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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
**GEVA THEATRE CENTER'S 2017-2018
FIELDING STUDIO SERIES CONCLUDES WITH
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF
HEARTLAND**

National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere will have its global debut at Geva.

Geva's Artistic Director Mark Cuddy returns to the stage in this touching drama.

Rochester, N.Y., February 28, 2018 – Geva Theatre Center's 2017-2018 Fielding Studio Series concludes with the world premiere of *Heartland* by **Gabriel Jason Dean**. This production features Artistic Director **Mark Cuddy** in his return to the stage and is directed by **Pirronne Yousefzadeh**. The production begins performances on **March 15** and runs in the Fielding Stage through **April 1**.

Dr. Harold Banks is a retired professor of Comparative Literature and Afghan Studies, waiting for his adopted daughter to return from teaching in Afghanistan, her native country. When Nazrullah, an Afghan refugee, suddenly arrives at his Nebraska doorstep armed only with his daughter's copies of *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *The Old Man and the Sea* – the two men become unlikely roommates. Set in both Maidan Shar and Omaha, *Heartland* is the story of a father, his determined daughter, and a surprising friendship.

Gabriel Jason Dean is a Brooklyn / Austin based theatre-maker who originally hails from Atlanta, Georgia. His plays have been produced or developed throughout the United States at places such as New York Theatre Workshop, Manhattan Theatre Club, McCarter Theatre, Araca Group, The Lark, The Flea, Oregon Shakespeare, The Kennedy Center, PlayPenn, InterAct, and many others. His play *In Bloom* was a finalist for the Laurents / Hatcher Award, received the Kennedy Center's Paula Vogel Prize, and was Runner-Up for the New Dramatist's Princess Grace Award. His play for children, *The Transition Of Doodle Pequeño*, received the American Alliance for Theatre & Education Distinguished Play Award, the New England Theatre Conference Aurand Harris Award and was selected for the Kennedy Center New Visions / New Voices Conference, Theatre for Young Audiences Award and was Runner-Up for the Harold & Mimi Steinberg National Playwriting Award. He is the recipient of the Essential Theatre New Play Prize and Austin's 2013 B. Iden Payne Award for "Best Original Script" and "Best Comedy" for *Qualities Of Starlight*, received an Austin Critic's Table Award for "Best Production" for *Terminus* and his play *Pigskin* won the Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival. Other awards include the Kennedy Center's ACTF Ken Ludwig Prize for a body of work from an emerging writer, and the City of Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs Playwriting Award. Fellowships include the Hodder Fellowship from Princeton

University, James A. Michener Playwriting Fellowship, the Dramatist's Guild Fellowship and the Sallie B. Goodman / McCarter Theatre Fellowship. His scripts are published through Samuel French, Dramatic Publishing and Playscripts. *Heartland* was originally commissioned by InterAct Theatre Company, and was developed with the support of PlayPenn.

Artistic Director **Mark Cuddy** makes his return to the Geva stage in the role of Harold. He was last seen in Geva's 2000 production of *Waiting for Godot*. Making their Geva debuts are **Mari Vial-Golden** as Getee and **Owais Ahmed** as Nazrullah.

Heartland is produced at Geva as part of a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere. **National New Play Network (NNPN)** is the country's alliance of non-profit professional theatres dedicated to the development, production, and continued life of new plays. Since its founding in 1998, NNPN has supported more than 250 productions nationwide through its innovative National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere program, which provides playwright and production support for new works at its Member theatres. *I and You*, which Geva presented in 2013, was also part of a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere.

Heartland is directed by **Pirronne Yousefzadeh** (Geva's 2017 production of *The Lake Effect*). The creative team includes **Meredith Reis** (Scenic Design), **Dina El-Aziz** (Costume Design), **Seth Reiser** (Lighting Design), **Pornchanok Kanchanabanca** (Sound Design) and **Jenni Werner** (Dramaturg).

***Heartland* begins performances on March 15 and runs in the Fielding Stage through April 1.**

The Fielding Studio Series is supported in part by the Gouvernet Arts Fund at The Community Foundation.
Media Sponsor for the Fielding Studio Series is Mix 100.5 FM.

**For further information, additional photographs or to arrange interviews, please contact:
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PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

PREVIEWS: Thursday, March 15 @ 7pm
Friday, March 16 @ 7pm
Saturday, March 17 @ 2:30pm (Open Captioned performance)

OPENING: Saturday, March 17 @ 7:30pm

PERFORMANCES: Sunday, March 18 @ 3pm
Tuesday, March 20 @ 7pm
Wednesday, March 21 @ 7pm
Thursday, March 22 @ 7pm
Friday, March 23 @ 7pm
Saturday, March 24 @ 2:30pm and 7:30pm
Sunday, March 25 @ 3pm
Wednesday, March 28 @ 7pm
Thursday, March 29 @ 7pm

Friday, March 30 @ 7pm
Saturday, March 31 @ 2:30pm and 7:30pm
Sunday, April 1 @ 3pm

TICKET PRICES: Tickets start at \$30.

RESERVATIONS: (585) 232-GEVA (4382), Website: www.gevatheatre.org

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

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 516-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.

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