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GEVA'S 47TH SEASON BEGINS WITH ***LA CAGE AUX FOLLES***

'The Best of Times is Now' as the ESL Federal Credit Union 2019-2020 Season kicks off with one of musical theatre's biggest all-time hits.

La Cage aux Folles is the first musical to win Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical twice and was the inspiration for the 1996 hit film, The Birdcage.

To celebrate his 25th Anniversary as Artistic Director, Mark Cuddy will star as nightclub owner Georges.

Rochester, N.Y., August 14, 2019 – Geva Theatre Center presents *La Cage Aux Folles*, with book by **Harvey Fierstein**, music and lyrics by **Jerry Herman**, based on the play by **Jean Poiret**, directed by **Melissa Rain Anderson**, with musical direction by **Don Kot**, and choreography by **Sam Hay** in the Elaine P. Wilson Stage from **September 3 through October 6**.

In sunny St. Tropez, Georges and Albin run a glamorous nightclub with fabulous drag performers. Their blissful existence is turned upside down when Georges' son announces that he is getting married...to the daughter of one of France's most conservative politicians. Georges and Albin do their best to ensure that the marriage goes off without a hitch, with hilarious results. One of musical theatre's biggest all-time hits, *La Cage aux Folles* features an exuberant score by Jerry Herman (*Mame; Hello, Dolly!*). Winner of six Tony Awards including "Best Musical" when it premiered in 1983, both the 2004 and 2010 Broadway revivals won the Tony Award for "Best Revival of a Musical." *La Cage aux Folles* was the inspiration for the 1996 hit film *The Birdcage*.

Based on the 1978 film of the same name, which was, in turn, based on a 1973 play by Jean Poiret, *La Cage aux Folles* opened on Broadway at the Palace Theatre in August 1983. This production received eight Tony Award nominations, winning six including Best Musical, Best Score and Best Book. It also won two Drama Desk Awards. The show ran for four years and 1,761 performances. It was revived on Broadway in 2004 and won the Tony Award for Best Revival. The 2008 London revival won the Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival. The production transferred to Broadway in 2010 and was nominated for eleven Tony Awards, winning for Best Revival of a Musical. *La Cage aux Folles* is the first musical in Broadway history to win the Tony Award for Best

Revival of a Musical twice and it has been awarded a “Best Musical” or “Best Revival of a Musical” Tony Award for each of its Broadway productions.

The cast is led by **Mark Cuddy** as Georges and **Danny Vaccaro** as Albin. In celebration of his 25th Anniversary as Geva’s Artistic Director, Mark Cuddy will star as nightclub owner Georges. In 2018 Cuddy returned to the stage after an eighteen year hiatus in an acclaimed performance of the world premiere of *Heartland* in Geva’s Fielding Stage. Previously on the Geva stage he played Vladimir in Geva’s 2000 production of *Waiting for Godot*. **Danny Vaccaro** makes his Geva Theatre Center debut as Albin. Danny was part of the Tony Award-winning production of *La Cage Aux Folles* in 2011. Other New York credits include *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Madison Square Garden’s *The Wizard of Oz* and *Nunsense A-men*.

Making their Geva debuts in *La Cage aux Folles* are **Michael RJ Campbell** (6th Street Playhouse productions of *The Addams Family* and *The Rocky Horror Show*) as Francis; **Giovanni DaSilva** (International tour of *A Chorus Line*, European tour of *Candide*) as Angelique; **Kyle Dupree** (Off-Broadway’s *Fabulous: Queen of Musical Comedies*) as Hanna; **Donovan Michael Hoffer** (Broadway production of *Rocktopia*) as Chantal; **Paige Silvester** (national tours of *The Sound of Music* and *Evita*) as Anne; **Sam Tanabe** (Broadway productions of *Allegiance* and Off-Broadway productions of *Red Eye of Love* and *Hello, Dolly!*) as Bitelle; **Matthew Tiberi** (Broadway productions of *Finding Neverland* and the national tour of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*); **Joseph Tudor** (national tour of *Elf: The Musical*) as Mercedes; **Michael Evan Williams** (Off-Broadway production of *Cruel Intentions*, National Tour of *Bullets over Broadway*) as Jean Michel; and **Esther Winter** (West End production of *Show Boat*) as Jacqueline. Returning to Geva are **Kevin Curtis** (Geva’s 2018 production of *Hair*) as Jacob; **Susan Haefner** (Geva’s *A Christmas Carol*; Broadway productions of *State Fair*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *42nd Street*) as Mme Renaud/Marie Dindon; and **James Michael Reilly** (Geva productions of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *Inherit the Wind*) as M. Renaud/Edouard Dindon. Local actors **Kat Berton**, **Brent Hammes**; **Kyle Johnson**, **Patrick Jones**, **Kayla McGallian**, and **Kelsey Roberts** complete the cast.

La Cage aux Folles is directed by **Melissa Rain Anderson** (last season’s production of *Hair*, 2017’s sell-out hit, *In the Heights*, 2016’s opening production of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, the 2015 sell-out hit production of *Monty Python’s Spamalot* and 2014’s *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*) with musical direction by **Don Kot** and choreography by **Sam Hay**. The creative team includes **Adam Koch** (scenic design), **Kevin Copenhaver** (costume design), **Brian J. Lilienthal** (lighting design), **Danny Erdberg** (sound design), **Bettie O. Rogers** (wig design) and **Jean Gordon Ryon** (dramaturg).

The 2019-2020 Season is sponsored by **ESL Federal Credit Union**. The Honorary Season Producer is **Dr. Dawn Lipson**. *La Cage aux Folles* is produced with support from Lead Co-Producer **Harter Secret & Emery LLP**; Media Sponsors **13WHAM** and **WARM 101.3** and Honorary Producers **Charis and Rich Warshof**.

***La Cage aux Folles* begins previews on September 3, opens September 7 and runs through October 6.**

**For further information, photographs or to arrange interviews, please contact:
Dawn Kellogg, Communications Manager, (585) 420-2059.**

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Previews: Tuesday, September 3 @ 7:30pm
Wednesday, September 4 @ 7:30pm
Thursday, September 5 @ 7:30pm
Friday, September 6 @ 8pm
Saturday, September 7 @ 2pm (Open Captioned Performance*)

Opening: **Saturday, September 7 @ 8pm**

Performances: Sunday, September 8 @ 2pm and 7pm
Tuesday, September 10 @ 6pm
Wednesday, September 11 @ 7:30pm
Thursday, September 12 @ 7:30pm
Friday, September 13 @ 8pm
Saturday, September 14 @ 3pm and 8pm
Sunday, September 15 @ 2pm (Sunday Salon) and 7pm
Tuesday, September 17 @ 7:30pm
Wednesday, September 18 @ 7:30pm
Thursday, September 19 @ 7:30pm
Friday, September 20 @ 8pm
Saturday, September 21 @ 3pm and 8pm
Sunday, September 22 @ 2pm (Audio Described performance) and 7pm
Tuesday, September 24 @ 7:30pm
Wednesday, September 25 @ 7:30pm
Thursday, September 26 @ 7:30pm (ASL Interpreted Performance)
Friday, September 27 @ 8pm
Saturday, September 28 @ 3pm and 8pm
Sunday, September 29 @ 2 pm (Sunday Salon) and 7pm
Tuesday, October 1 @ 7:30pm
Wednesday, October 2 @ 2pm and 7:30pm (Open Captioned Performances)
Thursday, October 3 @ 7:30pm
Friday, October 4 @ 8pm
Saturday, October 5 @ 3pm and 8pm
Sunday, October 6 @ 2pm

Ticket Prices: **Tickets start at \$25.**

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

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

* Partial support for open captioning provided by Theatre Development Fund.

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