

Geva Theatre closes its 51st Season with the Tony Award-winning Musical, *The Color Purple*

On stage May 28 - June 29

A Co-Production with Theater Latté Da

Rochester, N.Y. — Geva Theatre brings its 51st season to a close with *The Color Purple*. Based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alice Walker and adapted for the stage by Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winner Marsha Norman, with music and lyrics by Brenda Russell, Allee Willis, and Stephen Bray, *The Color Purple* tells the story of courageous heroine Celie, as she journeys through joy, despair, anguish, and hope in her own personal awakening to discover her unique voice in the world. This intimate version of the landmark musical celebrates life, love, and the strength to stand up for who you are and what you believe in. Running on the Wilson Stage May 28 – June 29, *The Color Purple* is directed by **Daniel J. Bryant**, Choreographed by **Heather Himes**, with Music Direction by **Sanford Moore**. Tickets are on sale now; visit GevaTheatre.org or call the Box Office at 585-232-GEVA(4382).

Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson said “I am so delighted to welcome Daniel Bryant back to Geva after his beautiful production of *How To Catch Creation* a couple years ago. Daniel, Heather, Sanford, and the team have built a beautiful production of this play, and we can’t wait to share it with audiences here in Rochester following their lauded run in the Twin Cities.”

Director Daniel J. Bryant shared, “Our telling of *The Color Purple* is uniquely special because it is intuitively created from ‘scratch’ without seeing any previous productions. [Our production is] led by Spirit and centered on healing, love and joy to tell this classic story of resilience – of finding strength in one’s self in order to soar in the truth of love.”

The Creative Team:

Director **Daniel J. Bryant** (he/him) returns to Geva Theatre after directing *How to Catch Creation* during the 49th Season. Some of Bryant’s recent directing credits include *the ripple*, *the wave that carried me home* (Portland Center Stage and Artists Repertory Theatre), the World Premiere production of *ABCD* at Barrington Stage Company, *What To Send Up When It Goes Down* (Congo Square Theatre), and *Feeding Beatrice* (St. Louis Rep). Previously serving as Associate Producer/Director of community programs at Baltimore Center Stage under the leadership of Artistic Directors Kwame Kwei-Armah and Hana Sharif, Daniel designed BCS’s Mobile Unit program, producing and directing *Antigone*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Endgame*, as well as directing *A Wonder In My Soul* for the main stage.

Joining Bryant on the creative team are Music Director **Sanford Moore** (Theater Latté Da: *Hello Dolly!*; Guthrie Theater: *To Kill A Mockingbird*), Choreographer **Heather Himes** (she/her) (The Black Rep: *Eubie!*; American Stage: *Ragtime*), Scenic Designer **Eli Sherlock** (he/him) (Theater

Latté Da: *Hello Dolly!*; Flint Repertory Theatre: *Spring Awakening*), Costume Designer **Jarrold Barnes** (he/him) (The 5th Avenue Theatre: *The Wiz*; Nashville Rep Theatre: *Fences*), Co-Lighting Designers **Bentley Heydt** (he/him) (Broadway: *Life of Pi* (Tony Award 2023) (ALD); *How To Dance In Ohio* (ALD)) and **Jason Lynch** (Audible Theatre/Minetta Lane Theatre: *You Are Here: An Evening with Solea Pfeiffer*, Goodman Theatre: *Lucha Teotl*), Sound Designer **C Andrew Mayer** (ACT, Arkansas Rep, Austin Opera), Wig, Hair, & Makeup Design by **Emma Gustafson** (she/her) (Guthrie Theater, Minnesota Opera), and Prop Designer **Abbee Warmboe** (Theater Latté Da, Guthrie Theater). The Production Stage Manager is **Shelby Reddig** (she/her) (Theater Latté Da: *Hello Dolly!*; MN Opera: *Albert Herring*) with Assistant Stage Managers **Ajah Williams** (she/her) (Lyric Arts Company of Anoka, Stages Theatre Company) and **Kate Duprey** (she/her) (Geva Theatre: *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*; The Company Theatre: *Romeo & Juliet*).

The Cast:

The cast of *The Color Purple* features **Ronnie Allen** (he/him) as Harpo (Theater Latté Da: *We Shall Someday*), **Carnetha Anthony** (she/her) as Sofia (Sidekick Theatre: *Little Shop of Horrors*), **Chuckie Benson** as Preacher (Goodspeed/McCarter: *Dreamgirls*), **Zola Dee** (she/her) as Squeak (Red Eye Theater: *On Freeing Fire*), **Lynnea Doublette** (she/her) (Guthrie Theater: *Caroline or Change*), **Dwight Xaveir Leslie** (he/him) (The Public Theatre: *The Harder They Come*), **Heather McElrath** (she/her) (Penumbra Theatre: *Black Nativity*), **Nubia Monks** (she/her) as Celie (Penumbra Theatre: *Wine in the Wilderness*), **David L. Murray Jr.** (he/him) as Mister (Off-Broadway: *On the Right Track*, *Songs for a New World*), **Nambi Mwassa** (she/her) as Nettie (Ashland Productions: *Oklahoma!*), **Dennis Spears** (he/him) as Pa (Penumbra Theatre, The Kennedy Center), **Angela Stewart** (she/her), and **Angela Wildflower** (she/her) as Shug Avery (Broadway: *Motown: The Musical*; Denver Center: *The Color Purple*).

ENGAGEMENT AT GEVA: Programming presented in conjunction with *The Color Purple*

Mondays at Geva | Monday, June 3, 6 - 8 p.m. • FREE

For *The Color Purple*, Mondays at Geva features an exhibit from artist **Lavonne Barfield-Wilson** who draws inspiration from quotes from *The Color Purple*, incorporating purple in different hues, values, textures, and forms. Refreshments will be served.

Geva Insights | Tuesday, June 4, Following the Performance • FREE

Immediately following the performance of *The Color Purple*, there will be an on-stage conversation with multi-award-winning educator, writer, entrepreneur, creative, and community steward, **Dr. Tokeya C. Graham**.

Engagement at Geva programs are sponsored, in part, by Volvo Cars Rochester.

TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

When: May 28 - June 29, 2024

Where: On the Wilson Stage, 75 Woodbury Boulevard, Rochester, New York 14607

To Purchase: Tickets may be purchased [online](#), by calling 585-232-GEVA(4382), or in person from the Box Office. *All prices, dates, and times are subject to change.*

Accessibility: Learn about our accessibility options [here](#).

Media Kit: View a first look at the production [here](#).

Geva's 51st Season is sponsored by ESL Federal Credit Union with Honorary Season Producer Dr. Dawn Lipson. *The Color Purple* is presented with support from Lead Producer Volvo Cars Rochester and media sponsors Channel 10 WHEC-TV and WDKX 103.9.

The Color Purple is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide, 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. www.theatricalrights.com. *The Color Purple* is a Co-Production with Theater Latté Da in Minneapolis, MN.

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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