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Philly

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Step into America's founding story when @HistoryThatDoesntSuck comes to the Kimmel Center on 5/9, presented by @EnsembleArtsPhilly. Created and hosted by Greg Jackson, this immersive live stage show blends storytelling, live music, and theatrical design to bring the nation's first 100 years to life – in the heart of historic Philadelphia. Learn more at www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

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**ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY PRESENTS
HISTORY THAT DOESN'T SUCK!
WITH PROFESSOR GREG JACKSON,
AT THE KIMMEL CENTER,
MAY 9, 2026**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (April 22, 2026) – Ensemble Arts Philly presents *History That Doesn't Suck!*, the acclaimed multimedia live stage show created and hosted by historian, professor, and podcast host, **Professor Greg Jackson**, at the Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, May 9, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. Adapted from Jackson's chart-topping podcast of the same name, he transforms America's first 100 years into 100 exhilarating minutes of immersive storytelling, live music, and theatrical stagecraft, offering audiences an engaging and deeply human exploration of the American Revolution through the Civil War.

Over the course of the performance, Jackson brings to life what he calls "The Unlikely Union" – the struggle, contradictions, and triumphs of a young nation striving to form, define, and reform itself. Rejecting a dry, two-dimensional view of history, the production centers around richly drawn, relatable human stories that illuminate both well-known and overlooked moments from the nation's founding through the Civil War. The live production fuses Jackson's storytelling with an original musical score performed on violin, cello, and guitar, alongside dynamic lighting, sound design, and animated video. Together, these elements create a fully immersive theatrical experience that brings history off the page and onto the stage.

“History without stories is forgettable. I adapted *History That Doesn’t Suck!* for the stage for the same reason I first created the podcast: to bring important, relevant stories from the past – both well-known and forgotten – to life,” said Jackson. “I reject the idea that history must be a dry, stuffy, ivory-tower subject. Stories let us push past names and dates. Simply put, good history doesn’t have to be told in a way that sucks.”

During the show, Professor Jackson tells the audience “I’m not interested in a two-dimensional history of gods or demons. I want a three-dimensional one, with flawed, relatable mortals. A history that reminds me what a miracle our unlikely union is; a history that reminds me we are stronger when we remember, as Ely Parker so rightly put it, that ‘we are all Americans.’ That, to me, is history that doesn’t suck.”

“This production brings history off the page and onto the stage in a way that’s bold, engaging, and genuinely fun,” said Frances Egler, Vice President of Theatrical Programming and Presentations. “With over 1,500 presentations and performances each year across a variety of genres, we’re excited to welcome audiences to this fresh experience, the opportunity to see the past through a new lens that honors our city’s role at the heart of American history.”

The show is nonpartisan and has no political agenda, with the sole goal of making accurate, scholarly researched American history more accessible and engaging through live performance. *History That Doesn’t Suck!* previously toured in 2023 with 28 performances across 14 states and Washington, D.C., receiving standing ovations from audiences across the political spectrum.

Jackson holds a PhD in history and is a tenured Associate Professor and Senior Fellow in National Security Studies, as well as Fellow of Integrated Studies at Utah Valley University. He also is a frequent commentator in film documentaries including the 2022 HISTORY® Channel three-night event *Abraham Lincoln*, which was executive produced by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Doris Kearns Goodwin and featured former President Barack Obama, among other history scholars.

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Other featured upcoming performances include ***Shucked*** (April 21–May 3, 2026, Forrest Theatre); ***Bat Out of Hell*** (May 1 & 2, 2026, Miller Theater); ***WXPN Welcomes Rhiannon Giddens*** (May 5, 2026, Miller Theater); ***Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis*** (May 26, 2026, Marian Anderson Hall); ***Chicago*** (May 12–17, 2026, Forrest Theatre); and ***The Outsiders*** (May 26–June 7, 2026, Academy of Music).

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased online at www.ensembleartsphilly.org, by calling 215-893-1999, or in person at the Academy of Music Box Office (240 S. Broad Street) daily from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. For more information, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

***History That Doesn’t Suck!* with Professor Greg Jackson**

Perelman Theater inside the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
Saturday, May 9, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

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ABOUT ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY

For more information about ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

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