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For immediate release.

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP SELECTS THREE LOCAL PRODUCTIONS FOR  
INAUGURAL BLOCK PARTY AT THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE**

**Center Theatre Group Will Remount Productions from Coeurage Theatre Company,  
Echo Theater Company and Fountain Theatre for Block Party Celebration April 14–May 21**

Center Theatre Group has selected three local productions for the inaugural **Block Party: Celebrating Los Angeles Theatre** at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. Block Party will remount Coeurage Theatre Company’s production of “Failure: A Love Story” by Philip Dawkins, Echo Theater Company’s production of “Dry Land” by Ruby Rae Spiegel and Fountain Theatre’s production of “Citizen: An American Lyric” by Claudia Rankine and adapted for the stage by Stephen Sachs. Each production will have a two-week run presented April 14 through May 21, 2017.

The selected shows will receive the full support of Center Theatre Group and its staff in order to fund, stage and market each production. Full casting for “Failure: A Love Story,” “Dry Land” and “Citizen: An American Lyric” will be announced at a later date.

“Failure: A Love Story” from Coeurage Theatre Company will take the first slot and will begin previews April 14, open April 16 and close April 23. Written by Philip Dawkins and directed by Michael Matthews, the show chronicles the lives, loves and deaths of the three Fail sisters and the one man who fell in love with each of them. Set against the backdrop of 1920s Chicago, this touching, whimsical tale explores the impermanence of life and the permanence of love.

“We’re completely thrilled to be a part of this program,” said Coeurage Artistic Director Jeremy Lelliott of being selected. “Center Theatre Group is a standard-bearer in the L.A. arts scene, and to benefit from their support and input on our growth and this upcoming production marks an exciting new chapter for Coeurage and the 99-seat community as a whole.”

Fountain Theatre’s “Citizen: An American Lyric,” a meditation on race that fuses poetry, prose, movement, music and the video image, will begin previews on April 28, open April 30 and close May 7. Adapted by playwright and Fountain Theatre Co-Artistic Director Stephen Sachs and directed by Shirley Jo Finney, it is a provocative stage adaptation of Claudia Rankine’s internationally acclaimed book of poetry about everyday acts of racism in America. Of Rankine’s “Citizen,” *The New Yorker* wrote that it was “brilliant... [and] explores

the kinds of injustice that thrive when the illusion of justice is perfected.” The New York Times wrote that “Rankine brilliantly pushes poetry’s forms to disarm readers and circumvent our carefully constructed defense mechanisms against the hint of possibly being racist ourselves.”

“We’re thrilled to be partnering with Center Theatre Group on its first-ever Block Party at the Kirk Douglas Theatre,” said Sachs. “It’s particularly meaningful to us that ‘Citizen’ was chosen because racism and white dominance in America is as timely now, since the election, as it ever was. The project also reflects the diversity of our work at the Fountain Theatre.”

Written by Ruby Rae Spiegel and directed by Alana Dietze, Echo Theater Company’s “Dry Land” will take the final slot of Block Party and will begin previews May 12, open on May 14 and close on May 21. It is a haunting play about female friendship and an abortion that takes place in the locker room of a central Florida high school. Written when Spiegel was just 21 years old and still an undergraduate at Yale, the play is a deeply truthful portrait of the fears, hopes and bonds of teenage girls — as gut-wrenching as it is funny. In his New York Times “critic’s pick” review, Ben Brantley called “Dry Land” “tender, caustic, funny and harrowing, often all at the same time.”

“The Echo is delighted and honored to be selected for Block Party,” said Echo Theater Artistic Director Chris Fields. “The fulfillment of being recognized and the deep gratification of being part of a special affirmation of our entire Los Angeles theatre community is just wonderful.”

“As we celebrate Center Theatre Group’s 50 years of creating theatre in Los Angeles, we want to turn the spotlight on some of the remarkable work being done on other stages,” said Center Theatre Group Artistic Director Michael Ritchie in discussing Block Party. “Coourage Theatre, Echo Theater and Fountain Theatre, as well as others throughout L.A., regularly produce excellent, boundary-pushing work and we’re so glad they are sharing some of that work with us.”

Tickets for Block Party will go on sale to the general public in February.

Center Theatre Group received 76 submissions for Block Party from intimate theatre companies from North Hollywood to San Pedro, Topanga to Sierra Madre. Each company was able to submit one production that opened between January 1, 2015, and August 12, 2016.

With Block Party, Center Theatre Group hopes to strengthen relationships within the Los Angeles community, create additional avenues for the organization to become familiar with local playwrights, actors, directors and designers, and foster relationships between Center Theatre Group staff and the staff at theatre companies throughout Los Angeles.

Block Party receives major support from Aliza Karney Guren and Marc Guren with generous funding also provided by Joni and Miles Benickes.

Center Theatre Group has a long history of pairing with local theatre companies including the Deaf West production of “Big River” which was produced at the Mark Taper Forum in 2002 and went on to Broadway before returning to the Ahmanson Theatre in 2005 as part of a national tour. More recently, Center Theatre Group partnered with Ebony

Repertory Theatre for the remounting of “A Raisin in the Sun” (which played at the Douglas), 24th Street Theatre’s “Walking the Tightrope” (also at the Douglas) and with other companies around the city for “The Behavior of Broadus” (Burglars of Hamm and Sacred Fools Theater Company) and “Birder” (The Road Theatre Company).

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, programming seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2000-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

The Kirk Douglas Theatre is located at 9820 Washington Blvd. in Culver City, CA 90232. Ample free parking and restaurants are adjacent.

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