

OCTET

STUDIO



# FRIENDS,

Here's a surprising fact: *Octet* is the first Dave Malloy production to make it to the Washington area. I say surprising because Dave has fast become a theatrical megaforce. Best known for *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812*, which opened on Broadway in 2016 and was nominated for 12 Tony Awards, Dave is widely acknowledged to be one of the most innovative and influential musical theatre makers working in the American theatre. Like one of *Octet*'s cast members said on the second day of rehearsals, "Nobody's doing it like Dave Malloy."

Because of his idiosyncratic and brainy choice of subjects, I like to think of Dave as a Tom Stoppard of the musical theatre. *Preludes* is a musical fantasia set in the mind of the composer Sergei Rachmaninoff. *Ghost Quartet* is a song cycle of scary stories spanning seven centuries. *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet* is an adaptation of 70 pages of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. You get the idea. Perhaps unsurprisingly given these topics, his lyrics are often dense and reference-packed. An unapologetic genre-mixer, Dave's music is at once sophisticated, experimental, and irreverent.

The first version of *Octet* premiered in 2019, and represented a departure for Dave. Topically, he moved from the historical and intellectual to the contemporary and everyday. And musically, he set aside the instrument-swapping, electronics, and sonic overload that had become Malloy signatures and instead embraced a radical musical constraint: *a cappella* singing.

It's an unlikely idea: creating play about our relationship to cyberspace with very little technology. But that's precisely the point: the naked human voice is the most analog of musical forms, about as low-tech as you can get. I think it's a brilliant formal choice for a musical about the justifiable fear that our creativity, spirituality, and ability to connect meaningfully with one another is being devoured by runaway technology.

Since the reopening of the Victor Shargai Theatre in 2022, we've staged productions here in all of the essential configurations (proscenium, thrust, alley, immersive) except for in-the-round, so *Octet* represents the completion of a circuit. It struck me as a terrific play to stage this way, because this support group for the tech-addicted is one in which most all of us could be members!

It's my pleasure to invite you to unplug and let Dave's musicality and the talent of this ensemble transport you. We're glad you're here.

Yours,

David Muse  
Artistic Director

Read a note from  
our dramaturg  
about Dave  
Malloy's take on  
intimacy in the  
era of the infinite  
scroll:



# STUDIO THEATRE

**DAVID MUSE**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**REBECCA ENDE**  
**LICHENBERG**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**PRESENTS**

## OCTET

MUSIC, LYRICS, BOOK,  
AND VOCAL  
ARRANGEMENTS BY  
**DAVE MALLOY**

DIRECTED BY  
**DAVID MUSE**

World Premiere commissioned and produced by Signature Theatre, New York City. Paige Evans, Artistic Director; Harold Wolpert, Executive Director.

West Coast Premiere presented by Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Signature Theatre.

Produced by special arrangement with Diana DiMenna and Plate Spinner Productions.

*Octet* is presented by special arrangement with Paradigm Talent Agency LLC.

**SDC** The Director and/or Choreographer is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.



The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT Theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA829 of the IATSE.

This Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theaters and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

MUSIC DIRECTOR  
**BEN MOSS**

SET DESIGNER  
**DEBRA BOOTH**

COSTUME DESIGNER  
**MOYENDA KULEMEKA**

LIGHTING DESIGNER  
**MARY LOUISE GEIGER**

SOUND DESIGNER  
**NICK KOURTIDES**

DRAMATURG  
**MICHELLE MARIE LYNCH**

MOVEMENT COORDINATOR/  
CHOREOGRAPHER  
**ASHLEIGH KING**

ITEM DESIGN  
**OR MATIAS**

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER  
**JOHN KEITH HALL\***

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION  
**JEFFERY MARTIN**

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR  
**RHIANNON SANDERS**

CASTING  
**KATJA ZAROLINSKI, CSA**

UNDERWRITTEN BY  
**MARK EPSTEIN AND AMORETTA HOEBER**  
**SARI HORNSTEIN**  
**CRAIG PASCAL**

# CAST



JESSICA  
**CHELSEA  
WILLIAMS\***



HENRY  
**ANGELO  
HARRINGTON II\*\***



PAULA  
**TRACY LYNN  
OLIVERA\***



KARLY  
**ANA MARCU\***



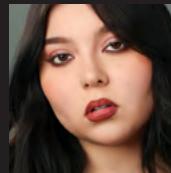
ED  
**JIMMY KIEFFER\***



TOBY  
**ADIAN JOYCE\***



MARVIN  
**DAVID TOSHIRO  
CRANE\***



VELMA  
**AMELIA  
AGUILAR\***

## UNDERSTUDIES

AVA & JESSICA  
**AVA WILSON**

HENRY & ED  
**SAM RODD**

TOBY & MARVIN  
**ANTHONY DE  
SOUZA**

PAULA & KARLY  
**SYDNE LYONS**

## SETTING

A church basement



\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

<sup>†</sup>Dance Captain

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# PLAYWRIGHT



**DAVE MALLOY** is a New York-based award-winning composer, writer, performer, and orchestrator. He has written music for 18 musicals, including *Three Houses*; Roald Dahl's *The Witches*; *Moby-Dick*; *Octet*; *Preludes*; *Ghost Quartet*; *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812* (12 Tony nominations; six Olivier nominations); *Little Bunny Foo Foo*; *Black Wizard / Blue Wizard*; *All Hands*; *Three Pianos*; *Beardo*; *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*; *The Sewers*; *Sandwich*; *Clown Bible*; and (*The 99-cent*) *Miss Saigon*. His accolades include three OBIEs, a Smithsonian Ingenuity Award, a Drama Desk Award, a Lucille Lortel Award, the Richard Rodgers Award, an ASCAP New Horizons Award, and a Jonathan Larson Grant. Upcoming: *Black Swan* at American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) from May 26, 2026, through June 28, 2026. [davemalloy.com](http://davemalloy.com)

# DIRECTOR



**DAVID MUSE** is in his sixteenth season as Artistic Director of Studio Theatre where he has directed *Downstate*; *Love, Love, Love*; *Fun Home*; *People, Places & Things*; *Cock* (the in-person and digital productions); *The Children*; *The Remains*; *The Effect*; *The Father*; *Constellations*; *Chimerica*; *Murder Ballad*; *Belleville*; *Tribes*; *The Real Thing*; *An Iliad*; *Dirt*; *Bachelorette*; *The Habit of Art*; *Venus in Fur*; *Circle Mirror Transformation*; *reasons to be pretty*; *Blackbird*; *Frozen*; and *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*. As Studio's Artistic Director he has overseen over 125 productions; established Studio R&D, a new work incubator that has commissioned over 40 artists; created The Cabinet, Studio's artist advisory body; and envisioned and oversaw Open Studio, a \$20 million expansion and upgrade of Studio's four-theatre complex. Previously, he was Associate Artistic Director of the Shakespeare Theatre Company, where he has directed nine productions, including *Richard III*, *Henry V*, *Coriolanus*, and *King Charles III* (a co-production with American Conservatory Theater and Seattle Rep). Other directing projects include *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* at Arena Stage, *The Bluest Eye* at Theatre Alliance, and Patrick Page's *Swansong* at the New York Summer Play Festival. He has helped to develop new work at numerous theatres, including New York Theatre Workshop, Geva Theatre Center, Arena Stage, New Dramatists, and The Kennedy Center. David has taught acting and directing at Georgetown, Yale, and the Shakespeare Theatre Company's Academy of Classical Acting. Productions he has directed have received 58 Helen Hayes Award nominations, including 9 for Outstanding Direction, and he is a DC Mayor's Arts Award recipient. David is a graduate of Yale University and the Yale School of Drama.

# 2025-2026

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Mark Tushnet and Elizabeth Alexander



*Khalia Muhammad, Sabrina Lynne Sawyer, Jacques Jean-Mary and Shana Lee Hill in *Exception to the Rule*. Photo by Margot Schulman.*

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Student matinees at Studio bring DC public and public charter high school students to see Studio productions with free tickets and transportation. Students also receive a specially-developed curriculum guide and participate in a post-show conversation with cast members.

### STUDENT MATINEE SPONSORS

THE SHAPIRO FAMILY FOUNDATION  
DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

**“I appreciate coming, I love being closer to the actors because it makes the plot feel more real!”**

– Student from Bard High School Early College DC after *Paradise Blue*

**DONATE NOW TO SUPPORT OCTET'S STUDENT MATINEE PERFORMANCES:**



# ACTORS

**CHELSEA WILLIAMS** (Jessica) is an actor and voiceover artist based in Brooklyn, NY. Her Broadway/national tours include *In Transit*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *Irving Berlin's White Christmas*. Select theatre credits include *Waitress: The Musical* at Ogunquit Playhouse, *Life After* at Goodman Theatre, *Grease* at Maine State Music Theatre, and *Mamma Mia!* at Casa Mañana. She recently appeared on *Elsbeth* (CBS) and can be heard in various national commercials and video games. She holds a BFA from Emerson College. On social media @chelseawillyums (Instagram).

**ANGELO HARRINGTON II** (Henry/Dance Captain) is a triple-threat performer making his Studio Theatre debut. His theatre credits include *Red Pitch*, *Senior Class*, and *Frozen* at Olney Theatre Center; *Sister Act* at Summer Rep Theatre Festival; *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *The Scottsboro Boys* at ArtsCentric; and *A Chorus Line* at Toby's Dinner Theatre. On social media @angeloharringtonii (Instagram).

**TRACY LYNN OLIVERA** (Paula) returns to Studio after appearing in 2013 production of *Bachelorette*. She performed on Broadway in the 2009 revival of *Ragtime*. Her regional credits include *Candide* at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago. She has performed in the DMV area at Signature Theatre, Arena Stage, Ford's Theatre, the Kennedy Center, Olney Theatre Center, Round House Theatre, and many other local area venues. She is a two-time Helen Hayes Award Winner (for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Musical and Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Musical), and a 12-time nominee. She has sung in concert at Signature Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Black Rock Center for the Performing Arts, as well as venues in Chicago, Sarasota, and Rehoboth Beach. Tracy is an adjunct professor at both Catholic University and American University. Her debut album, *Because*, is available on iTunes and Spotify.

**ANA MARCU** (Karly) is an actor, singer, musician, and owner of Ivory Voice and Piano

in Brooklyn, NY. Her Off Broadway credits include *Georama* at Playwrights Horizons and *90210! The Musical!* at Theatre 80. Her regional credits include *Sunny Afternoon* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater; *Once* at Syracuse Stage and California Center for the Arts, Escondido Theatricals; *Jersey Boys* at Theatre Aspen; *Million Dollar Quartet* and *The Old Man and the Old Moon* at South Coast Repertory; *Almost Heaven* at Weston Theater Company; *Man of La Mancha* at Arizona Theatre Company; *As You Like It* at Great River Shakespeare Festival; and *A Christmas Carol* at Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Touring credits include *Disney on Classic* in Japan. Ana was in the feature film *My Hero*. She received a BFA from Syracuse University. On social media @a\_marcu. [anamarcu.com](http://anamarcu.com).

**JIMMY KIEFFER** (Ed) is an actor based in New York. His Off Broadway credits include *Peter and the Starcatcher* at New World Stages, *A Christmas Carol* at Canal Park Playhouse, and *Scapin* at Theatre Row. Regionally, he has performed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Guthrie Theater and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, *The History Plays* at the Guthrie Theater, *Cyrano de Bergerac* at Kansas City Repertory Theatre, *Candide* at Alliance Theatre, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at Pittsburgh Public Theater, *The 39 Steps* at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and *Victor/Victoria* at Theatre Under The Stars. On television, he appeared on *Law & Order* (NBC) and *Criminal Minds* (CBS). Film credits include *Ocean's Eight* and *Ricki and the Flash*. He holds an MFA in Acting from the Professional Actor Training Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. On social media @thejimmykieffer (Instagram). [jimmykieffer.com](http://jimmykieffer.com).

**AIDAN JOYCE** (Toby) is a New York-based theatre artist and Mets fan originally from Montclair, NJ, making his Studio Theatre debut in *Octet*. He recently appeared in the world premiere of *A Wrinkle in Time* at Arena Stage. Other credits include Heather Christian's *None*:

*A Practical Breviary* at New York Stage and Film, *Rent* at Southern Plains Productions, and *Spring Awakening* at Monumental Theatre Company, which earned him a Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding Lead Performer in a Musical. He holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Shenandoah University. On social media @aidanjoyce (Instagram).

**DAVID TOSHIRO CRANE** (Marvin) is a New York-based actor, director, and teacher originally from Berkeley, California. His regional credits include the Los Angeles revival of *Reefer Madness* at The Whitley Theatre; *Emma* at Kansas City Repertory Theatre; *The Prince of Egypt*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, and *Tuck Everlasting* at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley; *Guys and Dolls* at San Francisco Playhouse; *The Glass Menagerie* at Sacramento Theatre Company; *Vietgone* and *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* at Capital Stage; *Noises Off* at Hillbarn Theatre; *110 in the Shade* at Actors Co-op Theatre Company; *Indoor*

Person at Normal Ave; and Dave Malloy's *Don't Stop Me* and *Next to Normal* at Korsa Musical Theater. David's on-camera work includes numerous *BuzzFeed* sketches viewed by millions worldwide. He is a graduate of UCLA's School of Theatre, Film and Television. On social media @craviddane (Instagram). [davidcrane.com](http://davidcrane.com).

**AMELIA AGUILAR** (Velma) is a performer and music director whose performance credits include *Superstar: A Concert*, *Rent*, *Into the Woods*, and *Seussical* at Texas State University. Her musical director credits include *Superstar: A Concert* and *Sister Act* at Texas State University. Her television and film credits include background vocals for the Josh Groban Holiday Special and the Grammy Awards 2020. Aguilar holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Texas State University and received additional training at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. On social media @ameliaaguilarr (Instagram).

# PRODUCTION

**BEN MOSS** (Music Director, he/him) is an award-winning music director, performer, songwriter, and orchestrator. New York credits include *Oratorio for Living Things* at Ars Nova and Signature Theatre Company (NYC) (Obie Award and Lucille Lortel Award), *The Hello Girls* at Prospect Theater and Syracuse Stage, Heather Christian's *PRIME : A Practical Breviary* released by Playwright's Horizons "Soundstage," *Arlington* at the Vineyard Theatre, and Alexandra Silber's *After Anatevka* at Audible's Minetta Lane Theatre. DC credits include *A Wrinkle in Time* at Arena Stage, *Penelope* at Signature Theatre (Helen Hayes nomination), and appearances at The Kennedy Center. Regional credits include Salty Brine's *Bigmouth Strikes Again* at Soho Theatre, UK, and *Azul* at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. He is the music director of the *Broadway Sings* concert series. He is a graduate of Harvard University. [benkmoss.com](http://benkmoss.com).

**DEBRA BOOTH** (Set Designer) has a long history with Studio, where she has designed

*Fun Home*; *People, Places & Things*; *Pass Over*; *Translations*; *The Wolves*; *The Father*; *The Hard Problem*; *Privates on Parade*; *The Apple Family Cycle*; *Jumpers for Goalposts*; *Cock*; *Bachelorette*; and others. Regional work includes *Sooner/Later* and *Blood Knot* at Mosaic Theater Company, *Richard III* (Helen Hayes nomination), *The Lover* and *The Collection* at the Shakespeare Theatre Company, *Marisol* at Hartford Stage and The Public Theater, the New York premiere of *Angels in America* at The Juilliard School, *Broken Glass* at Philadelphia Theatre Company (Barrymore Award nomination), and *A Moon for the Misbegotten* at Yale Repertory Theatre. Debra received the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Artist Fellowship and a NEA design grant. She is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

**MOYENDA KULEMEKA** (Costume Designer) has worked at Studio Theatre previously on *The Scenarios*, *The Colored Museum*, *Good Bones*, and *John Proctor is the Villain*.

Regionally, she has worked on *Where the Mountain Meets the Sea*, and *Birthday Candles* at Cincinnati Playhouse; *Akeelah and the Bee*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, and *Tiny Beautiful Things* at Baltimore Center Stage; *Selling Kabul*, *Daphne's Dive*, and *Detroit '67* at Signature Theatre; *Jump* at Everyman Theatre; *Radio Golf* at Round House Theatre; and *Nancy, Confederates, Bars and Measures*, and *In His Hands* at Mosaic Theater Company, among others. Moyenda received her B.A. at the University of Maryland and is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829, IATSE.

**MARY LOUISE GEIGER** (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer for theatre, dance, and opera. At Studio, she designed *At the Wedding*, *Chimerica*, *Invisible Man* (Helen Hayes award), and *Time Stands Still*. On Broadway, she designed *The Constant Wife* for *Roundabout Theatre Company*. Her upcoming Off Broadway credits include *Midwest Porn* for the Tent Theatre Company and *Zack* for the Mint Theatre Company. Regionally, her work includes *Rope* and *All My Sons* for Hartford Stage, *Last Night and the Night Before* at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* for Syracuse Stage. Recent dance work includes Christopher Wheeldon's ballet *From You Within Me* for New York City Ballet and a revival of *The Sleeping Beauty* for the Royal Danish Ballet. She trained at the Yale School of Drama and teaches at NYU. [mlgeiger.com](http://mlgeiger.com).

**NICK KOURTIDES** (Sound Designer) designs for musical theatre and creates sound environments for devised ensemble works. He is the global sound designer for *Magic Mike Live*. Previously at Studio he designed and composed *If I Forget* and designed *The Object Lesson*. Off Broadway credits include *Oratorio for Living Things* at Ars Nova and Signature Theatre Company, *Macbeth in Stride* at BAM, *Three Houses* at Signature Theatre Company, *The Keep Going Songs* at LCT3, *Travels* and *The Lucky One* at Ars Nova, *Terce: A Practical Breviary* at the Prototype Festival, *Black Light* at Greenwich House, *The Object Lesson* at NYTW and BAM, *Elephant Room* at St. Ann's Warehouse, *Carson McCullers Talks About Love* at Rattlestick Theater, and *Jomama*

*Jones: Radiate* at Soho Rep. He has designed at dozens regional theatres nationally. Nick has taught Sound Design for Live Performance at Drexel University and Swarthmore College. He has received Obie, Lucille Lortel, Bessie, and Barrymore awards.

**MICHELLE MARIE LYNCH** (Dramaturg) is a dramaturg, playwright, producer, and director. Her dramaturgy credits include *Night Garden* at The Kennedy Center, *tempered* at 4615 Theatre, *Q-Fest* and *Jingle in July* at Adventure Theatre MTC, and *North Wind* at Rapid Lemon Productions. Her commissioned plays include *From Cinders to Ella* and *Willow's Bend* at Adventure Theatre MTC. In recent years, Michelle has worked as the Artistic and Literary Associate for Folger Theatre, as a script reader for Studio Theatre, and as a Dramaturgy Career Mentor for Theatre Washington. In 2026, Michelle will be the Assistant Director for *Much Ado About Nothing* at Faction of Fools. On social media @michellemarieici. [michellemarielynchsquarespace.com](http://michellemarielynchsquarespace.com).

**ASHLEIGH KING** (Movement Coordinator/Choreographer) is a DC-born actor, director, choreographer, and four-time Helen Hayes award winner. She returns to Studio Theatre after previous work on *Fun Home* and *Problems Between Sisters*. Her DC-area credits include *Which Way to the Stage*, *Ragtime*, *Hair*, and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* at Signature Theatre; *Merry Wives* at Shakespeare Theatre Company; *Little Shop of Horrors* at Ford's Theatre; *The Sensational Sea Mink-ettes*, *Teenage Dick*, and *Fairview* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company; *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* at Olney Theatre Center; *Legally Blonde* and *Seussical* at The Keegan Theatre; *Junie B. Jones, the Musical* and *She Persisted* at Adventure Theatre MTC; and *A Year with Frog and Toad* at Imagination Stage. Her regional credits include *Waitress*, *'Bov Water, Spring Awakening*, and *Spamalot* at Northern Stage; *Donna: The Donna Summer Musical* at Red Mountain Theatre; and *Mamma Mia!* at Virginia Repertory Theatre.

**JOHN KEITH HALL** (Production Stage Manager) Previous Studio credits include *Wipeout; Downstate; Summer, 1976; Exception to the Rule; The Colored Museum; At the Wedding; Espejos: Clean; Fun Home; Bad Jews; Choir Boy; Water by the Spoonful; Tribes; Torch Song Trilogy; 4000 Miles; In the Red and Brown Water; The History Boys; and The Road to Mecca*. Other DC area credits include productions at Theater J, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Olney Theatre Center, Signature Theatre, and The Kennedy Center. His regional credits include more than 40 productions as Resident Stage Manager at the Barter Theatre as well as Shadowlands Stage, Virginia Musical Theatre, and Contemporary American Theatre Festival.

**KATJA ZAROLINSKI, CSA** (Casting) is serving as the Studio Theatre NYC Casting Director for the 2025/2026 season. Katja is a New York-based casting director handling productions

for theater, film and television. Previous casting work includes Broadway, Off Broadway and regional productions at Alley Theatre, Arena Stage, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage, Barrington Stage Company, Cape Playhouse, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, City Theatre Company, Contemporary American Theater Festival, Crossroads Theatre Company, Everyman Theatre, George Street Playhouse, Goodspeed Musicals, Guthrie Theater, Irish Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Mosaic Theatre Company, Olney Theatre Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Pittsburgh CLO, PlayMakers Repertory Company, Pittsburgh Public Theater, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Seattle Rep, Shakespeare & Company, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre (DC), South Coast Repertory, TheaterWorks Hartford, Virginia Stage Company, Virginia Theatre Festival, and many more.

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## PRODUCTION STAFF

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## SPECIAL THANKS

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BY DAVE MALLOY

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026



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The Studio Fellows-in-Residence program prepares future artists and administrators for a successful career in the arts through a rigorous, hands-on training experience over the course of a full theatrical season.

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*-THE NEW YORK TIMES*

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