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DIVE INTO THE HORNETS' NEST AT GEVA THEATRE CENTER

Geva's nationally recognized program of thought-provoking theatre continues on May 20 with *The Kavanaugh Files* by the Verbatim Performance Lab.

Rochester, N.Y., May 8, 2019 - Few experiences can ignite a great conversation like a thrilling night in the theatre. **The Hornets' Nest** series has theatre-goers itching for that conversation.

The Hornets' Nest series of script-in-hand readings with professional actors and directors returns with three plays investigating the most challenging and controversial ethical dilemmas of our time. Following each reading, audience members will have the opportunity to engage in open discussion with key figures from the Rochester community. Since its inception in 2007, the Hornets' Nest series of readings has become nationally recognized and lauded as one of the most innovative theatrical initiatives in the country.

The 2018-2019 series concludes on **May 20** with ***The Kavanaugh Files*** by the Verbatim Performance Lab.

In September 2018, Dr. Christine Blasey Ford came forward with allegations that she had been sexually assaulted by then Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh when they were both teenagers. The allegations prompted a second set of hearings conducted by the Senate Judiciary Committee on September 27, 2018. Blasey Ford and Kavanaugh both offered sworn testimony and faced questioning by members of the committee and a designated proxy, Rachel Mitchell. Following these hearings, the committee voted 11-10 to send the nomination to the Senate floor. On October 6, 2018, the Senate voted 50-48 to confirm Kavanaugh to become an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

The Kavanaugh Files is a verbatim performance of key moments from the hearings. Actors perform the original words, gestures, and disfluencies of the real-life people, and in most cases, the genders have been inverted--women perform the roles that men had in the real hearings, and men perform the women. How is our perception of a person's behavior influenced by their gender, and how does that impact the ways in which we respond to national events?

NYU Steinhardt's Verbatim Performance Lab investigates and performs words and gestures collected from found media artifacts and interview-based data. Through these investigations, the Lab disrupts assumptions, biases, and intolerances across a spectrum of political, cultural, and social experiences.

The Kavanagh Files is created by Joe Salvatore and Keith R. Huff, in collaboration with Heleya de Barros, Daryl Embry, Analisa Gutierrez, Suzy Jane Hunt, Scott Michael Morales, and Robert Thaxton-Stevenson, with costume design by Márion Talán.

Following the reading of *The Kavanagh Files*, audience members will have the opportunity to discuss the questions that the play poses.

The play reading is at 7:00pm in the Fielding Stage. Tickets are free and, due to the popularity of this series, are limited to two per person. Reservations are recommended. Due to anticipated demand, all unclaimed tickets will be released at 6:45pm on the day of performance. Patron discretion is advised: *The Kavanagh Files* deals with adult subject matter. To reserve tickets phone the Box Office: (585) 232-Geva (4382) or reserve online at www.gevatheatre.org.

The Fielding Stage is supported in part by the Gouvernet Arts Fund at The Rochester Area Community Foundation. Leadership support for the Hornet's Nest is provided by The Mary S. Mulligan Charitable Trust, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

GEVA THEATRE CENTER

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre Center is a not-for-profit theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs and services of a national standard. As Rochester's flagship professional theatre, Geva 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 20,000 students.

Geva operates two venues – the 516-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage and the 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage. As one of the country's leading theatre companies and a member of the national League of Resident Theatres, Geva produces a varied contemporary repertoire from musicals to world premieres celebrating the rich tapestry of our diverse community. The theatre draws upon the talents of some of the country's top actors, directors, designers and writers who are shaping the American Theatre scene.

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 more information: GevaTheatre.org

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