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

**Geva's nationally recognized program of thought-provoking theatre continues on March 25 with *Lines in the Dust* by Nikkole Salter.**

**Rochester, N.Y., March 14, 2019** - 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 2018-2019 series continues on **March 25** with ***Lines in the Dust* by Nikkole Salter**. When Denitra loses the charter school lottery for her daughter, she must find another way to escape from their underperforming neighborhood school. The answer seems like a risk well worth taking, but may end up requiring a bigger sacrifice than she ever could have imagined. Over a half-century after Brown vs. The Board of Education, how much closer have we come to providing equal educational opportunities for all students? What rights and responsibilities does a school district have to enforce boundaries and regulate enrollment? How far can – or should – a parent go to secure the best for their child?

Playwright **Nikkole Salter** hails from Los Angeles and is an OBIE Award-winning actress and writer who arrived onto the professional scene with her authorship and co-performance (with Danai Gurira) of the Pulitzer Prize-nominated play, *In the Continuum*. For its Off-Broadway run at Primary Stages and the Perry Street Theatre and for its US State Department and Bloomberg sponsored international tour, Ms. Salter received an OBIE Award, and the NY Outer Critics Circle's John Gassner Award for Best New American Play, the Seldes-Kanin fellowship from the Theatre Hall of Fame, and the Global Tolerance Award from the Friends of the United

Nations to name a few. Ms. Salter also received Helen Hayes and Black Theatre Alliance nominations for Best Actress for her performance. *In the Continuum*, published by Samuel French, was pronounced - by the *New York Times*, *Newsday* and *New York Magazine* - as one of the best plays of 2005 and has received over 20 productions across the world to date. As a dramatist, Ms. Salter has written eight full-length plays, been commissioned for full-length work by six institutions, been produced on continents in five countries, and been published in twelve international publications. Her work has appeared in over 20 Off-Broadway, regional and international theatres, and the Crossroads Theatre production of her play *Repairing a Nation* (directed by Marshall Jones, III) was regionally aired during the second season of the WNET program "Theatre Close-Up" on NYC's channel THIRTEEN, WLIC, NJTV. The National Black Theatre production of her play *Carnaval* was nominated for seven AUDELCO awards including Best Playwright and Best Production and won for Best Ensemble Performance. Ms. Salter is a 2014 MAP Fund Grant recipient, a Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Playwrights Conference semi-finalist, USA Fellowship nominee, a two time Playwrights of New York (PoNY) Fellowship nominee, is currently working on commissions from Woolly Mammoth, the National New Play Network/Cleveland Public Theatre, a musical with Networks Productions, and is in development to write the television adaptation of Claude Brown's *New York Times* Bestselling novel, *Manchild in the Promised Land*. Ms. Salter's deep sense of social responsibility led her to co-found (with NSangou Njikam) and serve as Executive Artistic Director of The Continuum Project, Inc., a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that creates innovative artistic programming for community empowerment and enrichment. Their first bi-annual endeavor, The Legacy Program: Residency – an arts education, youth development initiative – launched in 2009 at the William Alexander Middle School in Brooklyn, NY. The Continuum Project, Inc. received the 2010 and 2011 Brooklyn Arts Council Regrant Award (Local Arts), a grant funded by the New York Council on the Arts' Decentralization Program, in support of the LP: Residency. She is an active member of the Actors Equity Association, the Screen Actors Guild/American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, and the Actors Center; and sits on the board of the Theatre Communications Group and on the Council of the Dramatists Guild. She received her B.F.A. in theatre from Howard University and her M.F.A. from New York University's Graduate Acting Program.

The reading of *Lines in the Dust* is directed by **Jasmine B. Gunter** and the cast includes **Esther Winter, Erica Truesdale** and **Torrey Hanson**.

Following the reading of *Lines in the Dust*, audience members will have the opportunity to discuss the questions that the play poses with a panel of members of the community, or "Instigators," 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: *Lines in the Dust* 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 series concludes on May 20, 2019 with *The Kavanaugh Files* by the Verbatim Performance Lab.

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'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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