

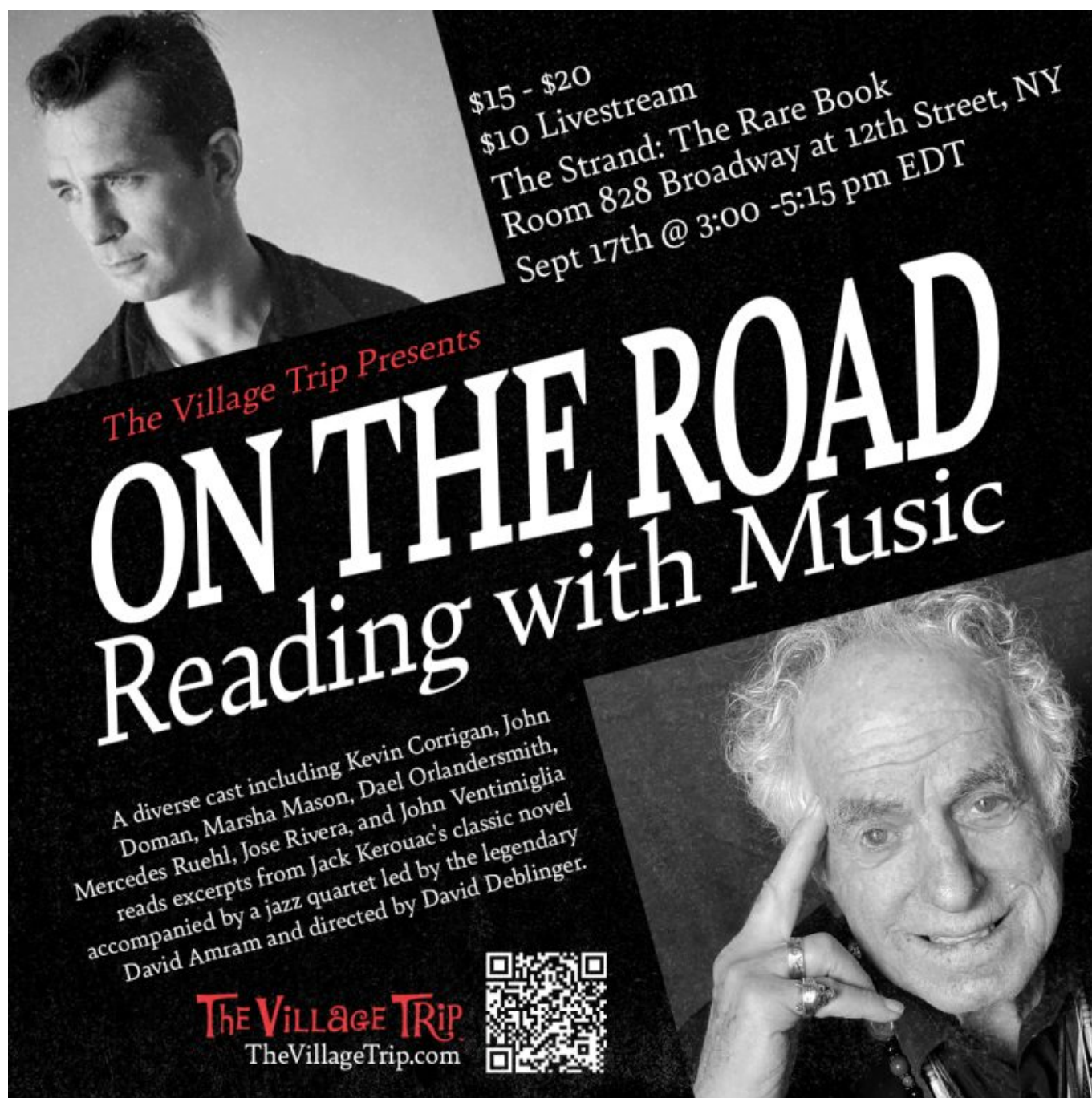


The Village Sun

REAL NEWS FOR THE COMMUNITY

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The Village Trip Presents

ON THE ROAD

Reading with Music

A diverse cast including Kevin Corrigan, John Doman, Marsha Mason, Dael Orlandersmith, Mercedes Ruehl, Jose Rivera, and John Ventimiglia reads excerpts from Jack Kerouac's classic novel accompanied by a jazz quartet led by the legendary David Amram and directed by David Deblinger.

THE VILLAGE TRIP
TheVillageTrip.com

\$15 - \$20
\$10 Livestream
The Strand: The Rare Book
Room 828 Broadway at 12th Street, NY
Sept 17th @ 3:00 -5:15 pm EDT



David Amram, lower right, will provide music and remiscences, as only he can, of his friend Jack Kerouac at the Strand event.

A long, strange trip with Jack: Strand reading will bring Kerouac's 'On the Road' to life

SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

BY DAVID DEBLINGER | When the organizers of The Village Trip arts festival asked me to direct a reading of excerpts from “On the Road,” by Jack Kerouac, I got so excited. Probably because 37 years ago, while reading the book for a course at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, I happened to try, for the first — and only — time, LSD. The two experiences melded in what was, thankfully, a beautiful experience, that resonates with me still.

My thought for the reading was to get a group of diverse artists together, to read this novel from 1957. I was told that the legendary David Amram, who had played music behind Kerouac when he read from the book 65 years ago, would do the same for our production with his current quartet (which includes his son Adam). And this would take place at the Strand Book Store, where Kerouac was known to have read his work.

I teach acting at HB Studio, and asked three incredible artists who also teach there — the actors Mercedes Ruehl, Marsha Mason and actor/playwright Dael Orlandersmith — to join our cast. Each enthusiastically agreed.

Then an old colleague of mine — the great playwright and screenwriter Jose Rivera — who had written the screenplay for the 2012 “On the Road” movie based on the book, immediately and excitedly agreed to participate, much to my surprise.

Then another four amazing actors — John Ventimiglia, John Doman, Kevin Corrigan and Stephanie Berry — also signed on, without hesitation.





Clockwise from rear right, David Amram with Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Larry Rivers and Jack Kerouac. (Courtesy David Amram)

Why were all these talented artists eager to get involved? Well, on the day of the event (Sat., Sept. 17), each may share a bit about that before they read.

I'm still thinking about that acid trip I had so long ago. In the middle of it, I remembered the book I was reading at the time and it was like a nuclear bomb going off in my brain. Words started streaming from my lips, astonishing my fellow travelers on that trip. And although I cannot remember much about those words, they put today's moment — the endless list of negative 2022 things and the challenges that make us want to close off, shut down and run away — in a new perspective.





David Deblinger is the director of the reading.

Watching the news today makes us want to distance ourselves from other people, from the world itself. “On the Road” does exactly the opposite. Of the many beautiful emotions it elicits in us, its readers, the most important is CURIOSITY. The book is brimming with a joyous fervor to connect — carnally, intellectually, spiritually. There’s such great compassion, wonder and awe mixed with a mess of egos crashing, behaving miserably and then, at the next moment, grace. The urgency of the now drives this journey, as well as myriad threads of stories and characters, loaded with nuance and humanity.

I feel Kerouac is telling us to savor every single moment, as if we don’t know which will be our last. And one important road to the sublime is to play and dance and sing. It’s so perfect that as people gather at the Strand on Sept. 17 to listen to such an extraordinary group of artists share these stories, they will be soaked with the sound of jazz improvisation changing the room, bringing us all into another zone.

As you can tell, I’m pretty enthused. Especially because it feels like this event is less about pizazz or celebrity, and more about the sacred power of words, and music and story — all happening live in a room where folks have gathered. A room where every soul’s voice, not just those sharing, but those listening as well...where every single one...matters.

“On the Road’: Reading with Music,” produced by The Village Trip festival in collaboration with HB Studio, at the Strand Book Store, Rare Book Room, 828 Broadway, at W. 12th Street, Sat., Sept. 17, from 3 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. For tickets (\$15 to \$20) via Eventbrite, [click here](#). The event will be livestreamed for those unable to attend; check The Village Trip [Web site](#) for details.