

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Geva Theatre Center launches new season with “Airness”** Critically-acclaimed comedy runs Jan. 11 – Feb. 6 on the Wilson Stage

**Rochester, N.Y.** – Geva Theatre Center will kick off its 49th season with the opening of “Airness” — a comedy about the world of competitive air guitar — on Tuesday, Jan. 11. The production will run through Feb. 6 on the Wilson Stage.

Featuring over-the-top air guitar solos set to a classic rock soundtrack, “Airness” is about Nina, a bona fide guitar player who enters her first air guitar competition. She thinks winning will be a breeze, but after meeting up with a group of lovable air guitar nerds, each hell-bent on becoming the next champion, she learns there is more to this fringe obsession than meets the eye. As Nina gets drawn deeper into the scene, she discovers what achieving the elusive quality known as “airness” really means. “Airness” is an exuberant reminder that everything we need to rock is already inside us. “Santa Barbara Independent” described it as “an amazing piece of theatre that will get you on your feet,” and DC Metro Theatre Arts called it “an all-out comedy that’s fricking funny, hella heartfelt, and badass brilliant.”

“Airness” is written by Chelsea Marcantel (“Everything is Wonderful,” “Saint Joan,” “Tiny Houses”). It premiered at the 41<sup>st</sup> Humana Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville in 2017 and won the American Theatre Critics Association’s M. Elizabeth Osborn New Play Award in 2018. Most of Marcantel’s work centers around human interaction in small societies, especially in fringe groups. “I enjoy showing people something that’s real,” she said about “Airness.” “If they didn’t know, they didn’t know, but I want people to look at all the weird things that humanity does and how they can identify it with something they do in their lives.”

Geva's production of "Airness" is directed by the theatre's director of education and artist-in-residence, Skip Greer, who was inspired by the play's theme of conquering self-doubt. "The life of an artist can often be one of learning to grapple with that little pixie of judgment that perches on all of our shoulders. Do you ever hear him sitting over there, dangling his feet and chatting in your ear? He's the one that causes us to doubt, whispers to us that we don't really know what we're doing and shouts that we'll look like a fool for even trying, said Greer. "I jumped at the chance to knock that little pixie off my shoulder, chase him out the front door, and slam it firmly behind him."

The production features Brittany Anikka Liu (Nina), Anna Crivelli (Cannibal Queen), Robert David Grant (Shreddy Eddy), Max Sangerman (Facebender), Rasell Holt (Golden Thunder), and Matt Burns (Announcer). Gabriella Anne Pérez (movement coordinator), Rob Koharchik (scenic designer), María-Cristina Fusté (lighting designer), Casey McNamara (costume designer), Michael A. King (wig designer), Andrew Mark Wilhelm (sound designer), Jenni Werner (dramaturg), Katherine Thesing (production stage manager), Nolan Todd (stage manager), and Shannon Toot (assistant stage manager) complete the creative team.

Tickets for "Airness" are on sale now and can be purchased by calling 585-232-4382, online at [GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org), or in person at the box office Tuesday through Sunday from noon to 8 p.m. Single tickets and season subscriptions are on sale now.

Geva's 49th Season is sponsored by ESL Federal Credit Union. Dr. Dawn Lipson serves as honorary season producer. Media sponsors for "Airness" are 98.9 The Buzz and "CITY Magazine."

The season continues with "Constellations," opening Feb. 2 on the Fielding Stage. The production is artistic director Mark Cuddy's final directorial project before retiring. His successor will be announced in January.

Geva is taking special care to keep everyone safe, including requiring proof of either COVID vaccination or a negative test for entry, along with masking. Patrons can find the theatre's current indoor safety procedures at [GevaTheatre.org/covid-safety](http://GevaTheatre.org/covid-safety).

## **About Geva Theatre Center**

**Geva Theatre Center** is a nonprofit, professional theatre company in downtown Rochester, New York, offering world-class productions and extensive additional programming. Founded in 1972, Geva is the most well-attended regional theatre in New York State with one of the 25 largest subscription bases among regional theatres in the country. Geva serves as many as 160,000 patrons annually, including more than 20,000 students.

Geva's 517-seat Wilson Stage and 180-seat Fielding Stage each offer a wide-ranging collection of drama, comedy and musical theatre, from classics to world premieres. The company also offers a broad slate of educational, outreach and literary programming to enrich audiences, students and artists of all ages and disciplines. Since 1995, Geva has been under the artistic direction of Mark Cuddy.

Geva Theatre Center sits on the ancestral and unceded territory of the O-non-dowa-gah, or "the people of the Great Hill." In English, they are known as the Seneca people, "the keeper of the western door." They have stewarded this land through generations, and Geva pays respect and gives thanks to their elders, past and present.

**Find out more about Geva Theatre Center** at [GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org) or by connecting with us on social media. Facebook: [facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter](https://facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter), Twitter: [@gevatheatre](https://twitter.com/gevatheatre), Instagram: [@gevatheatre](https://instagram.com/gevatheatre), LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center](https://linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center).

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