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KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE

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For immediate release.

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP SELECTS THREE LOCAL PRODUCTIONS FOR THE  
SECOND ANNUAL BLOCK PARTY AT THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE**  
**Center Theatre Group Will Remount Productions from Celebration Theatre,  
Critical Mass Performance Group and Playwrights' Arena March 29–May 20**

Center Theatre Group has selected three local productions for the second annual **Block Party: Celebrating Los Angeles Theatre** at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. Block Party 2018 will remount Celebration Theatre's production of "Die, Mommie, Die!," Critical Mass Performance Group's production of "Ameryka" and Playwrights' Arena's production of "Bloodletting." Each production will have a two-week run with 12 performances presented March 29 through May 20, 2018. The three visiting companies will receive the full support of Center Theatre Group and its staff in order to fund, stage and market each production.

"Just in its second year, Block Party is already a favorite tradition for the organization," said Center Theatre Group Artistic Director Michael Ritchie. "We cherish the opportunity to work alongside others in the Los Angeles theatre community and look forward to continuing to learn, share and experience with our colleagues by presenting these three vastly different productions of exceptional caliber."

Full casting for the three productions will be announced at a later date.

**"Bloodletting"**

Playwrights' Arena  
March 29 – April 8

"Bloodletting" from Playwrights' Arena will take the first slot and will begin previews March 29, open March 31 and close April 8. Written by Boni B. Alvarez and directed by Playwrights' Arena Artistic Director Jon Lawrence Rivera, the play takes place on an island called Palawan. Farrah and Bosley, two Filipino American siblings who recently lost their father, arrive on the island to scatter his ashes when a typhoon hits and they are forced to seek shelter at a tiny café. The peculiar café owner and his granddaughter share tales of aswangs (witches) with the siblings—that is until Farrah discovers she has a few peculiarities of her own.

"Part of an ongoing relationship with playwright Boni B. Alvarez, 'Bloodletting' is set on a remote Philippine island and depicts native folklore through the eyes of Filipino Americans,"

Rivera said. “Block Party will shine light on the diversity of our programming at Playwrights’ Arena and further showcase our work.”

**“Ameryka”**

Critical Mass Performance Group

April 19 – 29

Charting a course through 250 years of astonishing connections between the United States and Poland, Critical Mass Performance Group’s “Ameryka” is an epic exploration of the universal longing for freedom and justice. Written and directed by Critical Mass Performance Group Artistic Director Nancy Keystone in collaboration with the company, “Ameryka” will begin previews on April 19, open April 21 and close April 29.

From the American Revolution to the global war on terror, from the struggle for civil rights to the fight against communism, “Ameryka” shines a light on the promises and pitfalls of democracy. An ensemble-created piece developed over six years, it showcases Critical Mass Performance Group’s kaleidoscopic style of found texts, movement, original music and exuberant spectacle.

“We are absolutely over the moon to be chosen to participate in Block Party,” said Keystone. “‘Ameryka’ is a kind of hybrid creation—the different episodes collide in a fast-paced, non-linear structure, and it encompasses a variety of styles: vaudeville, psychological realism, heightened physicality, song, religious ritual, satire. It’s pretty epic!”

**“Die, Mommie, Die!”**

Celebration Theatre

May 10 – 20

Celebration Theatre’s production of “Die, Mommie, Die!” will take the final slot of Block Party and will begin previews May 10, open on May 12 and close on May 20.

Written by Charles Busch and directed by Ryan Bergmann, the show is a campy noir classic that follows the devious actions of aging Hollywood star Angela Arden (played by Drew Droege in drag) who is trapped in an unhappy marriage and plots to kill her husband in order to be with her young lover. When Angela’s children learn of her plot and seek revenge, madness ensues in this over-the-top comedy.

On being selected, Celebration Theatre Co-Artistic Director Michael A. Shepperd said, “It’s a big honor for us. We’re a 53-seat theatre company in L.A. and we’ve seen our stock and value grow immensely over the last few years, so this is a testament to the hard work and the good work that we’ve been doing.”

Center Theatre Group received 53 submissions for Block Party from intimate theatre companies in the greater Los Angeles area. Each company was able to submit one production that opened between January 1, 2016, and May 30, 2017.

With Block Party, Center Theatre Group will continue to strengthen its relationships within the Los Angeles theatre community by creating additional avenues for the organization to

work with local playwrights, actors, directors and designers. Block Party also helps to foster relationships between Center Theatre Group staff and the staff of 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. This programming is also made possible in part by a Culver City Performing Arts Grant with support from Sony Pictures Entertainment.

Center Theatre Group's inaugural Block Party in 2017 featured the Coeurage Theatre Company production of "Failure: A Love Story," followed by The Fountain Theatre production of "Citizen: An American Lyric" and finished with The Echo Theater Company production of "Dry Land."

Center Theatre Group has a long history of pairing with local theatre companies of all sizes in a multitude of ways. Center Theatre Group presented Deaf West's production of "Big River" at the Mark Taper Forum in 2002, which went on to Broadway before returning to the Ahmanson Theatre in 2005 as part of a national tour. Center Theatre Group also partnered with 24th Street Theatre on "Walking the Tightrope," which played at the Douglas, and with other companies on productions around the city such as "The Behavior of Broadus" (with Burglars of Hamm and Sacred Fools Theater Company), "Birder" (with The Road Theatre Company) and, most recently, "The Hotel Play" (with Playwrights' Arena).

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation's preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles' leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, programs 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.

Tickets for Block Party are available by calling (213) 628-2772, online at [www.CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://www.CenterTheatreGroup.org), at the Center Theatre Group Box Office at the Ahmanson Theatre or at the Kirk Douglas Theatre Box Office two hours prior to performance. Tickets for each individual production range from \$25 – \$70 (ticket prices are subject to change). A Block Party Party Pass is available for \$75, which includes a ticket to all three productions as well as a complimentary cocktail (or non-alcoholic beverage) at each performance. The Party Pass is available by phone or in-person now through April 8.

The Kirk Douglas Theatre is located at 9820 Washington Blvd. in Culver City, CA 90232. Free three hour covered parking at City Hall with validation (available in the Kirk Douglas Theatre lobby).

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