FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GEVA THEATRE CENTER HOSTS
YOUNG WRITERS SHOWCASE

Rochester, N.Y., April 25, 2014 - Geva Theatre Center hosts the Young Writers Showcase on Saturday, May 3 at 2:00pm with script-in-hand readings taking place in the Fielding Nextstage. The Young Writers Showcase gives young area playwrights the opportunity to have their works read by actors with the help of Geva directors and dramaturgs.

An invitation was extended in January soliciting work by writers between the ages of 13 and 18, now living or having lived within the six-county area: Monroe, Livingston, Wayne, Ontario, Genesee and Orleans. Six plays were chosen to participate in this year’s showcase.

The selected young playwrights include Cameron Bennett (School of the Arts), Betsy Hahm (Home Schooled), Austin Hammond (School of the Arts), Olivia Spenard (School of the Arts), Frank Bruno (Bishop Kearney High School), and Clara O’Connor (School of the Arts).

Young Writers Showcase
Saturday, May 3, 2:00pm

Just Like That by Clara O’Connor
Origins and Stumbles by Cameron Bennett
Dear Diary by Betsy Hahm
Sunny Side Up by Austin Hammond
Blue Skies by Frank Bruno
Omigawd by Olivia Spenard

This program is made possible with support from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the Shubert Foundation, the Mary S. Mulligan Trust, Jack & Barbara Kraushaar and Geva Annual Fund Donors.

Tickets for the Young Writers Showcase are free, but must be reserved in advance. Call the Geva Box Office at (585) 232-Geva (4382) to reserve tickets.

About the playwrights
CAMERON BENNETT  *Origins and Stumbles*  is a Ninth Grade Creative Writing Major at School of the Arts. He enjoys reading, writing, playing videogames and traveling. He has enjoyed writing since his early days in elementary school when writing projects were first introduced to him. He hopes that he will continue to improve as a writer and further increase his skills so that he can pursue his dream of having a book published.

BETSY HAHM  *Dear Diary*  home schools in Hilton, New York. She loves music, and is the primary pianist at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Fairport, New York. This summer she will travel to Kenosha, Wisconsin to sing in the Honors Choir at The WELS National Worship Conference. Betsy enjoys reading, watching plays and musicals, crafting, baking gourmet desserts, and writing. She has three pen pals and has kept a diary for seven years.  *Dear Diary*  is her first play.

AUSTIN HAMMOND  *Sunny Side Up*  is a 16 year old aspiring writer with the life goal of becoming an astrophysicist. He began writing as a hobby and later discovered his potential for writing at School of the Arts. Austin has had little time to pursue other interests but has found plenty of time to hone his writing abilities. Austin is employed at Juan and Maria’s Empanada stop at the Public Market and has dedicated the majority of his teenage life to his academics and his workplace.

OLIVIA SPENARD  *Omigawd*  is a 15 year old Creative Writing student at School of the Arts. Her play,  *Omigawd*, is the second play she’s written and her first to be performed. In the past she has spent a lot of her time writing at Writers and Books, playing games on a softball field or belting Broadway showtunes at home. She has performed in plays at SOTA and in the future would like to try her hand at playwriting in order to combine her love for creative writing and theater. She’d like to thank her Creative Writing teachers, her supportive family, her wonderful friends and all the teenagers around the world for being so zany and inspiring. She hopes you enjoy!

FRANK BRUNO  *Blue Skies*  attends Bishop Kearney High School and is planning to attend a SUNY school in the Fall. He enjoys reading and writing and spending time with his friends. He also plays baseball and enjoys spending time in nature. In addition to writing plays, he enjoys writing poetry and short stories. He would like to take this opportunity to thank Geva Theatre Center for giving him this incredible opportunity. He would also like to thank all of his family friends and teachers that have at any time helped to guide him, and he would like to give a shout out to Mrs. Hoffman and his creative writing class.

CLARA O’CONNOR  *Just Like That*  is a senior Creative Writing major at School of the Arts and she is thrilled to have another play selected for the Young Writers Showcase. Clara runs cross country, plays ultimate Frisbee, and is President of her Ventures Crew. Last summer she participated in the Taub Multimedia Journalism Academy, as Clara plans on pursuing a degree in Journalism. She would like to thank her Creative Writing teachers Ms. Gamzon, Ms. Perez, and Mr. Craddock for all of their criticism and generosity in accepting late work. Many thanks also go to her family and friends, including Susan Cergol who hosts her visits to New York City where Clara is able to avidly people-watch, especially while riding the subway.

For further information, or to arrange interviews, please contact:
Dawn Kellogg, Communications Manager, (585) 232 1366 x 3059

GEVA THEATRE CENTER
Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre Center is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs and services of a national standard. As Rochester’s leading professional theatre, Geva Theatre Center is the most attended regional theatre in New York State, and one of the 25 most attended in the country, attracting over 160,000 patrons annually, including more than 16,000 students.

The 524-seat Elaine P. Wilson Mainstage offers a wide variety of shows, from musicals to American and world classics. The 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Nextstage is home to Geva’s own series of cutting-edge drama, comedy and musical theatre; Geva Comedy Improv; Geva’s New Play Reading Series and the Hornet’s Nest - an innovative play-reading series facilitating community-wide discussion on controversial topics. The Nextstage also hosts visiting companies of both local and international renown.

Geva Theatre Center offers a wide variety of educational, outreach and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Since 1995 the organization has been led by Artistic Director Mark Cuddy.

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