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## DIVE INTO THE HORNETS' NEST AT GEVA THEATRE CENTER

**Geva's nationally-recognized program of thought-provoking theatre concludes on April 9 with *Buyer Beware* by Michael Weller**

**Rochester, N.Y., March 28, 2018** - 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 investigates the most challenging and controversial ethical dilemmas of our time. Following the 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 2017-2018 series concludes on **April 9** with ***Buyer Beware* by Michael Weller** and **directed by Jim Frangione**. When Ron, a Brandeis College student, discovers the work of Lenny Bruce, he's eager to share this surprising, boundary-pushing comedic material with his fellow students. But some of them don't appreciate Bruce's politically incorrect language, and soon Ron finds himself at the center of a controversy that threatens his friendships, his scholarship, and the college's fundraising efforts. In this age of extremism, what kinds of conversations can we have on college campuses? What role do artists play in provoking conversation and progress?

**Michael Weller** is the author of 40+ produced plays. Among his best known: *Moonchildren*, *Loose Ends*, *Spoils of War*, and *Fifty Words*. He is the author of the screenplays for *Hair*, *Ragtime*, *Lost Angels* and *Spoils of War*, and was a writer/producer on the television series "Once and Again." He is currently developing a series called "Dirty Laundry" for Levinson-Fontana. A musical from the Boris Pasternak novel *Dr Zhivago*, for which he wrote the book (Des McAnuff director, Lucy Simon music, Amy Powers and Michael Korie lyrics), opened on Broadway in April 2015, and his adaptation of the novel *The Fill Catastrophe* by David Carkeet, premiered at the Contemporary American Theatre Festival in July/August 2015. His work has earned an Academy Award

nomination, an N.A.A.C.P. Outstanding Contribution Award, Critics Outer Circle Award, a Rockefeller Foundation Grant and a Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays Award, and the Helen Merrill Award. The Broken Watch Theatre Company named their playhouse in his honor. He is President of the Writer's Guild Initiative, of the Writers Guild of America, East, and is a permanent member of the council of the Dramatists Guild of America.

Following the reading of *Buyer Beware*, 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: *Buyer Beware* deals with adult subject matter. To reserve tickets phone the Box Office: (585) 232-Geva (4382) or reserve online at [www.gevatheatre.org](http://www.gevatheatre.org).

The Hornets' Nest line up for the 2018-2019 Season will be announced in September.

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, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

#### **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 516-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.

**\*ENDS\***