

Geva Theatre announces the lineup for the 24/25 Season Thrilling partnerships, new programs, and more!

*Sponsored by ESL Federal Credit Union
Honorary Season Producer Dr. Dawn Lipson*

Rochester, N.Y. — Geva Theatre’s Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson, Executive Director James Haskins, and Curation Team (Rachel Y. DeGuzman, Fiona Kyle, Harrison David Rivers, and Baron Vaughn) are delighted to announce Geva’s 2024/2025 season, programming, partnerships, and events as they roll out **One Geva**: a new vision for the company that encompasses productions, education, and engagement programming throughout the year on and off Geva’s stages.

“This coming year at Geva will see extraordinary stories onstage, from August Wilson’s powerful memoir play ***How I Learned What I Learned***, which takes us back through the creation of his Century Cycle, to Harrison David Rivers’ new adaptation of ***A Christmas Carol***, to Christina Ham’s stunning and searing ***Nina Simone: Four Women***, to a fresh take on Louisa May Alcott’s ***Little Women***. We’ll bookend the season with great musicals: beginning with a hilarious new production of **Mel Brooks’ *Young Frankenstein*** and ending with ***Beautiful: The Carole King Musical***,” said Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson.

“We’ll deepen our partnership with Friends of Ganondagan and Natives Voices; after working with them to bring ***The Mush Hole*** and the Indigenous Theatre Symposium to Rochester this summer, we’re partnering with them on the East Coast Premiere of Vickie Ramirez’ wonderful Haudenosaunee dramatic comedy ***Pure Native***. We’ll also launch new summer programming this year featuring Hershey Felder in ***George Gershwin Alone***,” Williamson continued. “Outside of our mainstage programming, we’ll see the return of Baron Vaughn’s comedy-in-process series ***The Work Out Room***, and we’ll once again go to La Marketa for the Latinx Art and Culture Celebration, this year featuring Borinquen’s ***Pedro and the Wolf***.”

New to the 24/25 Season, Geva is unifying all of our spaces with our **One Geva** subscription. The **One Geva** subscription offers a full season of exciting work across our two stages – five shows in the Wilson and one in the Fielding. It features equally significant and inspiring work across all spaces with the same production values and the same level of excellence in artistry.

James Haskins, Executive Director, adds, “As Geva Theatre’s new Executive Director, I’m thrilled to join with Elizabeth Williamson to announce such an exciting and diverse lineup for the 2024/25 Season. More students will be able to join us at the theatre with extended weeks for student matinees of ***A Christmas Carol*** and ***Little Women***, and thanks to the City, the ROC Geva Pass will bring 200 Rochester residents free of charge to every mainstage show in the season. Speaking of students, we are thrilled to announce that the Geva-Brockport Alliance will continue

for the next five years! We have loved having their students with us at Geva and are so happy to be continuing our partnership with SUNY Brockport. We so appreciate the extraordinary support of our sponsors, ESL Federal Credit Union and Dr. Dawn Lipson, and look forward to welcoming new and returning audiences to our Wilson and Fielding Stages as we celebrate One Geva.”

The season launches with Mel Brooks’ *Young Frankenstein*, opening on the Wilson Stage in September. Stuart Ross, writer and director of *Forever Plaid*, directs this co-production with Berkshire Theatre Group and Bay Street Theater. Second up on the Fielding Stage will be August Wilson’s *How I Learned What I Learned*, a theatrical memoir by one of America’s most acclaimed playwrights.

The new year begins on the Wilson Stage with Christina Ham’s *Nina Simone: Four Women*, a play with music, which follows Simone as she writes her Civil Rights anthem, “Mississippi Goddam.” Next up on the Wilson is Heather Chrisler’s adaptation of Louisa May Alcott’s beloved novel, *Little Women*.

The season continues on the Wilson Stage with the East Coast Premiere of dramatic comedy *Pure Native* by Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora), directed by Randy Reinholz (Choctaw), produced in association with Friends of Ganondagan and Native Voices. Closing the 24/25 Season is the Tony Award-winning *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* with book by the late Tony- and Oscar-nominated Douglas McGrath, and words and music by the seminal pop music writing teams Gerry Goffin and Carole King, and Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil. Karen Azenberg, Artistic Director of Pioneer Theatre Company, directs this co-production with Pioneer.

In addition to our season, we will feature two exciting add-on productions as well as our comedy-in-process series!

In July 2024, the theatre will bring new summer programming to Rochester with Hershey Felder’s *George Gershwin Alone*, which has played on Broadway, in the West End, and internationally to great acclaim. Pre-sale tickets are available now for 24/25 Season Subscribers at a discounted rate of 20% off! This discount is valid through April 21, after which 24/25 Subscribers will enjoy 15% off. Purchases can be made by calling the Box Office at (585)-232-4382. Single tickets will go on sale to the general public April 23, 2024.

Coming to the Wilson Stage in November 2024, we are excited to present a new production of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. This world premiere adaptation from Geva’s 2022-24 Artist in Residence Harrison David Rivers will be directed by Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson. Filled with humor, heart, hope – and a little bit of horror – *A Christmas Carol* reminds us that it is never too late to have a change of heart.

We are happy to announce that DeLanna Studi, whose work was seen last year at Geva with her one-woman show *And So We Walked: An Artist’s Journey Along the Trail of Tears*, will be our 2024-26 Artist in Residence! Our 2023-25 Artist in Residence, actor, writer, and comedian Baron Vaughn will continue to curate his comedy series, *The Work Out Room*, which will return

in March and June of 2025 with all new comedians. Each Artist in Residence serves on our Senior Leadership, Curation, and Strategic Planning teams.

Geva's 24/25 season was curated by Geva's Curation Team: Rachel Y. DeGuzman, Fiona Kyle, Harrison David Rivers, Baron Vaughn, and Elizabeth Williamson.

ESL Federal Credit Union continues its support to Geva as the sponsor of the 24/25 Season. ESL Federal Credit Union has served as Season Sponsor since 2014. "ESL proudly supports Geva's continued commitment to producing world-class theatre for everyone in our community," said ESL Federal Credit Union President and CEO Faheem Masood. "We welcome Executive Director James Haskins to this gem in our arts community and look forward to another series of outstanding productions in the theatre's 52nd season."

Dr. Dawn Lipson serves as Honorary Season Producer.

Subscriptions for Geva's 24/25 Season are on sale now and may be purchased by calling the Geva Theatre Box office at 585-232-4382. Tickets to all individual productions will go on sale to the general public in July.

2024/2025 Season

Mel Brooks' *Young Frankenstein*

Book by Mel Brooks & Thomas Meehan

Music & Lyrics by Mel Brooks

Original Direction & Choreography by Susan Stroman

Co-Production with Berkshire Theatre Group & Bay Street Theater

Directed by Stuart Ross

Choreography by Gerry McIntyre

Scenic Design by Arnulfo Maldonado

On the Wilson Stage | September 25 – October 27, 2024

Mel Brooks' comedic genius meets black and white horror movies in this electrifying musical comedy! When Dr. Frederick Frankenstein inherits his infamous grandfather's estate in Transylvania, little does he think he'll be pulled into the family business – until he finds himself exclaiming "It's alive!" as he creates a monster to rival his grandfather's. This new, wildly inventive production brings the hilarious antics of the screen sensation to life with unforgettable tunes such as "The Transylvania Mania," "He Vas My Boyfriend," and "Puttin' on the Ritz."

August Wilson's *How I Learned What I Learned*

By August Wilson

Co-Conceived by Todd Kreidler

On the Fielding Stage | October 15 – December 1, 2024

From Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright August Wilson comes this one-actor biographical play chronicling Wilson's life as a Black artist in the Hill District in Pittsburgh. Through stories about Wilson's first jobs, first loves and experiences with racism, we go deep into the life of one of the most celebrated writers of the twentieth century, from his roots to the completion of his history-making American Century Cycle, his ten-play series showcasing Black experience from across the twentieth century.

Nina Simone: Four Women

By Christina Ham

On the Wilson Stage | January 14 – February 9, 2025

September 16, 1963. When Nina Simone heard that four Black girls had been killed in the bombing of the 16th Avenue Church in Birmingham, Alabama, her first impulse was to try and build a zip gun; instead she channeled her rage into "Mississippi Goddamn," the song that marked the emergence of Nina Simone, the Civil Rights activist. Infused with traditional hymns along with songs including "Four Women," "I Loves You, Porgy," and "Young, Gifted and Black," *Nina Simone: Four Women* looks at an artist and the women around her as their journey leads them down a path of discovery and healing.

Little Women

By Louisa May Alcott

Adapted by Heather Chrisler

On the Wilson Stage | February 25 – March 23, 2025

Louisa May Alcott's classic novel comes to fresh life in this inventive, theatrical adaptation which follows as the March sisters – Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy – gather in the family attic. From making up fairy stories, writing for their pretend newspaper, and playing make believe, they graduate to scenes of love, loss, and – for Jo – artistic self-discovery, as they come of age against the backdrop of the American Civil War.

Pure Native

East Coast Premiere

By Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora)

Directed by Randy Reinholz (Choctaw)

In Association with Friends of Ganodagan and Native Voices

On the Wilson Stage | April 15 – May 11, 2025

Brewster's back after almost a decade and things have changed. Brews is proud of his success working for a large corporation, and wants to share it with the people of his Rez in Upstate New York. After all, it's been a bad year, and Brews believes partnering with his corporation on a new bottled water factory would be a great opportunity for the Rez to create its own industry and sustain itself. But to his old love Connie, it's a betrayal of everything the Haudenosaunee stand for. Who will win?

Beautiful: The Carole King Musical

Book by Douglas McGrath

Words and Music by Gerry Goffin & Carole King, Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil
Music by Arrangement with Sony Music Publishing
Orchestrations, Vocal and Incidental Music Arrangements by Steve Sidwell
Additional Music Arrangements by Jason Howland
Co-Production with Pioneer Theatre Company
Directed by Karen Azenberg
On the Wilson Stage | May 28 – June 29, 2025

Before she was hit-maker Carole King, she was Carole Klein, an up-and-coming songwriter from Brooklyn. *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* is the inspiring story of how she made her mark on the music industry – and found her own voice in the process. This Tony Award-winning musical with a book by the late Oscar- and Tony-nominated Douglas McGrath features the unforgettable songs “Will You Love Me Tomorrow,” “You’ve Lost that Lovin’ Feeling,” “Natural Woman,” and “I Feel the Earth Move” from King’s iconic songbook.

Additional Programming

Hershey Felder as *George Gershwin Alone*

Music and Lyrics of George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin
Book by Hershey Felder
Directed by Joel Zwick
Associate Direction by Trevor Hay
Scenic Design by Hershey Felder
Lighting Design by Michael Gilliam
Sound Design by Erik Carstensen
On the Wilson Stage | July 9 – 28, 2024

Captivating audiences around the world, including on Broadway, in London’s West End, and more, Hershey Felder as *George Gershwin Alone* tells the story of America’s great composer, who with the groundbreaking “A Rhapsody in Blue,” made a “Lady out of Jazz.” The show incorporates the composer’s best-known songs from “The Man I Love” and “Someone to Watch Over Me,” through the hits of *An American In Paris* and *Porgy and Bess*, to a complete performance of “Rhapsody in Blue.” Mr. Felder brings to life the spirit and talent of the legendary composer and pianist for the first time in history, leading the audience through the fascinating rhythms of Gershwin’s legendary songbook and his tragically short life.

A Christmas Carol

A World Premiere Commission
By Charles Dickens
Adapted by Harrison David Rivers
Directed by Elizabeth Williamson
Dramaturgy by Sally Lobel
On the Wilson Stage | November 21 – December 29, 2024

Charles Dickens' holiday classic returns to the Geva stage, with a new adaptation by Geva's 22-24 Playwright in Residence, Harrison David Rivers. Over the course of a single night, notorious grump, Ebenezer Scrooge, is visited by four ghosts. But will their intervention prompt him to change his "humbug" ways? Filled with humor, heart, hope – and a little bit of horror (there are ghosts, after all) – *A Christmas Carol* reminds us that it is never too late to have a change of heart.

The Work Out Room

The Comedy Series, Curated by Baron Vaughn

On the Fielding Stage | March 12 – March 22, 2025 & June 11 – June 21, 2025

Join us on the Fielding Stage for the continuation of Artist in Residence Baron Vaughn's *The Work Out Room*, the long-form comedy series where the audience gets to watch some of the country's most exciting comedians develop new material live with the Rochester community. Comedians to be announced.

Engagement at Geva

Leading these initiatives is Rachel Y. DeGuzman, Geva's Director of Engagement, Community Partnerships, and Public Curation. Engagement at Geva's overarching objective is to connect more people and organizations with the productions presented on the theatre's stages.

For the 24/25 season we are excited to continue offering the ROC Geva Pass, a partnership with the City of Rochester to provide two hundred complimentary tickets for each of Geva's Subscription Series Productions to city residents in specified zip-codes. Visit gevatheatre.org/engagement/#RocPass for updates on when tickets will be released.

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our Engagement Committee, whose members are Amanda Ashley Rodriguez, Jayme Bermudez, Dr. Mark Broomfield, Christopher K. Coles, Tania Day-Magallon, Daystar/Rosalie Jones (Pembina Chippewa), Cocoa Rae David, Javannah Davis, Rachel Y. DeGuzman, Luticha Doucette, Fran Flaherty, Jeiri Flores, Nancy Gong, Dr. Tokeya Graham, James W. Guido, Delores Jackson Radney, Ansley Jemison (Seneca, Wolf Clan), Christina Lee, Rajendra Ramoon Maharaj, Kathryn Murano Santos, Victor RANGE Zarate, David Shakes, Nicole Stein, Kristen Walker, Thomas Warfield, Elizabeth Williamson, and Sarah Yarger.

Following the success of the Latinx Art and Culture Celebration last August, Geva joins Ibero-American Action League, Borinquen Dance Theatre, and the City of Rochester to present the 2024 Latinx Art and Culture Celebration on August 17, 2024 at La Marketa/The International Plaza in Downtown Rochester. This free event will feature *Pedro and the Wolf*, reimagined by Jayme Bermudez, Andrew Rodriuez, and Adrian Franco – performed by Borinquen dancers to live music. Tania-Day Magallon and Victor RANGE Zarate will install artwork and lead community artmaking.

Engagement at Geva programs also include *Geva Insights*, Mondays at Geva, the Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Awards, symposiums and more. Dates and events will be announced on the company's website through the season.

Education at Geva

Education at Geva will include student matinee performances of *A Christmas Carol*, *Nina Simone: Four Women*, *Little Women*, *Pure Native*, and *Beautiful*. We will also hold a five-week Musical Theatre Summer Academy conservatory training program for young actors ages 12-18 in July of 2025. Program and Audition information will be released in January, and full and partial need-based scholarships will be available.

For over twenty years, SUNY Brockport has been a wonderful partner to Geva Theatre in nurturing students through professional artistic experiences in the Geva-Brockport Alliance, and we are thrilled to continue our alliance with them! Each semester, SUNY Brockport students engage with Geva's staff and visiting artists through performance opportunities, internships, show attendance, workshops, facilitated conversations, classes, and more. Many of these students have gone on to work at Geva as full-time staff members, as performers on our stages, and at theatres across the country.

Other Geva Education programs will center on expanding in-school workshops, classes in Geva's Fielding Stage, college internships in performance and with behind-the-scenes departments at Geva for students at multiple institutions throughout the greater Rochester region, and expanded accessibility.

About Geva Theatre

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs, and services of a national standard.

Geva offers a wide variety of educational, engagement, and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Geva Theatre 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.

Geva is under the leadership of Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson and Executive Director James Haskins.

Find out more about Geva Theatre 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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