

LINCOLN CENTER THEATER CASTING ANNOUNCEMENT

**McKINLEY BELCHER III, KHRIS DAVIS, MONTEGO GLOVER,
JOHN LAVELLE, CLARKE PETERS**

TO BE FEATURED IN

LINCOLN CENTER THEATER'S PRODUCTION OF

"THE ROYALE"

A new play by MARCO RAMIREZ

Directed by RACHEL CHAVKIN

PERFORMANCES BEGIN THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

OPENING NIGHT IS MONDAY, MARCH 7

AT THE MITZI E. NEWHOUSE THEATER

Lincoln Center Theater (under the direction of Producing Artistic Director André Bishop) has announced that McKinley Belcher III, Khris Davis, Montego Glover, John Lavelle, and Clarke Peters will be featured in its upcoming production of ***THE ROYALE***, a new play by Marco Ramirez, directed by Rachel Chavkin, which begins performances Thursday, February 11 at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater (150 West 65 Street). Opening night is Monday, March 7.

Loosely based on the real-life experiences of Jack Johnson, the first African-American heavyweight world champion, ***THE ROYALE*** tells, in six rounds, the fictional story of Jay "The Sport" Johnson (to be played by Khris Davis), a charismatic Negro Heavyweight Champion. It's 1905 and as Johnson faces his opponents – and confronts his demons – he exposes the troublesome events in his life that have propelled him into the ring with a burning desire to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.

THE ROYALE will have sets by Nick Vaughan, costumes by Dede Ayite, lights by Austin R. Smith, and sound by Matt Hubbs.

Marco Ramirez has had plays produced at The Kennedy Center, Louisville's Humana Festival of New American Plays, San Diego's Old Globe Theatre, London's Bush Theatre, and the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles. His honors include Juilliard's Lila Acheson Wallace Playwriting Fellowship, the Lecomte du Nouy Award, and TCG's Edgerton Foundation New Play Award. A WGA and Emmy Award nominated television writer, his credits include "Sons of

Anarchy" (FX), "Orange is the New Black" (Netflix), "Fear The Walking Dead" (AMC), and Marvel's "Daredevil" (Netflix).

Rachel Chavkin developed and directed the recent, critically-acclaimed LCT3 production of Dave Malloy's *Preludes* and previously directed **THE ROYALE** at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. Her Off-Broadway credits include Bess Wohl's *Small Mouth Sounds* (Ars Nova); Dave Malloy's *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812* (Ars Nova, Kazino); The TEAM's *Roosevelt* (Bushwick Starr, Vineyard Theatre with PS122); Rick Burkhardt, Alec Duffy, and Dave Malloy's *Three Pianos* (Incubator, New York Theatre Workshop, ART); Taylor Mac's *The Lily's Revenge* (Act II, HERE); James Monaco and Jerome Ellis' *Aaron/Marie* (with Annie Tippe, Under the Radar Incoming). Regional/UK: The TEAM and Heather Christian's *Mission Drift* (London's National Theatre), Meg Miroshnik's *Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls* (Yale Rep), Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (Northern Stage, English National Tour). She is Artistic Director of the Brooklyn-based experimental ensemble The TEAM.

Major support for this production of **THE ROYALE** is provided by The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation.

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MCKINLEY BELCHER III Off-Broadway: *Romeo & Juliet* (CSC). Regional: numerous credits include productions at the Huntington Theatre Company, Two River Theater, Hartford Stage, Studio Theatre, Los Angeles Shakespeare Center. Film: *Go For Sisters*, *Ricky*. TV: "Mercy Street," "Chicago P.D.," "Madam Secretary," "Elementary," "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt," "Power," "Louie," "Rizzoli & Isles".

KHRIS DAVIS will make his NY stage debut in *The Royale*. Regional theatre: *Colossal* (Dallas Theater Center), *Bull Durham* (Alliance Theatre), *Love in Afghanistan* (Arena Stage), *Ruined* (Philadelphia Theatre Company), and *Go Green* (Walnut Street Theatre). A native of Camden, New Jersey he began his career with Philadelphia's Quintessence Theatre Group in featured roles in their productions of *Othello* and *Antigone*, and with the Adrienne Theater in *The First Breeze of Summer*.

MONTEGO GLOVER Broadway: *Les Misérables* (Fantine), *It Shoulda Been You*, *Memphis* (Tony and Drama League Award nominations; Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Best Actress in a Musical), and *The Color Purple* (as both Celie & Nettie). Regional theatre: *The Royale* (Old Globe Theatre - Craig Noel Award nomination). Film: *Alone*. TV: "The Following," "Black Box," "The Good Wife," "Hostages," "Smash," "Golden Boy," "White Collar," "NYC 22," "Law & Order". Concerts: numerous credits include appearances with the New York Pops and at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

JOHN LAVELLE Broadway: *The Graduate*. Off-Broadway: *Catch-22*, *Burleigh Grimes*, *Rope*, *Spatter Pattern*. Regional theatre: *The Royale*; *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*; *The Merchant of Venice*; *Bell, Book & Candle* (Old Globe Theatre); *As You Like It* (Los Angeles Shakespeare Center); *Much Ado About Nothing* (La Jolla Playhouse); *On The Razzle*

(Williamstown Theatre Festival). Film: *Born Guilty*, *Selma*, *Taking of the Pelham 1 2 3*. TV: "Forever," "N.C.I.S.," "Numb3rs," "The Black Donnellys".

CLARKE PETERS Broadway: *King Lear*, *Chicago*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *Five Guys Named Moe* (author). London stage: *Guys & Dolls*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *The Passion*, *Dispatchers* (all at the National Theatre); *Porgy and Bess*, *Seventh Heaven*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *Chicago*, *Five Guys Named Moe*. Film credits include: *Best of Me*, *Franny*, *Red Hook Summer*, *Seaching for Sunny*, *Endgame*, *Marley and Me*, *Freedomland*, *Notting Hill*, *Mona Lisa*. Recent TV credits include: regular roles on "The Divide," "Treme," "The Wire"; guest star roles on "Forever," "True Detective," "Person of Interest," "Blue Bloods," "Damages".