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DIVE INTO THE HORNETS' NEST AT GEVA THEATRE CENTER

Geva's nationally recognized program of thought-provoking theatre begins on December 12 with Martin Zimmerman's *On the Exhale*.

Rochester, N.Y., November 10, 2016 - Few experiences can ignite a great conversation like a thrilling night in the theatre. **The Hornets' Nest** series has theatre-goers itching for that conversation.

The Hornets' Nest series of script-in-hand readings with professional actors and directors returns with three plays investigating the most challenging and controversial ethical dilemmas of our time. Following each reading, audience members will have the opportunity to engage in open discussion with key figures from the Rochester community. Since its inception in 2007, the Hornets' Nest series of readings has become nationally recognized and lauded as one of the most innovative theatrical initiatives in the country.

The 2016-2017 series begins on **December 12** with ***On the Exhale* by Martin Zimmerman**. For years, a college professor has feared being shot by a disgruntled student. Now, in the aftermath of a violent tragedy, as she campaigns for stronger regulations governing assault weapons, she finds peace and consolation just where she least expects it. Should guns – or certain types of guns – be more strictly regulated in the U.S.? Do citizens have the right to purchase any weapon that helps them feel safe?

Martín Zimmerman is a multi-ethnic, bilingual playwright and screenwriter whose plays include *Seven Spots On The Sun*, *White Tie Ball*, *The Making Of A Modern Folk Hero*, *The Solid Sand Below*, and *Let Me Count The Ways*, and have been produced or developed at The Kennedy Center, Goodman Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse In The Park, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, Alley Theatre, Roundabout Underground, LCT3, New York Theatre Workshop, Victory Gardens Theater, The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Marin Theatre Company, The Playwrights' Center, Alliance Theatre, A.C.T. (Seattle), PlayPenn, Icicle Creek Theatre Festival, American Theater Company, The Theatre @ Boston Court, Chicago Dramatists, Primary Stages, Teatro Vista, Ojai Playwrights Conference, Playwrights Foundation, Cara Mía Theatre Co, Seven Devils Playwrights Conference, The City of Chicago's

Department of Cultural Affairs, Theatre Row, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Borderlands Theater, Source Festival, The Gift, Collaboraction, Red Tape, The University of Texas at Austin, and Duke University with upcoming projects at Roundabout Underground, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, and Milwaukee Repertory Theater. A recipient of the Terrence McNally New Play Award, Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award Citation, Humanitas Prize New Voices Award, Sky Cooper New American Play Prize, McKnight Advancement Grant, Jerome Fellowship, Carl Djerassi Playwriting Fellowship, and the National New Play Network's Smith Prize, Martín was a Staff Writer on Netflix's "Narcos," is a Story Editor on the upcoming Netflix Series "Ozark," has been the Alliance for Latino Theater Artists (ALTA) Artist of the Month, was a member of the 2011-2012 Playwrights' Unit at Goodman Theatre, is a Playwright in Residence at Teatro Vista, a Resident Playwright at Chicago Dramatists, and has been a finalist for the Keneda Competition and Heideman Award. Mr. Zimmerman received his M.F.A. in Playwriting from the University of Texas at Austin, his B.A. in Theater Studies and B.S. in Economics from Duke University.

Following the reading of *On the Exhale*, audience members will have the opportunity to discuss the questions that the play poses with a panel of members of the community brought together specifically for this event:

The play reading is at 7:00pm in the Fielding Stage. Tickets are free and, due to the popularity of this series, are limited to two per person. Reservations are recommended. Due to anticipated demand, all unclaimed tickets will be released at 6:45pm on the day of performance. Patron discretion is advised: *On the Exhale* deals with adult subject matter. To reserve tickets phone the Box Office: (585) 232-Geva (4382) or reserve online at www.gevatheatre.org.

The Hornets Nest series continues with *The Christians* by Lucas Hnath on March 20, 2017 and *Black and Blue* by Sean Lewis on May 8, 2017.

The Fielding Stage is supported in part by the Gouvernet Arts Fund at The Rochester Area Community Foundation. Leadership support for the Hornet's Nest is provided by The Mary S. Mulligan Charitable Trust, Jack and Barbara Kraushaar, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and The LGBT Giving Circle at The Rochester Area Community Foundation.

GEVA THEATRE CENTER

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre Center is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs and services of a national standard. As Rochester's leading professional theatre, Geva Theatre Center is the most attended regional theatre in New York State, and one of the 25 most subscribed in the country, serving up to 160,000 patrons annually, including more than 16,000 students.

The 522-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage is home to a wide variety of performances, from musicals to American and world classics. The 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage is home to Geva's own series of contemporary drama, comedy and musical theatre; Geva Comedy Improv; Geva's New Play Reading Series and the Hornets' Nest - an innovative play-reading series facilitating community-wide discussion on controversial topics. In addition, the Nextstage hosts visiting companies of both local and international renown.

Geva Theatre Center offers a wide variety of educational, outreach and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Since 1995, the organization has been under the artistic direction of Mark Cuddy.

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