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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## GEVA'S 47<sup>TH</sup> SEASON CONTINUES WITH **ONCE**

*ESL Federal Credit Union 2019-2020 Season continues  
with the captivating, Tony Award-winning musical.*

**Rochester, N.Y., January 24, 2020** – Geva Theatre Center presents *Once*, with a book by Enda Walsh; Music and Lyrics by **Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová**, based on the motion picture written and directed by **John Carney** and directed by **Mark Cuddy**, in the Elaine P. Wilson Stage from **February 19 through March 22**.

**The story of a guy who gave up on love and music, and the captivating woman who inspired him to dream again. He spends his days working at his father's Dublin fix-it shop and his nights playing music in pubs. He is on the verge of giving up music altogether when he meets her: a Czech immigrant who refuses to let him abandon his guitar. Over the course of a week, this friendship grows into a musical collaboration and, ultimately, a powerful (but complicated) love. Featuring all of the magical songs from the critically-acclaimed 2007 film, including the Oscar-winning "Falling Slowly," this beautiful, joyously melodic show celebrates the power of music to connect us all.**

*Once* began as a 2007 Irish film written and directed by John Carney. The film starred Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová as two struggling musicians in Dublin. Hansard and Irglová had previously performed music as Swell Season and composed and performed the film's original songs. *Once* spent years in development in the Irish Film Board and was made for a budget of €112,000. It was a commercial success and received several awards include the 2007 Independent Spirit Award for best Foreign Film. Hansard and Irglová's song, "Falling Slowly," won the 2008 Academy Award for Best Original Song and the soundtrack received a Grammy Award nomination.

*Once* premiered in a workshop at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA, in April, 2011. It subsequently transferred to New York Theatre Workshop where it made its Off-Broadway debut in December, 2011. It received Lortel nominations for Outstanding Musical, Outstanding Director, Outstanding Choreographer, Outstanding Scenic Design, Outstanding Lighting Design, and Outstanding Sound Design and won NY Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical. *Once* began previews on Broadway at the Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre from February 28, 2012 The production received 11 Tony Award nominations, winning eight,

including Best Musical. It won the Drama League Award for Distinguished Production of a Musical for 2011–12. The production played 1,167 regular performances and 22 previews by closing time in 2015. *Once* had its West End debut at the Phoenix Theatre, London in 2013.

This production of *Once* is a co-production with Syracuse Stage where it will run from April 15 to May 3.

Making their Geva debuts in *Once* are **Billy Cohen** (tour of *Soul Doctor*, *Billy Elliot* at Goodspeed and *Once* at Engeman Theatre) as Svec; **Elliot Greer** (Chicago production of *Miss Saigon*, *Held Momentarily* at Soho Playhouse) as Guy; **Maggie Hollinbeck** (National Tours of *Once* and *Annie*) as Baruška; **Kent M. Lewis** (National Tours of *Billy Elliot* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, the Las Vegas production of *Mamma Mia*, and the Off-Broadway premiere of Lerner and Loewe's *The Day Before Spring*) as Eamon; **Adrian Lopez** (National Tour of *Spamilton: An American Parody!*) as Angrej; **Benjamin Magnuson** (Broadway production and National Tour of *Once*, 2005 Broadway revival of *Sweeney Todd*, 2009 Broadway revival of *Guys and Dolls*) as Bank Manager; **Nicholas Mongiardo-Cooper** (Off-Broadway productions of *Rothschild & Sons*, *Lonesome Traveler*, and *Julius Caesar*) as Billy; **Rachel Mulcahy** (*Bright Star* at Florida Studio Theatre; *Once* at Northern Stage; Ivoryton Playhouse and The Engeman Theater; the National Tour of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*) as Ex-Girlfriend; **Kristopher Saint-Louis** (*Godspell* at Saint Michaels Playhouse and *Once* at Pioneer Theatre Company.) as Emcee; **Samantha Sayah** (National Tour of *Junie B. Jones*, Regional productions of *West Side Story*, *Pippin*, *James and the Giant Peach* at Summer Theatre of New Canaan; *In the Heights* at Pittsburgh Musical Theatre) as Girl; **E J Zimmerman** (West End production of *Les Misérables*, National Tour of *Avenue Q*) as Reza; and **Kurt Zischke** (Broadway, Off-Broadway and National Tours of *Signs Of Life*, *Whistle Down The Wind*, *The Buddy Holly Story*, *The Three Sisters*, *Antigone*, *King Lear*, *A Doll's House*,) as Da.

*Once* is directed by **Mark Cuddy**, celebrating his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Geva's Artistic Director. The creative team for *Once* includes **Don Kot** (music director), **Whitney G-Bowley** (Choreographer) **Tim Mackabee** (scenic design), **Christina Selian** (costume design), **Alex Mannix** (lighting design), **Andrew Mark Wilhelm** (sound design), **Blake Segal** (dialect coach) and **Jean Gordon Ryon** (dramaturg).

For this production of *Once*, Geva will be partnering with Bishop Kearney High School for **The Stage Door Project: *Once***. Throughout the entire rehearsal process, students from Bishop Kearney will shadow their professional counterparts. This project culminates in a unique and rare opportunity. After rehearsing the show independently at their school, the students from Bishop Kearney will perform their own version of *Once* in the Wilson Stage on the set of Geva's production for a special one-night performance in March.

The 2019-2020 Season is sponsored by **ESL Federal Credit Union**. The Honorary Season Producer is **Dr. Dawn Lipson**. *Once* is produced with support from Lead Co-Producers **Buckingham Properties**; Co-Producer **Tasteful Connections** and Media Sponsors **News10NBC** and **98PXY**. *The Stage Door Project: Once* is made possible in part by the **Guido and Ellen Palma Foundation**.

***Once* begins previews on February 19, opens February 22 and runs through March 22.**

**For further information, photographs or to arrange interviews, please contact:  
Dawn Kellogg, Communications Manager, (585) 420-2059.**

## **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

**Previews:** Wednesday, February 19 @ 7:30pm  
Thursday, February 20 @ 7:30pm  
Friday, February 21 @ 8pm  
Saturday, February 22 @ 2pm (Open Captioned Performance)

**Opening:** **Saturday, February 22 @ 8 pm**

**Performances:** Sunday, February 23 @ 2pm and 7pm  
Tuesday, February 25 @ 6pm  
Wednesday, February 26 @ 7:30pm  
Thursday, February 27 @ 7:30pm  
Friday, February 28 @ 8pm  
Saturday, February 29 @ 3pm and 8pm  
Sunday, March 1 @ 2pm (Sunday Salon) and 7pm  
Tuesday, March 3 @ 7:30pm  
Wednesday, March 4 @ 7:30pm  
Thursday, March 5 @ 7:30pm  
Friday, March 6 @ 8pm  
Saturday, March 7 @ 3pm and 8pm  
Sunday, March 8 @ 2pm (Audio Described Performance) and 7pm  
Tuesday, March 10 @ 7:30pm  
Wednesday, March 11 @ 2pm and 7:30pm (Open Captioned performances)  
Thursday, March 12 @ 7:30pm (ASL Interpreted Performance)  
Friday, March 13 @ 8pm  
Saturday, March 14 @ 3pm and 8pm  
Sunday, March 15 @ 2pm (Sunday Salon) and 7pm  
Tuesday, March 17 @ 7:30pm  
Wednesday, March 18 @ 2pm and 7:30pm  
Thursday, March 19 @ 7:30pm  
Friday, March 20 @ 8pm  
Saturday, March 21 @ 3pm and 8pm  
Sunday, March 22 @ 2pm

**Ticket Prices:** **Tickets start at \$25.**

**Reservations:** **(585) 232-GEVA (4382), Website: [www.gevatheatre.org](http://www.gevatheatre.org)**

**Location:** **Geva Theatre Center, 75 Woodbury Blvd, Rochester, NY 14607**

\* Partial support for open captioning provided by Theatre Development Fund.

### **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](http://GevaTheatre.org)