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Geva Theatre Center presents ‘Yoga Play’
Satirical new comedy runs May 10 – June 5 on the Wilson Stage

Rochester, N.Y. – Geva Theatre Center presents “Yoga Play,” a satirical comedy by Dipika Guha, beginning Tuesday, May 10. The co-production with Syracuse Stage, directed by Melissa Crespo, runs through June 5 on the Wilson Stage.

“Yoga Play” is set in the corporate headquarters of athleisure giant Jojomon. When a scandal sends the brand into freefall, Joan, the newly hired CEO, risks everything on a wild plan to recover the company’s earnings and reputation. The acclaimed comedy confronts cultural appropriation and the search for authenticity in a world determined to sell enlightenment. The Washington Post called it “a zinging satire.”

Playwright Dipika Guha was born in Calcutta and grew up in Russia and the United Kingdom. After making her way to the United States to study playwriting, she later earned her M.F.A. at Yale. Now based in Los Angeles, Guha’s plays have been produced at theaters across the country. In an interview with Playwrights’ Center, she explained that most of her plays deal with displacement. “As someone who’s adapted to new places so many times, I’ve seen how much of my identity I’ve either adopted or dropped for survival reasons,” she said. “If this is true for all of us, then how do we really know who we are? I find myself returning to this question urgently in my work, whether it’s through comedy or through a more serious or lyrical lens.” Guha has also written for television shows “Black Monday,” “Sneaky Pete” and “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel.”

“Yoga Play” was commissioned by South Coast Repertory in Costa Mesa, California, where it premiered in 2017. Asked to write a play about Orange County, Guha said she had been thinking about California as a place where the desire for wealth and authenticity are equally important. “Yoga seemed to be at the nexus of that,” she observed in an interview for Ma-Yi Theatre. “‘Yoga Play’ is

about yoga, capitalism and what it means to be yourself,” she added in her Playwrights’ Center interview.

Director Melissa Crespo returns to Geva after directing “Native Gardens” — another Geva and Syracuse Stage co-production — in 2019. She said she is happy to be directing such a funny play “because we all need to laugh right now. ‘Yoga Play’ mirrors what we feel when we work too much and prioritize greed over humanity,” she observed. “It encourages us to slow down, to meditate and have more empathy for each other.” Described as one of “the hardest working stage directors in America” by American Theatre magazine, Crespo was appointed as associate artistic director of Syracuse Stage in September 2021.

“Yoga Play” features a cast of six: Octavia Chavez-Richmond (Romola), Andrea Cirie (Joan), Jeffrey Blair Cornell (Guruji), Rishan Dhamija (Raj), Christopher Gurr (John), and Ricky Pak (Fred). Ann Beyersdorfer (scenic designer) Johanna Pan (costume designer), Jeanette Oi-Suk Yew (lighting designer), Mark Van Hare (sound designer), Lisa Renkel (projection designer), Susan Cameron (dialect coach), Sidikha Ashraf (dramaturg), Caitlin Sullivan (associate director), Darlene Miyakawa (stage manager), and Katherine Thesing (assistant stage manager) complete the creative team.

Tickets for “Yoga Play” can be purchased by calling 585-232-4382, online at [GevaTheatre.org](https://www.gevatheatre.org), or in person at the box office Tuesday through Sunday from noon to 8 p.m.

Geva’s 49th Season is sponsored by ESL Federal Credit Union. Dr. Dawn Lipson serves as honorary season producer. “Yoga Play” is presented with support from associate producer St. John’s and media sponsor Radio 95.1.

The season concludes with “Sister Act,” June 21 – July 24 on the Wilson Stage.

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](https://www.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 Onöndowa'ga, 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 or by connecting with us on social media. Facebook: facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter, Twitter: [@gevatheatre](https://twitter.com/gevatheatre), Instagram: [@gevatheatre](https://instagram.com/gevatheatre), LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center.

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