

GEVA THEATRE ANNOUNCES POST-SHOW CONVERSATIONS, ART EXHIBIT & COMMUNITY EVENTS DURING *FURLOUGH'S PARADISE* AND *BARON VAUGHN: CYCLE BREAKER*

In Partnership with the Frederick Douglass Institute and Department of Black Studies at the University of Rochester, the Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County, Jennifer House and artist Adam Eaton

Rochester, N.Y. — Geva is partnering with the Frederick Douglass Institute and Department of Black Studies at the University of Rochester on a series of post-show conversations around *Furlough's Paradise* and the upcoming world premiere production of comedian Baron Vaughn's solo show, *Baron Vaughn: Cycle Breaker*. Professors Jeffrey Q. McCune and Jordan Ealey (who is also the dramaturg on *Furlough's Paradise*) have worked with Geva to curate the conversations around issues of criminal justice, the resonance of both August Wilson and Ntozake Shange's classic works in contemporary Black playwriting, and much more.

Geva will also be holding a special workshop with Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach at Jennifer House for previous or current justice involved, identifying women inspired by a.k.a. Payne's *Furlough's Paradise*, which the playwright calls "an abolition play." Along with the conversation series and workshop, Geva will host additional programming throughout both productions, including Black Out Affinity performances.

Rochester based visual artist Adam Eaton's exhibit *Black is Beautiful* will be on display in the lobby throughout the shows as well, in collaboration with the Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County. There will be a free, open to the public celebration of Adam Eaton's exhibit *Black is Beautiful*, on display in Geva's lobby through June 7, 2026.

"Our partnerships are essential to the conversation we want Geva's programming to be in with the wider discourse of our Rochester communities," shared Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson. "We've been planning these conversations with the Frederick Douglass Institute for over a year, and I can't wait to hear the broader conversations they bring us. Our new Director of Connectivity, Jacqueline Raymond Wegman, is piloting a new partnership with Jennifer House to bring a workshop expanding on these themes to the Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach program. And we are also thrilled to be working with the library and Adam Eaton to be part of sharing his stunning *Black is Beautiful* exhibit with our Rochester communities."

List of Events:

Black is Beautiful: Adam Eaton Art Exhibition

- Monday, April 20th, from 6-8pm
 - o Join us in Geva's Lobby to kick off *Black is Beautiful* with live music by the band *Night and Day* led by Candice O'Connor.
 - o This event is free and open to the public.

Adam Eaton's artwork will be presented at Geva Theatre and in The Library Link Gallery located at the Central Library of Rochester & Monroe County (115 South Ave, Rochester, NY 14604). This exhibit will be on display in Geva's lobby from April 20 – June 7, 2026 and can be viewed by the public any time the Geva Box Office is open. Hours are listed at the top of Geva's website. *Black Is Beautiful* is a fine art portrait photography exhibition by Adam Eaton, created to honor the beauty, dignity, and humanity of Black people. Rooted in community and visual storytelling, this exhibition invites viewers to slow down, reflect, and experience Black beauty celebrated across two locations in Rochester. More information about the artist: adameaton.com/about

Black Out Affinity Performances:

Celebrate these powerful productions through an afternoon of affinity where we hope to provide a welcoming space for Black audience members and performers to enjoy this performance together. Non-Black-identifying patrons are welcome to attend.

- Sunday, April 26, 2pm Performance of *Furlough's Paradise*
 - o Following the 2pm performance, a discussion will be led by Dramaturg and Jordan Ealey, with fellow University of Rochester faculty member Philip McHarris (<https://www.sas.rochester.edu/aas/people/core/mcharris-philip/index.html>) joining the conversation, which will draw from his book *Beyond Policing*
- Sunday, May 24, 2pm Performance of *Baron Vaughn: Cycle Breaker*
 - o Following the 2pm performance, a discussion will take place around navigating parenthood with actor Johnathan Nthkethka (<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3359124/>)

Post-show Conversation Series: Presented in partnership with the Frederick Douglass Institute and Department of Black Studies at the University of Rochester. Talkbacks are free to attend; tickets are required to attend the performance.

- Wednesday April 29, Black Studies at Geva event, following the 7:30pm performance of *Furlough's Paradise*
 - o University of Rochester Professor Jeffrey Q. McCune leads this conversation with Director & Geva's Resident Director/Associate Producer Jasmine B. Gunter.
- Saturday, May 2, following the 3pm Matinee of *Furlough's Paradise*
 - o A Conversation with Kristen Walker of Flower City Noire Collective bookstore around the ongoing resonance of Ntozake Shange's seminal choreopoem *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf*.
- Sunday, May 10, following the 2pm Matinee of *Furlough's Paradise*
 - o A discussion paired with both *Furlough's Paradise* and *Baron Vaughn: Cycle Breaker*, led by Resident Director/Associate Producer Jasmine B. Gunter with Baron Vaughn
- Saturday, May 16, following the 3pm Matinee of *Baron Vaughn: Cycle Breaker*
 - o A conversation with Baron Vaughn.

Ticket and Performance Information

Furlough's Paradise

When: April 14 – May 10, 2026

Where: On Geva's Wilson Stage, 75 Woodbury Boulevard, Rochester, New York 14607

Baron Vaughn: Cycle Breaker

When: April 28 – June 7, 2026

Where: On Geva's Fielding Stage, 75 Woodbury Boulevard, Rochester, New York 14607

To Purchase: Single tickets may be purchased through the Box Office by calling 585-232-4382, visiting in-person, or online at GevaTheatre.org. Discounted tickets are available for groups of 10+, to purchase call 585-420-2090. *All prices, dates, and times are subject to change.*

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 Onondowa-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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