

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR LISTINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Philip Akin to host “Tony Kushner in Conversation” May 9, 2016 at 7:00 PM

“Some playwrights want to change the world. Some want to revolutionize theater. Tony Kushner is that rarity of rarities: a writer who has the promise to do both.” — New York Times

Toronto, ON, April 11, 2016 ... The Koffler Centre of the Arts announced today that actor and director **Philip Akin** will host “**Tony Kushner in Conversation**,” an evening of talk with one of the world’s greatest playwrights, on **May 9, 2016 at 7:00 PM** at the Panasonic Theatre, 651 Yonge Street. Tickets for this event start at \$29 and are available at 1 800 461-3333 or kofflerarts.org.

In Toronto for one night only, Kushner will speak with Akin about how he “tackles the most difficult subjects in contemporary history” (*New Yorker*), his life as an artist who weaves the most challenging politics of the day so seamlessly throughout his writing, and his thoughts on the future of contemporary theatre in North America.

Tony Kushner is a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer best known for his two-part epic, *Angels In America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes*. He wrote the screenplays for **Mike Nichols’** film of *Angels In America*, and **Steven Spielberg’s** *Munich*. His 2012 screenplay for Spielberg’s movie *Lincoln* was nominated for an Academy Award, and won the New York Film Critics Circle Award, Boston Society of Film Critics Award, Chicago Film Critics Award, and several others.

Tony Kushner is currently working on screenplays for two major films: **Denzel Washington’s** adaptation of *Fences* — August Wilson’s play about the 1950s African American experience; and the memoir *He Wanted the Moon*, by Mimi Baird and Eve Claxton, to be produced by **Brad Pitt**. Kushner’s 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 is the recipient of an Emmy Award, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, an Arts Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a PEN/Laura Pels Award, a Spirit of Justice Award from the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, a Cultural Achievement Award from The National Foundation for Jewish Culture, a Chicago Tribune Literary Prize for lifetime achievement, and the 2012 National Medal of Arts, among many others.

Philip Akin has been acting and directing for more than 30 years. He is a founding member of Obsidian Theatre, Canada’s leading black theatre company, and has served as its Artistic Director since 2006. In this role, he has worked tirelessly to provide opportunities and guidance

for emerging artists. Accolades for Akin include the Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award, the Bra D'Or Award from the Playwright's Guild of Canada, the Toronto Sun's Performance Artist of the Year, and the Silver Ticket Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Arts presented by the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts.

Philip Akin's recent and upcoming projects include directing Athol Fugard's *Master Harold and the boys* at the Shaw Festival; Lisa Codrington's *Up the Garden Path*, and *Venus' Daughter* by Meghan Swaby, both for Obsidian Theatre. Akin was seen in the 2009 remount of *The Last days of Judas Iscariot* (Birdland Theatre), and the 2007 productions of *Othello* and *Of Mice and Men* (Stratford Shakespeare Festival). His directing credits include Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Ruined; Toronto the Good*, and *El Paso* (Factory Theatre); *Intimate Apparel* (Citadel Theatre, Canadian Stage, Obsidian Theatre), and *Black Medea, Born Ready*, and *Pusha Man* (Obsidian Theatre). His film and television credits include *Shake Hands With the Devil* (2007), *The Sum of All Fears* (2002) and *Flashpoint* (2008-2011).

Listing information:

The Koffler Centre of the Arts presents

“Tony Kushner In Conversation” with host Philip Akin

May 9th, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Panasonic Theatre, 651 Yonge St

Tickets start at \$29 | Box office: [1.800.461.3333](tel:18004613333)

kofflerarts.org | <http://kofflerarts.org/programs-events/2016/02/01/tony-kushner-in-conversation/>

ABOUT THE KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS

The Koffler Centre of the Arts is a Jewish cultural organization that presents a cross-disciplinary, contemporary arts program encouraging inquiry and exploration. We promote an inter-cultural dialogue that engages our Jewish identity with diverse perspectives and global voices. The Koffler Gallery and its administrative offices are located at Artscape Youngplace, in Toronto's vibrant downtown West Queen West art and design district.

Koffler Centre of the Arts acknowledges the support of the Koffler Family Foundation, Cultural Season Sponsor CIBC Wood Gundy, the Ontario Arts Council through the Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Organizations Program, our patrons and donors.

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For further information and high resolution images, contact:

Tony Hower, Director of Marketing,
Communications & Archives
Koffler Centre of the Arts | Koffler Gallery
180 Shaw Street, Suite 104-105,
Toronto M6J 2W5
647.925.0643 x224
E-MAIL: thower@kofflerarts.org |
WEB: kofflerarts.org

Luisa Trisi, Big Picture Communications
180 Shaw Street, Suite 104-105,
Toronto M6J 2W5
416.481.1161 | 416.456.0499
E-MAIL: ltrisi@sympatico.ca