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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GEVA THEATRE CENTER LAUNCHES
RECOGNITION RADIO: AN AUDIO PLAY FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING BLACK VOICES**

***ESL Federal Credit Union Sponsors Geva's 48th Season with
Honorary Season Producer Dr. Dawn Lipson***

Thursday, October 15, 2020. Rochester, N.Y. – Geva Theatre Center proudly announces the first productions of its reimagined 2020-2021 Season. Beginning October 27, Geva will present *Recognition Radio: An Audio Play Festival Celebrating Black Voices*. Local actor and director Esther Winter serves as Creative Producer for the four-play series, with Black writers, directors, dramaturgs and sound designers bringing to life the broad array of Black stories. Geva's Andrew Mark Wilhelm serves as Sound Engineer. The festival reflects the talents of theatre-makers from the Rochester area and across the country.

As a throw-back to long-ago family evenings spent gathered around grand wooden speaker cabinets, the four modern plays of Recognition Radio have been selected and specially adapted for an intimate and immersive listening experience – perfect for chilly nights spent indoors. Access can be purchased per-show or as a discounted package at Recognition-Radio.com. (Geva subscribers should note that the series represents the first two productions of this year's Wilson Stage subscription season.) The festival website also offers exclusive supplemental content related to each production and tips for setting the mood at home to enhance the listening enjoyment of each play.

Beginning with the release of *Feeding Beatrice: A Gothic Tale*, the plays will be released to ticketholders in two-week intervals. All plays will be available for listening through December 31. The media sponsors for Recognition Radio are WDKX 103.9 FM and WXXI.

More About Geva's 2020-2021 Season

From January through July of 2021, Geva plans to offer five live productions on the Wilson Stage – four of these included in the 20-21 subscription package, and a fifth “bonus” play to replace last season’s cancelled production of *Looks Like Pretty*. Because of the pandemic, there will be no production of the annual holiday classic *A Christmas Carol* this year.

All live performances beginning in January will be conducted in accordance with public health guidelines, including distanced seating, masking, modified entry procedures, and enhanced cleaning protocols, as required. Geva will offer ticketholders on-demand video as an alternative to in-person attendance. The 2020-21 Fielding Stage season has been cancelled due to the smaller size of the Fielding auditorium where appropriate physical distancing isn’t possible. Those who have already subscribed for the 2020-2021 Fielding Stage series will have the option to transfer their subscriptions in full to the 2021-2022 Season.

Since Geva’s 2014-2015 Season, **ESL Federal Credit Union** has sponsored the Wilson Stage Series, along with the Fielding Stage Series in recent years. In its 100th year, the financial institution continues its commitment as the Presenting Sponsor for the Geva Theatre Center 2020-2021 Season. **Dr. Dawn Lipson** will once again serve as Honorary Season Producer as she has since 2016.

All plays, artists, schedules and prices are subject to change.

Recognition Radio: An Audio Play Festival **Celebrating Black Voices**

Feeding Beatrice: A Gothic Tale

Beginning October 27

Written by Kirsten Greenidge

Directed by Daniel J. Bryant

Sound Designer: David Kelepha Samba

Dramaturg: Francisca Da Silveira

In order to afford the large suburban home they've dreamt about, June and Lurie agree to live on a diet of bread and margarine for the foreseeable future. Even the arrival of a mysterious houseguest won't dampen their excitement at being homeowners – that is until the strange intruder's innocent requests turn into vicious demands. As the couple becomes increasingly haunted by her presence, they are confronted with the unforeseen realities of life in an all-White neighborhood and the true cost of the American Dream.

The Bleeding Class

Beginning November 27

Written by Chisa Hutchinson

Directed by Jade King Carroll

Sound Designer: Justin Ellington

Dramaturg: Theresa M. Davis

In this pointedly witty – and oh so timely – socio-political thriller, a Dominican-American escort from the Bronx and a Black doctor try to save the world from the sudden outbreak of a deadly plague. With political tensions running high and everyone desperate for an immediate cure, how many rules will be broken, and who will get hurt in the process?

we are continuous

Beginning November 24

Written by Harrison David Rivers

Dramaturg: Theresa M. Davis

Sound Designer: Christie Chiles Twillie

Dramaturg: Otis Ramsey-Zöe

Ora and her son Simon are close: she thinks about him and he calls, he knows that she's always got his back. They've even mostly managed to weather Simon's coming out. But will his HIV diagnosis be their undoing? By turns intimate, funny, and hopeful, *we are continuous* explores how people can change and how love can evolve.

The Resurrection of Michelle Morgan

Beginning December 8

Written and Performed by Christina Anderson

Directed by Robbie McCauley

Dramaturg: Pascale Florestal

In 2017, playwright Christina Anderson imagined herself in a not-too-distant American future, working 10 gigs just to (barely) get by. When a harrowing experience leaves her disillusioned with an art form she once loved, she turns to her partner, Alex, and the larger community for refuge. But a surprise commission for a new play reminds her of what she's lost, and what she must do to heal age-old wounds and reclaim her voice.

About Geva Theatre Center

Since 1973, the not-for-profit Geva Theatre Center has been Rochester's professional theatre home, offering patrons the opportunity to enjoy the work of the country's top artists in an intimate setting right in their own community.

Because professional regional theatre cannot be sustained on ticket-sales alone, Geva Theatre Center thanks those generous individuals and businesses that have already committed to making the 2020-2021 Season a memorable one: ESL Federal Credit Union and Dr. Dawn Lipson.

Subscriptions for the full 2020-2021 Wilson Stage Season are on sale now. Complete information about dates and single-ticket sales will be released on an ongoing basis as the theatre continues to monitor guidelines set by local, state and federal authorities. To receive timely news and information, patrons and supporters are encouraged to visit GevaTheatre.org and register for email updates. Announcements will also be shared regularly on Geva's social media channels.



FAST FACTS

Artists:

- Nearly 6,200 actors, directors, choreographers, designers, musical directors, musicians, stage managers, and writers have worked at Geva since it was founded in 1972.
- Among Geva's notable alumni are:
 - 1 Pulitzer Prize nominee
 - 4 Academy Award Nominees: Josh Brolin, Robert Downey, Jr., Samuel L. Jackson & Robert Vaughn
 - 23 Tony Award winners and 77 Tony nominees
 - 34 Drama Desk Award Winners and 94 Drama Desk nominees
 - 11 Emmy Award Winners and 47 Emmy nominees.
- Geva casts the country's top artists from auditions held in New York City and Rochester.
- Geva houses out-of-town actors, directors and artists in apartments just 150 steps away from the theatre, which the theatre now owns.
- Geva provides every out-of-town actor, director and artist with a familiarization packet containing information on all there is to see and do in Rochester and the surrounding area.
- Actors who perform at Geva are Rochester residents for an average of eight weeks and become part of the fabric of the community, dining in area restaurants, shopping in area stores and visiting area attractions.

Writers and New Plays

- Geva has presented approximately 360 play readings and workshops since its inception. More than 70 Geva-developed plays have had subsequent productions around the country and the globe.
- In subsequent productions, plays that premiere at Geva are recognized on the title page of programs, saying "Originally produced at Geva Theatre Center, Rochester, NY."
- Play readings are free and open to the public, and most are followed by a discussion between the audience and the playwright.
- Geva's nationally recognized and innovative "Hornets' Nest" series of play readings uses theatre to facilitate community discussions on contemporary topics.

Productions:

- Geva has made over 540 fully-produced productions of plays and musicals since 1972.
- What audiences see onstage is the culmination of months of work. The artistic team for each show begins collaborating up to 12 months in advance of the first performance on every aspect and detail of the production.
- It takes over 11,000 direct labor hours to produce each show at Geva.

Geva and Geva's Staff:

- As a member of the national League of Resident Theatres (LORT), Geva operates under agreements between Actors Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the US; the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, an independent national labor union; and United Scenic Artists (Local USA-829), a union of scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers.
- Geva is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Visit Rochester, the Rochester Business Alliance (RBA), Rochester Downtown Development Corporation (RDDC), Arts & Cultural Council for Greater Rochester, TheatreROCS and the Washington Square Neighborhood Association.

Economic Impact:

- In a normal season, Geva operates on a budget of approximately \$8 million, 87% of which is directed toward artistic, production, education, literary and community program expenses.
- Geva's annual economic impact exceeds \$11 million. Since 1972, Geva has contributed over \$260 million in economic activity to the community.
- 86% of Geva's direct expenses are made in New York State, with 71% in the Rochester area.
- Geva's education and work-force training programs serve over 40,000 youth and adults each year.
- Geva welcomes 160,000 people through its doors each season and over its 48-year history has served over 5 million theatergoers.