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RACE & THEATRE SYMPOSIUM

Geva Theatre Center to host Race and Theatre Symposium on May 19
Free one-day event will feature expert and activist Kaja Amado Dunn

Rochester, N.Y. – Geva Theatre Center will host a symposium on race and theatre on May 19. The one-day event will feature internationally known theatre decolonization expert and activist Kaja Amado Dunn and a panel of regional BIPOC theatre-makers. The symposium is hosted and curated by Geva Producer of Engagement Programs Rachel DeGuzman and presented by Geva's Engagement Department in alignment with the theatre's anti-racism commitment.

Schedule of Events

Breakfast (provided with support from Wegmans), 8:30 – 9 a.m.

Hot Topics, 9 – 10 a.m.

Kaja Amado Dunn and Rachel Deguzman discuss the state of race equity in the national theatre landscape.

Reimagining a More Racially Equitable Regional Theatre Landscape, 10 – 11 a.m.

A panel conversation including Carolina Osorio Gil, Daystar Rosalie Jones, Delores Jackson Radney and Jennifer Galvez Caton.

Break, 11 – 11:15 a.m.

Symposium Karaoke, 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Attendees share their stories and perspectives as well as ask questions of panelists in one-minute segments at an open mic.

Lunch (provided with support from Wegmans), 12 – 12:30 p.m.

Race and Theatre Workshop, 12:30 – 3 p.m.

Kaja Amado Dunn's interactive race and theatre workshop comprehensively examines how racism manifests in the field and explores allyship, questions for theatres to consider, scripts and seasons.

The symposium is free and open to the region's theatre community, but registration is required. Interested participants can visit gevatheatre.org/race-and-theatre-symposium for more information.

About Kaja Amado Dunn

Kaja Amado Dunn is an assistant professor and the head of acting at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Department of Theatre, affiliate faculty for Theatrical Intimacy Education, and a consultant on issues of race and theatre for Actors' Equity Association. She received a Kennedy Center Medallion for her work addressing equity in theatre education. An actor, director and activist, Dunn has performed nationally and internationally in over 40 productions, most recently appearing in the title role in "Pearl" at Atlanta's Theatrical Outfit. She has published work in the U.S. and has co-authored a chapter in "The Arden Research Handbook of Shakespeare and Contemporary Performance" as well as a chapter on Black motherschooling in the forthcoming "Black Women and the 'Rona.'"

Dunn has presented on issues of equity and diversity for the Actors' Equity Association, the Women's Theatre Festival, Blumenthal Performing Arts, the Michael Chekhov Association (MICHA), the North Carolina Theatre Conference (keynote panelist), Children's Theatre Charlotte, Goldsmiths University of London, the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC), the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) and the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, among others. She serves on the executive board of the Black Theatre Network. Dunn also teaches workshops and consults for universities and private corporations. She was most recently interviewed for an American Theatre magazine article on race and theatre education.

About the Panel

Born in Bogotá, Colombia and a longtime Ithaca resident, **Carolina Osorio Gil** is an M.S./Ph.D. candidate in developmental sociology at Cornell University. She received a B.A. in cognitive psychology from Cornell (2002) and an M.A. in early childhood teaching and curriculum with a concentration in gifted learning from Columbia University Teachers College (2010). Osorio Gil is an actress, director, chef and community organizer and is the founder and former director of CULTURA Ithaca, a Latinx cultural organization.

Jennifer Galvez Caton is a professional actress who began her career in New York City performing in numerous television, film and theatre productions. Her TV credits include roles on “As the World Turns,” “One Life to Live,” “Law & Order” and “Sesame Street.” She has been seen in numerous independent and corporate training films as well as several commercial print modeling advertising campaigns. Theatre roles include Kate in “Taming of the Shrew,” Cecily Pigeon in “The Odd Couple” and the world premiere of the off-Broadway production of “Pearl of the Orient” at the Laurie Beechman Theater in Manhattan. Most recently, she appeared in the role of Melissa Gardner in “Love Letters” by A.R. Gurney, which she also produced. After a successful run at the Keybank Rochester Fringe Festival, the production was staged at Bristol Valley Theater in Naples this spring.

Daystar Rosalie Jones is the Artistic Director at Daystar: Contemporary Dance-Drama of Indian America. The Daystar Company was founded in 1980 and is now the first modern dance company in the United States created with all-native performers and specializing in the portrayal of the personal and tribal stories of Indian America. The company has toured throughout the U.S. and Canada, and in Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

Jones was born on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana and is of Pembina Chippewa ancestry on her mother’s side. She holds a Master’s Degree in dance from the University of Utah with postgraduate work at Juilliard School in New York City. She studied Korean, Hawaiian, East Indian and Flamenco dance, mime with Reid Gilbert, and modern with Jose Limon, Hanya Holm and Barry Lynn.

Over many years, she has gained a knowledge of the indigenous dance and cultural forms of the Plains, the Northwest Coast, and Conchero Dance, among others. As a teacher, she was responsible for the revitalization of performing arts at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico during the early 1990s when she was chair of the department. In 1995, Jones was awarded a two-year National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Choreographer’s Fellowship.

Delores Jackson Radney is the founder Kuumba Consultants, an arts in education agency providing arts and cultural programming for schools and youth organizations throughout the region. Radney was a theatre resource educator for the Rochester City School District, where she designed drama curriculum to satisfy New York state learning standards and enhance student understanding in all subject areas. She was also a museum educator at the Memorial Art Gallery, where she was in charge of family programs and community outreach to underserved audiences. Radney is also the artistic director of a multidisciplinary youth drama troupe Kuumba Kids. She directs children’s plays, musicals and historical dramas and produces many community programs. She is the co-chair for the of the community-wide Kwanzaa celebration. Recently, Radney created and produced Our Stories Ourselves: 19th Century Afro Rochester, an interactive learning resource used to teach schools and the community about Rochester’s role in the African American freedom movement of the 19th century. Our Stories Ourselves is now a permanent part of school resource libraries across the district. Radney is a graduate of SUNY Geneseo with a B.A. in dramatic arts and communications.

About the Curator and Host

Rachel DeGuzman is the Producer of Engagement Programs at Geva. She comes to the theatre with more than 20 years of experience in the arts and community engagement/activation. Her achievements have earned her a number of awards, including the 2016 Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award presented by Geva. She was also honored as one of the accomplished leaders featured in Rochester Museum and Science Center's recent exhibition, *The Changemakers: Rochester Women Who Changed the World*.

In addition to her work at Geva, DeGuzman is also the founder and executive director of 21st Century Arts Inc. and is the managing curator of the community-rooted arts space *The Black House*.

DeGuzman's past positions include director of advancement and external relations at Rochester City Ballet, marketing and publicity manager at Nazareth College Arts Center, director of development and marketing at The Commission Project, and director of development at Garth Fagan Dance. Rachel currently serves on the board of Visual Studies Workshop (VSW). Her past board positions include the Women's Council: A Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce Affiliate, William Warfield Scholarship Fund, Greentopia, and Rochester City Ballet, among others. She has worked with Visit Rochester, Janklow Arts Leadership Program at Syracuse University, the Avenue Black Box Theatre, Artists Co-creating Real Equity/PISAB, and other local and national organizations to create opportunities and foster greater equity in the community at large and the arts and culture sector in particular.

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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