excerpts from participants' works.

A First Look Festival - Meet and Mingle: Join us after the lights dim on stage for an intimate post-show gathering after the final reading of *A First Look Festival* in January 2026. Meet the cast and creative teams behind the new plays in development while enjoying a relaxed atmosphere of conversation and celebration of the staged reading.

Written Then, Spoken Now: Experience the convergence of history and theatre in this elevated book talk! Blending together scholarly conversation with theatrical reading of historical texts, this unique event brings the past to life through contemporary voices. A book signing will follow the onstage event. Friday, February 6, 2026.

29th Annual Abraham Lincoln Institute Symposium: Ford's Theatre is proud to host this annual event featuring renowned Lincoln scholars on March 21, 2026. The Abraham Lincoln Institute (ALI) and Ford's Theatre Society present a free symposium focused on the life, career and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln.

Legacy in the Making: A Day of Advancing the Unfinished Work: Inspired by Lincoln's personal conviction in the ideals outlined in the Declaration of Independence, partners and thought leaders explore the ways in which the legacies of Lincoln and the founding of the United States manifest today. This full day of panel discussions will illuminate the opportunities and responsibilities we are challenged to continue, May 16, 2026.

History Talks is a webinar series designed for history enthusiasts of all ages, featuring compelling visuals with content experts delving into the assassination of President Lincoln and the world of Civil War Washington.

On April 14, 2026, we explore *Inside the Petersen House*. When Abraham Lincoln was shot at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865, soldiers carried the unconscious president across the street to the Petersen House, where he died the next morning. The testimonies given by the residents living at the house transport us to that tragic night; meet the ordinary people who witnessed the death of the president.

On May 12, 2026, shine a spotlight on the *Lesser-Known Players* in the story of President Lincoln's assassination. There were over 1000 witnesses in the theatre on April 14, 1865, many of whom left compelling accounts of the historical tragedy and went on to live fascinating lives. Together we'll learn more about some of those who were involved in and witness to the assassination.

Museum & Trivia Night: Ford's Theatre opens its doors after-hours for this fun Civic Season Event! Explore the Theatre and museum and team up for Lincoln and Civics Trivia on June 26, 2026.

Ford's Theatre Society

Since reopening its doors in 1968, Ford's Theatre has been committed to exploring the legacy of President Abraham Lincoln and celebrating the ideals of leadership, democracy, and freedom of expression. Through history, theatre, and education, Ford's Theatre inspires audiences from across the nation and around the world.

For more information about upcoming public programs, visit: fords.org/whats-happening/public-programs.

For more information on Ford's Theatre and the Ford's Theatre Society, please visit www.fords.org.

###

Ford's Theatre on Instagram: [@fordstheatre](https://www.instagram.com/fordstheatre)

Ford's Theatre on Facebook: [@fordstheatre](https://www.facebook.com/fordstheatre)

Ford's Theatre on TikTok: [@fordstheatredc](https://www.tiktok.com/@fordstheatredc)

Ford's Education on Twitter: [@fordsedu](https://twitter.com/fordsedu)

Website: www.fords.org