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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GEVA THEATRE CENTER HOSTS YOUNG WRITERS SHOWCASE

Rochester, N.Y., April 16, 2018 - Geva Theatre Center hosts the **Young Writers Showcase** on **Saturday, May 5 at 3:00pm** with script-in-hand readings taking place in the Fielding Stage. The Young Writers Showcase gives young area playwrights the opportunity to have their works read by actors with the help of Geva directors and dramaturgs.

An invitation was extended in December soliciting work by writers between the ages of 13 and 18, now living or having lived within the six-county area: Monroe, Livingston, Wayne, Ontario, Genesee and Orleans. Six plays were chosen to participate in this year's showcase.

The selected young playwrights include **Tali Beckwith-Cohen** (School of the Arts), **Samantha Dickson** (Bishop Kearney), **Victoria Graziano** (School of the Arts), **Blake Lombardo** (Wayne Central High School), **Mina Stevens** (Barker Road Middle School), and **Salma Marte Velez** (Brighton High School).

Young Writers Showcase

Saturday, May 5, 3:00pm

Broken Vase, by Blake Lombardo

The Inevitable Choice, by Tali Beckwith-Cohen

Seasonal Sorrow, by Samantha Dickson

Reprise, by Victoria Graziano

Just Like That, by Mina Stevens

The Strife of the Critical, by Salma Marte Velez

Tickets for the Young Writers Showcase are free, but must be reserved in advance.

Call the Geva Box Office at (585) 232-Geva (4382) to reserve tickets.

This program is made possible with support from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; The Dramatists Guild Fund; and the Mary S. Mulligan Charitable Trust.

**For further information or interviews, please contact:
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THE PLAYWRIGHTS

TALI BECKSITH-COHEN is a 9th grade Creative Writing major at School of the Arts. She has acted on stage since age six and is a graduate of the Geva Summer Academy. When not in a show, Tali enjoys singing, writing poetry and fiction, babysitting, and reading outdoors. She would like to thank GEVA for this amazing opportunity, as well as her creative writing teachers for their support and encouragement.

SAMANTHA DICKSON is a junior attending Bishop Kearney High School. She is an avid reader and writer, and aspires to one day publish her own novel. She sees having her play performed at Geva as a wonderful opportunity to gain valuable experience and polish her craft. She looks forward to being able to collaborate with professionals in the field and learn from them to better her own work.

VICTORIA GRAZIANO, an 11th grader currently attending Rochester's School of the Arts, majored in creative writing up until her Junior year of high school. She discovered her passion for music and theatre, and took a leap of courage and pursued piano-- a very rewarding decision. Her play *Reprise* was written to express the struggles that all students of music face and can be applied to people from other walks of life. The play was a great hit, and was featured twice at her school's annual Playwrights Festival.

BLAKE LOMBARDO is a junior at Wayne Central High School. He has been writing seriously since fourth grade. His play "Pure Imagination" was included in last year's Young Writer's Showcase. In his free time, he likes performing in musicals and working behind the scenes at the sound board. He has been in 15 shows. Special thanks to his family and friends, John Barthelmes, Kathy Perconti, Jacquelyn Courtney, and Brennan Saur for supporting him and being inspirations.

MINA STEVENS is an eighth grader at Barker Road Middle School. She has been active in theater since third grade. Some of her favorite roles include The Genie in *Aladdin* and Mrs. Sowerberry in *Oliver*. When she's not busy with school work, Mina enjoys composing music, animating, reading *Scott Pilgrim*, playing her trombone, and participating in the Literary Magazine Club at her school.

SALMA MARTE VÉLEZ is a proud Puerto Rican—who is an avid fan of film, acting, writing, and most creative aspects of the entertainment industry. She attends Brighton High School currently. She is a junior but is graduating early, so is also a senior. She will be heading off to college in the fall of 2018, majoring in film studies due to interest in the industry.

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 Fielding Stage 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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