



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:**

Jordyn Chelf, Marketing Associate  
Theater at Monmouth | 207.933.2952  
jordyn@theateratmonmouth.org

**Experience the Historic Clash of Friendship and Ideals in *The Agitators***

**Monmouth, Maine** – Theater at Monmouth opens Mat Smart's play *The Agitators* Friday, part of the *(R)evolutionary Redux Season*. Originally scheduled to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the 19th Amendment, this deeply-moving story of the decades-long friendship between Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony is both timely and urgently relevant today.

Brimming with urgency and relevance, *The Agitators* examines the friendship and rivalry between Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony. It's 1849 and two young activists steel themselves for the battles to come. Over the next 45 years, they journey from allies to adversaries and back. Theirs is a story of defiance, of rebellion, of revolution. They agitated the nation. They agitated each other. They changed the course of history. And together, they challenge us with the question: "Do you still believe there can be a country for all?"

An escaped slave, Frederick Douglass became a leader and speaker in the movement to abolish slavery before and during the Civil War. He continued to fight for equality and human rights after the end of the war and the Emancipation Proclamation until his death. Susan B. Anthony was one of the most visible leaders of the women's suffrage movement, travelling throughout America fighting for the rights of all women. After listening to Douglass speak, she became a fellow activist for the abolishment of slavery.

In Bangor in 1854, Anthony spoke concerning the right to vote for women, and would later do so again in Ellsworth in 1857. In cities and towns like Bangor, Rockland, Ellsworth, and Lewiston, many women, both of privilege and working class, became agitators in the pursuit of voting rights for women. "There was no doubt that the early suffragists knew that they had a long, hard fight ahead of them to change the prevailing cultural attitudes of the day," writes Andy O'Brien of *The Free Press*. However, their efforts had finally come to fruition on August 18th of 1920, when the 19th Amendment guaranteeing the right to vote for women was ratified.

Playwright Smart sees the story of the pair as timely for 21st Century America. "The distance between people in this country seems to be growing greater and greater," Smart says. "And something that is so inspiring to me about Susan and Frederick was their ability to have a healthy, hard dialogue with the people they disagreed with..." There is something to be learned from these two great abolitionists, who, despite their racial, background, and gender differences, found ways to fight for what they believed in, while (mostly) respecting the others opinion.

"Writers differ upon the level of friendship between Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony, who over the years, when they found it expedient, did not hesitate to disassociate themselves from each other. Despite that, it is clear that the missions of Douglass and Anthony overlapped. He championed women's rights; she fought against slavery. The common enemy they shared was the struggle for acceptance into American Society," commented Director, Debra Ann Byrd; "theirs was a friendship that changed a nation."



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Performance Calendar: OPENING 7/3 at 7:30 p.m.; additional performance dates 7/21, 8/20 at 7:30 p.m.; 7/17, 8/1, 8/6, 8/11, 8/17 at 1:00 p.m.; and 7/25 at 7:00 p.m. with a streamed Post-Show Discussion.

*The Agitators* features Nathan Ramsey as Frederick Douglass and Casey Turner as Susan B. Anthony. Directed by Debra Ann Byrd; Assistant Director and Dramaturgy by Dathan Williams; Set design by Nadir Bey, Costume Design by Michelle Handley, Lighting Design by Aja Jackson, and Sound Design by Rew Tippin.

**Engagement Programs**

Post-Performance Discussions. For 2021 Post-Performance Discussions will be pre-recorded and audiences will be able to stream the content after the selected dates. Discussions with the cast and creative team will cover the critical historical, artistic, and cultural perspectives of the worlds of each individual play.

Tickets, Subscriptions, and Ways to Save. A TAM subscription offers the greatest savings and exclusive benefits like priority seating and ticket exchanges. Gold, Flex, General, or Senior Passes are available for purchase, so whether you want a ticket for each show or five tickets to one show, there's an option for you. Single tickets for the Summer Repertory and Fall Play are \$36 for adults, \$31 for senior citizens, and \$22 for students (18 and under). Family Show tickets are \$17 for adults, \$12 for children. Due to limited capacity this year, individual tickets must be bought at a minimum of two tickets.

Opening Nights are Educator Nights. Educators receive 20% off the general ticket price with a valid photo ID at the Box Office.

Single Day-Of Tickets: To help with capacity limits, Theater at Monmouth is restricting the purchase of one single ticket to day of show. Please call the Box Office at 207.933.9999 to purchase these tickets.

For calendar and reservations, please contact the TAM Box Office at 207.933.9999 or visit [www.theateratmonmouth.org](http://www.theateratmonmouth.org).

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Theater at Monmouth, founded in 1970, was named the Shakespearean Theater of Maine by the State Legislature in 1975. The theatre's mission is to present innovative approaches to Shakespeare and other classic plays through professional productions that enrich the lives of people throughout Maine. Since its founding, TAM has produced expertly crafted, engaging productions in its three-month Summer Repertory Season entertaining audiences from 36 states and through Education Tours annually reaching more than 15,000 students statewide.

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