



Media Contact: Dawn Kellogg  
Communications Manager  
(585) 420-2059  
[dkellogg@gevatheatre.org](mailto:dkellogg@gevatheatre.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Geva Theatre Center presents ***GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER***

*2017 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the iconic film.*

*Cast is a blend of Geva favorites and veteran actors making their Rochester debut.*

Rochester, N.Y., January 16, 2017 – Geva Theatre Center presents *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, a funny and poignant stage adaptation of the beloved Academy Award©-winning film. Adapted by **Todd Kreidler** and based on the screenplay by **William Rose**, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* is directed by **Skip Greer** and will be performed in the Wilson Stage from **February 14 to March 12**.

**Joanna surprises her liberal, white parents when she brings home John, her African-American fiancé, to meet them. However, she shocks even John by inviting his disapproving parents to dinner. A clash of generations and races ensues when both sets of parents must confront their own unexpected reactions and concerns for their children as their long-held beliefs are put to the test.**

American-born William Rose, who wrote the screenplay for *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, spent the majority of his life and career in the UK where he wrote the screenplays for *Genevieve* (1953) and the Ealing Comedies *The Maggie* (1954) and *The Ladykillers* (1956). In addition to *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, his screenplays for American films included *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* (1963) and *The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming* (1966).

2017 marks the fiftieth anniversary of *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, one of the most iconic films in motion picture history. Directed by Stanley Kramer, the film received eight Academy Award© nominations and won two - including an award for Best Screenplay. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* was also the final onscreen pairing of Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn. Tracy died 17 days after filming his final scene for the movie. Todd Kreidler's stage adaptation premiered in Atlanta in 2012 and has subsequently been performed at regional theatres around the country.

Geva's production of *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* is a co-production with Indiana Repertory Theatre. The ensemble cast is a blend of Geva favorites and veteran actors making their Geva debuts. **Nora Cole** (Broadway productions of *Jelly's Last Jam* and *On the Town*) returns to Geva where she appeared in last season's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and, in previous seasons, *Katherine's Colored Lieutenant* and *Voices of the Spirits in My Soul* (both of which she wrote); *You Can't Take it With You* and *Fences*. Ms. Cole appears as Mary Prentice. **Cleavant Derricks** (Tony Award©-winner for *Dreamgirls* and Tony Award©-nominee for Bob Fosse's *Big Deal*) appeared at Geva last season for *A Journey to the Son* – part of Geva's acclaimed festival around the life and work of Son

House. Mr. Derricks appears as John Prentice, Sr. **Lynda Gravátt** (Broadway productions of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Doubt*, *King Hedley II* and *45 Seconds from Broadway*) appeared at Geva in *A Raisin in the Sun* and *The Old Settler* and appears in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* as Matilda Binks. **Constance Macy**, who made her Geva debut in *Good People* in 2014, appears as Hilary St. George and **Brigitt Markusfeld** (Geva productions of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Stranded on Earth*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *Over the Tavern*, *A Christmas Story* and *The Weir*) is Christina Drayton.

Making their Geva Theatre Center debuts are **Mark Goetzinger** (Chicago productions of *White Embers*, *October in the Chair* and *Other Fragile Things*) as Monsignor Ryan; **Chické Johnson** (Broadway production of *A Time to Kill*) as Dr. John Prentice, Jr., **Chelsea Morgan** ("Chicago PD") as Joanna Drayton and **Craig Spidle** (Steppenwolf Theatre's production of *The Tempest* and Goodman Theatre's *Sweet Bird of Youth*; TV shows "Chicago P.D.," "Chicago Code," and films *The Road to Perdition* and *The Untouchables*) as Matthew Drayton.

*Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* is directed by **Skip Greer**. The design team includes **Robert Koharchik** (scenic designer), **B. Modern** (costume designer), **Kendall Smith** (lighting designer) and **Todd Mack Reischman** (sound designer).

The 2016-2017 Wilson Stage Series is sponsored by **ESL Federal Credit Union**. The Honorary Wilson Stage Series Sponsor is **Dr. Dawn Lipson**. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* is produced with support from Lead Co-Producer **Buckingham Properties**; Co-Producer **Tasteful Connections**; Associate Producer **Bond Schoeneck & King** and Media Sponsors **WDKX** and **FOX Rochester**.

## ***Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* begins performances February 14 and runs in the Wilson Stage through March 12.**

For photos, or to arrange interviews, please contact  
Dawn Kellogg, Communications Manager, (585) 420-2059 or email: [dkellogg@gevatheatre.org](mailto:dkellogg@gevatheatre.org).

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

**PREVIEWS:** Tuesday, February 14 @ 7:30pm  
Wednesday, February 15 @ 7:30pm  
Thursday, February 16 @ 7:30pm  
Friday, February 17 @ 8pm  
Saturday, February 18 @ 2pm (Open Captioned Performance)

**OPENING NIGHT:** **Saturday, February 18 @ 8 pm**

**PERFORMANCES:** Sunday, February 19 @ 2pm and 7pm  
Tuesday, February 21 @ 6pm  
Wednesday, February 22 @ 7:30pm  
Thursday, February 23 @ 7:30pm (Community Night: Out at Geva)  
Friday, February 24 @ 8pm  
Saturday, February 25 @ 4pm and 8:30pm  
Sunday, February 26 @ 2pm (Sunday Salon) and 7pm

Tuesday, February 28 @ 7:30pm  
Wednesday, March 1 @ 7:30pm  
Thursday, March 2 @ 7:30pm  
Friday, March 3 @ 8pm  
Saturday, March 4 @ 4pm and 8:30pm  
Sunday, March 5 @ 2pm (Audio Described Performance) and 7pm  
Tuesday, March 7 @ 7:30pm  
Wednesday, March 8 @ 2pm & 7:30pm (Open Captioned performances)  
Thursday, March 9 @ 7:30pm (ASL Interpreted Performance)  
Friday, March 10 @ 8pm  
Saturday, March 11 @ 4pm and 8:30pm  
Sunday, March 12 @ 2pm (Sunday Salon)

**TICKET PRICES:** **Start at \$25**

**RESERVATIONS:** **(585) 232 GEVA (4382), Website: [www.gevatheatre.org](http://www.gevatheatre.org)**

**LOCATION:** **Geva Theatre Center, 75 Woodbury Blvd, Rochester, NY 14607**

\*Open captioning is provided with support from Hearing Loss Association of America – Rochester Chapter.

#### **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 subscribed in the country, serving up to 160,000 patrons annually, including more than 16,000 students.

The 522-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage is home to a wide variety of performances, from musicals to American and world classics. The 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage is home to Geva's own series of contemporary drama, comedy and musical theatre; Geva Comedy Improv; Geva's New Play Reading Series and the Hornets' Nest - an innovative play-reading series facilitating community-wide discussion on controversial topics. In addition, the Fielding Stage 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 under the artistic direction of Mark Cuddy.

**\*ENDS\***