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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Your Invitation to the Writers' Studio
Geva's Festival of New Theatre 2019
Today's Writers + You = New Stories Onstage

Rochester, N.Y., September 19, 2019 - Geva Theatre Center unveils its line-up for the ***Festival of New Theatre 2019*** to be held in the Fielding Stage from **October 8 – October 20. *FONT 2019*** is a vibrant and innovative mix of new works by some of the most exciting playwrights from across the country and around the corner and is part of Geva's ongoing commitment to developing and producing new work for the American theatre.

FONT 2019 is a celebration of the theatrical imagination, an exciting glimpse into the creative process, and YOUR opportunity to contribute to the future of theatre in Rochester and around the world. During the Festival, you're invited to take a glimpse into the writers' studios as they work on new ideas, tell new stories and explore new forms. And because the readings of new plays are presented concert-style – with actors at music stands, facing the audience – the budget for the set, costumes and other effects is limited only by your imagination! Audiences will also have the unique opportunity for a post-reading discussion with the playwright. Since 2010, Geva's new play programs have developed 61 new plays, leading to over 75 productions around the country and 15 world premieres right here in Rochester.

Geva's **Literary Director/Resident Dramaturg Jenni Werner** commented, "We're thrilled to share these new works with our Rochester community. Two of this year's offerings in **FONT** are Geva commissions, written specifically for Rochester. *Lulu In Rochester*, by Allison Gregory, is the story of two Rochester icons, James Card and Louise Brooks. And *Africantic* was inspired in part by the Son House festival in 2015, as well as visits to some of Rochester's incredible record stores. And I'm personally excited to introduce our audiences to the gorgeous writing of Harrison David Rivers, in his play *The Sea and the Stars. Solitude* was in our Regional Writers Showcase this past spring - we were so interested in the incredible story of Edith Bone that we asked Carolyn Kourofsky to come back and spend more time with us, continuing to develop the script."

Geva's new play programming is funded by the New York State Council on the Arts, the MAP Fund, the Mary S. Mulligan Charitable Trust, and Geva's Annual Fund Donors.

Admission to the *Festival of New Theatre 2019* readings is free, but reservations are required. Call the Geva Theatre Center Box Office at (585) 232- 4382 or visit www.gevatheatre.org for tickets. Play readings sell out quickly, but tickets often become available the night of the performance.

Here is the line-up for the 2019 Festival of New Theatre:

Oct. 8, 7pm

***Solitude* by Carolyn E. Kourofsky**

Directed by Jean Gordon Ryon

Solitude is inspired by the true story of Edith Bone, a doctor and journalist who is unjustly accused of being a British spy in 1949 Hungary. In solitary confinement for seven years, how will she survive?

Oct. 11, 7pm

Rochester Bake-Off

Now in its sixth year! A creative experiment, the outcome of which can never be predicted! Geva will present a challenge to Rochester-area playwrights to create a short piece in just three days, inspired by a uniquely Rochester experience.

Oct. 12 and 13, 3pm

Young Writers Showcase

Five short plays by Rochester-area writers, ages 13-18, are presented in fully staged productions by local theatre artists.

Told You So by Jessi Opett
It's Cold Here by Sophia Milazzo
Semifinals by Mina Stevens
Caprice by Bella Callari
Letters by Heather Hillman

Oct. 16, 7pm

***The Sea and the Stars* by Harrison David Rivers**

Directed by Mikael Burke

Simon is a lifeguard. Finn is terrified of water. Both are adrift in the tiny beach town of Jupiter, heartbroken and caring for families who need them. THE SEA & THE STARS is a play about love, karaoke, and the sea.

Oct. 18, 7pm

***Lulu in Rochester* by Allison Gregory**

Directed by Jessica Kubzansky

Inspired by real-life, *Lulu in Rochester* follows the fascinating partnership between famously reclusive silent-

film star Louise Brooks and acclaimed Eastman Museum film curator James Card. When James persuades his irreverent idol to move to Rochester and watch her celebrated films for the first time, Louise must confront the myths and perceptions that have shaped her life, and shed light on the mystery of why 'Lulu' inexplicably disappeared at the height of her fame.

Oct. 20, 7pm

***Africantic* Created and Performed by Universes**

Africantic is an audiovisual immersive theatrical experience by UNIVERSES, one of the nation's premiere theatre ensembles. Founded in The Bronx in 1995, UNIVERSES is a national Ensemble Theater Company, of multi-disciplined writers and performers of color, who fuse theatre, poetry, dance, jazz, hip hop, politics, down home blues and Spanish boleros to create moving, challenging and entertaining works for the stage.

UNIVERSES has performed at venues throughout the United States and toured extensively worldwide.

Africantic identifies, maps, deconstructs and reconstructs the musical DNA chains that bind us. From the complexities of spiritual ancestral rhythms and chant, across the middle passage into the Americas (where African deities entangle, to this day, in a delicate and vicious dance with Catholic Saints), from work songs and field hollers all the way to today's music, *Africantic* explores the importance of music and the social movements that have shaped us. *Africantic* roots run deep.

For further information, bios of playwrights and directors, photographs, or to arrange interviews, please contact: Dawn Kellogg, Communications Manager, (585) 420-2059.

GEVA THEATRE CENTER

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre Center is a not-for-profit theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs and services of a national standard. As Rochester's flagship professional theatre, Geva 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 20,000 students.

Geva operates two venues – the 516-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage and the 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage. As one of the country's leading theatre companies and a member of the national League of Resident Theatres, Geva produces a varied contemporary repertoire from musicals to world premieres celebrating the rich tapestry of our diverse community. The theatre draws upon the talents of some of the country's top actors, directors, designers and writers who are shaping the American Theatre scene.

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.

For more information: GevaTheatre.org

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