



MEDIA CONTACT:

Leah Yoon Frelinghuysen, Director of Marketing & Communications
Carly Cloud, Associate Director of Marketing & Communications
press@fords.org

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 8, 2026

Ford's Theatre Announces 2026-2027 Public Programs

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Ford's Theatre today announced its **2026–2027 Public Programs**, bringing together conversations, tours, workshops and community events that examine pivotal moments in American history and the people who shaped them. This season's programs explore leadership and resilience following 9/11, Abraham Lincoln's life and legacy, the Civil War and its memory, the process of turning history into art and the voices carrying these stories forward.

"History is not only about understanding what happened—it's about asking what those moments can teach us now," said **Paul R. Tetreault**, director of Ford's Theatre. "This season gives audiences the opportunity to look at some of the defining moments and figures in our history from a range of perspectives, while making connections to the questions and challenges of our own time."

"Each of these programs offers a different way into the history we explore at Ford's," said **Tricia Patrick**, Ford's Theatre Irani Foundation Director of Education. "Audiences can hear from historians and authors, explore Washington's historic landscape, develop their own creative work or share their voices through oratory. Together, these programs create opportunities to engage with history as something we continue to question, interpret and carry forward."

A full list of public programs is available at fords.org/whats-happening/public-programs and will be updated on a rolling basis.

2026-2027 Public Programs

25 Years After 9/11: Lessons in Leadership, Resilience and Finding Our Better Angels

September 29, 2026 | 6 p.m.

The events of September 11, 2001, challenged our nation and called forth extraordinary acts of courage and leadership. Join Ford's Theatre for a compelling conversation with special guests **Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Purdue President Emeritus Mitch Daniels** and **CBS News correspondent Norah O'Donnell** as they examine the leadership decisions that shaped the nation's response—from the split-second actions of first responders and public officials, to the mobilization of communities and military forces, to the ongoing work of healing, remembrance and resilience. Our special guests will reflect on how leaders inspire hope when words fall short, what it takes to unite a nation in times of crisis and how we can preserve the lessons of 9/11 for generations who did not experience it firsthand.

Called to Serve: Stories from Courage Can Save Us

October 6, 2026 | 6 p.m.

In the wake of the attacks on 9/11, military enlistment surged to levels not seen since World War II. The desire to serve, whether in the military or in one's community, was palpable across the nation. Ford's Theatre will host a powerful discussion honoring courage, sacrifice and service. Author **Rye Barcott** brings together several individuals featured in his book, *Courage Can Save Us*, for a conversation about what happens when ordinary people are called to do extraordinary things.

Come From Away performances and public programs are generously underwritten by the Come From Away Commemorative Committee, Honorary Chairs, President George W. Bush and Mrs. Laura Bush, and Committee Chairs, Anita and Tim McBride.

Lincoln's Life, Death and Legacy

September 26, 2026 | February 15, 2027 | April 18, 2027 | 10 a.m.

This full-day program explores Abraham Lincoln's life, presidency and legacy through visits to three historic Washington, D.C. sites: President Lincoln's Cottage, where he worked on the Emancipation Proclamation; Ford's Theatre, where he was assassinated; and the Lincoln Memorial, which commemorates his enduring place in American history. Presented in partnership with Ford's Theatre Society and the National Mall and Memorial Parks, the program offers a comprehensive look at Lincoln's connection to Washington, D.C., and the places that shaped and commemorate his legacy.

Civil War Forts Tour

October 10, 2026 | 10 a.m.

When the Civil War broke out, Washington, D.C. was surrounded by slave-holding states and confederate sympathizers. In the summer of 1861, 68 forts were hastily built to defend

this city. These forts remain part of our city today. Participants will embark on a 2-mile outdoor hike from Fort DeRussy to Fort Stevens.

History Talks: A Glorious Fate

November 6, 2026 | 7 p.m.

Historian **Kevin M. Levin** presents his new biography of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, *A Glorious Fate: The Life and Legacy of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw*, tracing Shaw's transformation from reluctant volunteer to Union martyr and the enduring legacy of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry.

The Art of Memory: A Civil War Walking Tour

November 7, 2026 | 9:30 a.m.

Step into the streets of Washington, D.C. for a guided exploration of how the Civil War has been memorialized in the nation's capital. Led by Civil War memory historian **Kevin M. Levin**, this walking tour and museum experience traces monuments associated with the Union cause and concludes with an in-depth look at the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial at the National Gallery of Art.

From Quill to Curtain: Crafting Plays Inspired by History

January 9 | January 16 | January 30, 2027 | 10 a.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.

History Talks: Edwin Booth and the Burden of Memory

January 21, 2027 | 7 p.m. | Virtual Program

After his brother assassinated Abraham Lincoln, Edwin Booth faced a question few Americans could imagine: how do you live with a name the nation has come to hate? Drawing on emerging scholarship, historian **Elizabeth Reese** explores how the celebrated actor navigated public suspicion and private grief, transforming personal tragedy into a performance of redemption and national healing.

Written Then, Spoken Now

February 5, 2027 | 7 p.m.

In this chapter of *Written Then, Spoken Now*, Ford's Theatre will be in conversation with Pulitzer-Prize winning author **Dr. Edda Fields-Black** about her book *Combe: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid, and Black Freedom during the Civil War*. The evening is a blend of scholarly conversation and performance, featuring excerpts of the book read aloud by actors.

30th Annual Abraham Lincoln Institute Symposium

March 20, 2027 | 9 a.m.

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 at Ford's Theatre.

A Celebration of Oratory

May 3, 2027 | 3:30 p.m.

National Oratory Fellows and student delegates from across the country will take the stage to share powerful speeches rooted in the theme *The Stories We Carry Forward: Lessons from the Past, Shaping Our Future*. Speakers will explore the ideas, challenges and hopes shaping their world. Hear from today's voices and tomorrow's leaders at the historic Fords Theatre.

History Talks: Lincoln and Immigration

May 14, 2027 | 7 p.m.

Join acclaimed Lincoln historian **Harold Holzer** for a discussion of his groundbreaking book, *Brought Forth on This Continent*. Holzer reveals the vital role immigrants played in preserving the Union and offers fresh insights into Lincoln's legacy. This timely program highlights striking parallels between nineteenth-century America and today.

Museum and Trivia Night

June 21, 2027 | 5:30 p.m.

Ford's Theatre opens its doors after-hours as part of Civic Season! Explore the historic site and Aftermath Exhibits; team-up for Lincoln and Civics Trivia and nerd-out in good company with fellow history and theatre lovers.

Ford's Theatre Society

One of the most visited sites in the nation's capital, Ford's Theatre reopened its doors in 1968, more than a hundred years after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Operated through a partnership between Ford's Theatre Society and the National Park Service, Ford's Theatre is the premier destination in the nation's capital to explore and celebrate Abraham Lincoln's life and legacy.

Ford's Theatre Society was founded under the guidance of executive producer **Frankie Hewitt**, who, during her 35-year tenure, established Ford's as a living, working theatre producing performances that highlighted the diversity of the American experience. Since the arrival of **Paul R. Tetreault** as Director, critics and the theatre-going public have recognized Ford's for the superior quality of its artistic programming. With works from the Tony-nominated *Come From Away* and the nationally acclaimed *Big River*, to the world premieres of *Meet John Doe*, *The Heavens Are Hung In Black*, *Liberty Smith*, *Necessary*

Sacrifices, The Widow Lincoln, The Guard, Grace, Something Moving and *The American Five*, Ford's Theatre is making its mark on the American theatre landscape. Under the current leadership of Board of Trustees Chairman **Phebe N. Novakovic** and through the lens of Lincoln's leadership and legacy, Ford's today endeavors to advance Lincoln's "unfinished work" with programs and performances that cultivate empathy, encourage dialogue and bridge divides in American life.

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

####

Ford's Theatre on Instagram: @fordstheatre

Ford's Theatre on Facebook: @fordstheatre

Ford's Theatre on TikTok: @fordstheatredc

Ford's Education on X: @fordsedu

Website: www.fords.org