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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GEVA ANNOUNCES 2018-2019 SEASON

46th Season features the original love-rock musical and the world premiere of the Geva-commissioned Revival: The Story of Son House.

***ESL Federal Credit Union and Rochester Regional Health Season Co-Sponsors
Dr. Dawn Lipson Honorary Season Producer***

Monday, March 19, 2018. Rochester, N.Y. – Geva Theatre Center’s **Artistic Director Mark Cuddy** and **Executive Director Christopher Mannelli** are proud to announce the 11 major productions and 2 festivals of the much anticipated 2018-2019 Season, the non-profit theatre’s 46th year of making professional theatre of a national standard in Rochester.

Since the 2014-2015 Season, **ESL Federal Credit Union** has sponsored the Wilson Stage Series, and continues its commitment as a Co-Sponsor for the Geva Theatre Center 2018-2019 Season. They are joined by Co-Sponsor **Rochester Regional Health**. **Dr. Dawn Lipson** will serve as Honorary Season Producer.

The Wilson Stage features the original love-rock musical; an acclaimed one-man tour de force about the first African American appointed to the Supreme Court; the world premiere of a madcap comedy of errors and mistaken identity; a funny but touching play that was the toast of Broadway in 2016; a hilarious new comedy about what it means to be “neighborly;” and the world premiere of a play about blues legend Son House.

Geva also announces the return of the theatre’s magical production of Dickens’ classic tale of redemption, the KeyBank production of *A Christmas Carol*, which has truly become Rochester’s holiday tradition; and, for a strictly limited return engagement in the Fielding Stage, *Erma Bombeck, At Wit’s End* starring “Suburban Outlaw” Pam Sherman. Geva will present a full line-up in the Fielding Stage throughout 2018-2019: nurturing new plays in the Festival of New Theatre, and an eclectic range of contemporary plays in the Fielding Studio Series. Additionally, the Fielding Stage will be a venue for the KeyBank Rochester Fringe Festival.

Geva is committed to serving diverse artists and communities. As with this current season, over half of next season's productions are written and/or directed by women. Five plays featured in the 2018-2019 Season are written by playwrights of color and four plays will be helmed by directors of color.

"Our stories for the stage in 2018-19 will not only include a wide range characters, but also of writers, directors, actors and designers" stated **Artistic Director Mark Cuddy**. "And fully a third of our subscription shows will be world premieres, owing to our commitment to creating a new body of dramatic literature for the American theatre."

"One our core values at Geva Theatre Center is to create work that celebrates the human experience," commented **Executive Director, Christopher Mannelli**. "In next year's incredibly exciting season the Rochester community will see themselves represented in the stories on our stage and be inspired by the artists creating the work."

"Geva Theatre Center has been a vital element of the arts and cultural experience in Rochester for more than 40 years," said **William Freeman, Vice President/Director of Marketing, ESL Federal Credit Union**. "We are proud to lend our support for the 2018-2019 season, and are pleased to continue our partnership for a fifth consecutive year."

"The cultural and educational offerings at Geva Theatre Center are an integral part of Rochester's artistic experience," said **Rochester Regional Health President and CEO Eric Bieber, MD**. "Part of Rochester Regional Health's vision is to enable every member of the communities we serve to enjoy a better, healthier life. We believe that enjoyment of the arts is an important part of life and we are very pleased to co-sponsor the 2018-2019 Geva Theatre Center Season."

Since 1972, the not-for-profit Geva Theatre Center has been Rochester's professional theatre home, offering patrons the opportunity to enjoy the work of the country's top artists in an intimate setting right in their own community. Geva Theatre Center is one of the premier cultural and educational institutions in Rochester, the most attended professional regional theatre in the Northeast United States outside Manhattan, and a leader among American professional theatres.

2018-2019 Season

HAIR

Book and Lyrics by Gerome Ragni and James Rado

Music by Galt MacDermot

Directed by Melissa Rain Anderson

Part of the Wilson Stage Series

September 4 – October 7, 2018

The original love-rock musical celebrates the Sixties with songs such as “Aquarius;” “Good Morning, Starshine;” and “Let the Sunshine In.” Claude, Berger, and their free-spirited friends balance their bohemian lives with their rebellion against the Vietnam War and The Establishment. It’s the summer of love in all its barefoot, long haired, bell-bottomed, beaded and fringed glory.

FORTUNE

Written and Directed by Deborah Zoe Laufer

In Partnership with the Hangar Theatre, Ithaca

Part of the Fielding Studio Series

October 4 – October 21, 2018

A romantic comedy about finding love: whether it’s in the cards (or not!). Maude is a 30-something storefront psychic who has given up on love. When Jeremy, a downhearted, love-hungry accountant, stumbles into her shop, she wrestles with fate and destiny.

THURGOOD

By George Stevens, Jr.

Directed by Lou Bellamy

Part of the Wilson Stage Series

October 16 – November 18, 2018

The inspiring story of the first African-American to sit on the Supreme Court of the United States. *Thurgood* spans the impressive 58-year career of Justice Thurgood Marshall, from his early days as the civil rights lawyer arguing the landmark case of Brown vs. Board of Education, to the end of institutionalized segregation in 1954, and his appointment to the highest court in the land.

World Premiere

HARD CELL

By Brent Askari

Directed by Skip Greer

Part of the Wilson Stage Series

January 8 – February 3, 2019

A madcap new comedy of errors and mistaken identity. When college professor Nick Abtahi finds himself lost in a small Midwestern town, the welcome mat doesn’t exactly get rolled out by its crazy collection of locals. This laugh out loud comedy makes its world premiere at Geva.

World Premiere

THE MAGICIAN'S DAUGHTER

By Lila Rose Kaplan

Directed by Shelley Butler

Part of the Fielding Studio Series

January 24 – February 10, 2019

Inspired by Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, this play is a Magic Show. The Magician Prospero and his daughter Miranda dazzle and delight until Miranda quits. A rift grows between them as Miranda searches for the courage to let her father know how his addiction has affected her life. What she doesn't expect is to learn how much she loves him.

THE HUMANS

By Stephen Karam

Directed by Mark Cuddy

A Co-Production with Syracuse Stage

Part of the Wilson Stage Series

February 19 - March 17, 2019

Winner of four 2016 Tony Awards including 'Best Play.' Three generations of the Blake family from Scranton, PA gather for Thanksgiving in a tiny NYC apartment. Over toasts, turkey and tough love, family hopes and myths are shared and shattered. This funny and heart-tugging play was hailed on Broadway two seasons ago.

NATIVE GARDENS

By Karen Zacarías

Directed by Melissa Crespo

A Co-Production with Syracuse Stage

Part of the Wilson Stage Series

March 26 – April 21, 2019

One of this year's most-produced plays: A brilliant new backyard comedy redefining what it means to be "neighborly". When a disagreement over a property line turns into a war of green thumbs, neighbors spin out of control with hilarious results.

THE ROYALE

By Marco Ramirez

Directed by Pirronne Yousefzadeh

In partnership with Kitchen Theatre, Ithaca

Part of the Fielding Studio Series

April 11 – April 28, 2019

Get your ringside seats for this electrifying drama that packs an unforgettable punch. Boxer Jay "The Sport" Jackson wants to be the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world. But it's 1905, and in racially segregated Jim Crow America his chances are about as good as getting knocked out. From the award-winning writer of "Orange is the New Black" and "Sons of Anarchy."

REVIVAL:

The Resurrection of Son House

Written and Directed by Keith Glover

Music by Son House, Billy Thompson and Keith Glover

Musical Direction by Billy Thompson

Part of the Wilson Stage Series

May 1 – June 2, 2019

Revival brings blues legend Son House back to life on the Geva stage. From his beginnings in rural Mississippi, through personal crises and his relatively obscure life in Rochester, to the stunning rebirth of his career in 1964. A celebration of the musical legacy of the man who inspired generations of blues artists from B.B. King, Eric Clapton, and Bonnie Raitt, to Susan Tedeschi, Joe Bonamassa, and Jack White.

Special Productions and Events

KEYBANK ROCHESTER FRINGE FESTIVAL

In the Fielding Stage

September 12-22, 2018

The Fielding Stage will once again be a venue for the KeyBank Rochester Fringe Festival, hosting a wide variety of performances.

FESTIVAL OF NEW THEATRE

In the Fielding Stage

October 29 – November 11, 2018

A two-week showcase of new plays and projects that are currently in Geva's developmental process. More than 330 full-length or short works have received readings and/or workshops as part of Geva's new play development programs, and more than 65 have had subsequent productions around the country and the globe.

Rochester's Holiday Tradition

The KeyBank production of

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Charles Dickens

Adapted by Mark Cuddy Music and Lyrics by Gregg Coffin

Directed by Mark Cuddy

In the Wilson Stage

November 29 – December 29, 2018

On Christmas Eve, Scrooge is visited by a series of ghosts who remind him who he was and what he might yet become. He learns the true meaning of the season and that it's never too late to make a new start. The famous tale of redemption for the most despised man in London will awaken your heart and rekindle your spirit in this critically acclaimed adaptation. Recommended for the entire family! (Please remember that children under five are not permitted in the theatre.) **Note: Not a part of the ESL Wilson Stage subscription series.*

Back by popular demand!
ERMA BOMBECK: AT WIT'S END

By Margaret Engel and Allison Engel

Directed by Mark Cuddy

Starring Pam Sherman as Erma Bombeck

March 12 – March 31, 2019

Last year's sell-out hit returns for a limited run. Erma Bombeck, one of our country's most beloved humorists, captured the frustrations of her generation by asking, "If life is a bowl of cherries, what am I doing in the pits?" Starring "Suburban Outlaw" and columnist Pam Sherman, this is the story behind America's favorite average housewife who championed the lives of women with an incomparable wit that sprang from the most unexpected place of all — the truth. **Note: Not part of the Fielding Studio Series.*

Throughout its 45-year history, Geva has partnered with area cultural and community organizations, most recently with the Rochester Latino Theatre Company on *In the Heights*; the Susan B. Anthony Museum and House for *The Agitators: the Story of Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass*, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester for *The Diary of Anne Frank*. As a committed member of the Rochester community, Geva looks forward to partnering with area cultural and community organizations for the 2018-2019 Season and will announce more details throughout the season.

Because professional regional theatre cannot be sustained on ticket sales alone, Geva Theatre Center thanks those generous individuals and businesses that have already committed to making the 2018-2019 Season a memorable one: ESL Federal Credit Union; Rochester Regional Health, Dr. Dawn Lipson, The Gouvernet Arts Fund at the Community Foundation; KeyBank; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; The Mary S. Mulligan Charitable Foundation; Harter Secrest & Emery; Rockcastle Florist; All-Occasions Catering; imaginé Photography; Marshall Street Bar & Grill; NOX; Salena's; Tasteful Connections Catering; ROC Brewing Co.; and Media Sponsors 13 WHAM TV, 98PXY, Radio 95.1, Fox Rochester, Legends 102.7, WARM 101.3, WHAM Radio, News10NBC, WROC TV and WXXI Public Broadcasting.

Subscriptions for the full 9-Play 2018-2019 Season are on sale now from \$210. The ESL and Rochester Regional Health Wilson Stage Series and Fielding Studio Series may be purchased separately, from \$120 and \$90 respectively. Subscribing is easy, flexible and affordable. Subscribers enjoy the best seats at the best prices, plus a host of exclusive benefits like ticket exchange privileges, priority advance booking and discounts, money-saving coupons to area restaurants, free coat check and more. For more information on subscribing to Geva's 2018-2019 Season visit: www.gevatheatre.org/subscribe-now/. Subscribers to the 2018-2019 Season will be able to purchase tickets for *A Christmas Carol* and *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's*

End in June. Tickets to all individual shows (excl. *A Christmas Carol* and *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End*) will go on sale to the general public on July 17, 2018. Tickets to *A Christmas Carol* will go on sale to the general public on Monday, September 24. For information on the 2018-2019 Season, visit www.gevatheatre.org/2018-2019-season. **All plays, artists, schedules and prices are subject to change.**

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.

**FOR RESERVATIONS AND TICKET INFORMATION, CONTACT THE BOX OFFICE AT
(585) 232-Geva (4382), OR VISIT GEVA'S WEBSITE AT www.GevaTheatre.org.**

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FAST FACTS ON



AND THE 2018-2019 SEASON

Artists:

- Over 5,800 actors, directors, choreographers, designers, musical directors, musicians, stage managers, and writers have worked at Geva since it was founded in 1972.
- Among Geva's notable alumni are:
 - 1 Pulitzer Prize nominee
 - 4 Academy Award Nominees: Josh Brolin, Robert Downey, Jr., Samuel L. Jackson & Robert Vaughn
 - 23 Tony Award winners and 76 Tony nominees
 - 34 Drama Desk Award Winners and 94 Drama Desk nominees
 - 11 Emmy Award Winners and 47 Emmy nominees.
- Geva casts the country's top artists from auditions held in New York City and Rochester. Our casting director, Paul Fouquet, is a Geva Affiliate Artist and a Rochester native.
- Geva houses out-of-town actors, directors and artists in apartments just 150 steps away from the theatre, which the theatre now owns.
- Geva provides every out-of-town actor, director and artist with a familiarization packet containing information on all there is to see and do in Rochester and the surrounding area.
- Actors who perform at Geva are Rochester residents for an average of 8 weeks and become part of the fabric of the community, dining in area restaurants, shopping in area stores and visiting area attractions.

Writers and New Plays

- Geva has presented approximately 340 play readings and workshops since its inception. More than 67 Geva-developed plays have had subsequent productions around the country and the globe.
- In subsequent productions, plays that premiere at Geva are recognized on the title page of programs, saying "Originally produced at Geva Theatre Center, Rochester, NY."
- Play readings are free and open to the public, and most are followed by a discussion between the audience and the playwright.
- Geva's nationally recognized and innovative "Hornets' Nest" series of play readings uses theatre to facilitate community discussions on contemporary topics.

Productions:

- Geva has made over 520 fully-produced productions of plays and musicals since 1972.
- What audiences see onstage is the culmination of months of work. The artistic team for each show begins collaborating up to 12 months in advance of the first performance on every aspect and detail of the production.
- It takes over 11,000 direct labor hours to produce each show at Geva.

Geva and Geva's Staff:

- Geva employs 93 resident full-time and part-time staff, in addition to some 200 guest actors, designers, directors and other artists.

- As a member of the national League of Resident Theatres (LORT), Geva operates under agreements between Actors Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the US; the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, an independent national labor union; and United Scenic Artists (Local USA-829), a union of scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers.
- Geva is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Visit Rochester, the Rochester Business Alliance (RBA), Rochester Downtown Development Corporation (RDDC), Arts & Cultural Council for Greater Rochester and TheatreROCS.

Economic Impact:

- Geva operates on a budget of approximately \$7 million, 87% of which is directed toward artistic, production, education, literary and community program expenses.
- Geva's annual economic impact exceeds \$10 million. Since 1972, Geva has contributed over \$250 million in economic activity to the community.
- 86% of Geva's direct expenses are made in New York State, with 71% in the Rochester area.
- Geva's education and work-force training programs serve over 40,000 youth and adults each year.
- Geva welcomes 160,000 people through its doors each season and over its 45-year history has served over 4.8 million theatergoers.