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For immediate release.

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP TO HOST TWO FREE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS  
FOR “ELLIOT, A SOLDIER’S FUGUE” AND “WATER BY THE SPOONFUL”**

**Community Conversation on February 9 at the Kirk Douglas Theatre  
Will Discuss Coming Home From Combat**

**Community Conversation on February 21 at the Mark Taper Forum  
Will Explore How Technology Creates Community**

Center Theatre Group will host two Community Conversations inspired by Quiara Alegría Hudes’ plays “Elliot, a Soldier’s Fugue” and “Water by the Spoonful.” Community Conversations are a series of panel discussions that are free and open to the public and feature local thought leaders in dialogue about the context, issues and ideas finding voice on Center Theatre Group stages.

The first Community Conversation relates to “Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue” and is titled **Coming Home From Combat**. It will be held on Friday, February 9 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. and will discuss how veterans talk about their experiences in combat and how they relate to others after returning from war. The discussion will also examine the feeling of isolation that many veterans grapple with after experiencing war and the individuals and institutions in Los Angeles and beyond that are available to support those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. This event will take place at the Kirk Douglas Theatre at 9820 Washington Blvd. Panelists to be announced at a later date.

The second Community Conversation relates to “Water by the Spoonful” and is titled **Does Technology Create Community?** It will take place on Wednesday, February 21 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. and will discuss how technology seemingly provides endless opportunities to connect people to one another, whether it be for love, friendship or support. The event will also examine how online communities are affecting real-life communities and the problems that arise when so much human interaction takes place behind a screen. This event will take place at The Music Center Annex building, 601 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, in Rehearsal Room A. Panelists to be announced at a later date.

Directed by Shishir Kurup, “Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue” is the first in Hudes’ Elliot Trilogy and will play at the Kirk Douglas Theatre January 27 through February 25. Directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz, “Water by the Spoonful” is the second in the trilogy and will play at the Mark Taper Forum January 31 through March 11. The Latino Theater Company will present the final installment of the trilogy with their production of “The Happiest Song Plays Last” at the Los Angeles Theatre Center February 17 through March 19. Presented all together, the full trilogy gives Los Angeles theatre audiences a rare opportunity to immerse themselves in this exciting playwright’s work.

“Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue” follows 19-year-old Elliot who is a soldier, like his father and his father’s father and is back from Iraq with a Purple Heart. As he recovers from his injuries and decides whether to return to Iraq, he yearns for a truer connection with his father and considers his own limited options outside the military.

Phoebe Hoban of The New York Times said “‘Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue’ is that rare and rewarding thing: a theater work that succeeds on every level, while creating something new. The playwright, Quiara Alegría Hudes, who has degrees in music (a bachelor’s from Yale) and playwriting (a master’s from Brown), combines a lyrical ear with a sophisticated sense of structure to trace the legacy of war through three generations of a Puerto Rican family.”

In “Water by the Spoonful,” a janitor, a software mogul, a college grad and an IRS paper-pusher have one thing in common. Although they live thousands of miles apart, these four people share a secret: they’re recovering addicts who have found a safe haven in an online chat room. There, with liberal doses of jokes and bullying, they help each other navigate the broken terrain of their lives. But when an Iraq War veteran’s tragedy spills over into their cyberhome, everything changes. In this fearless play, worlds virtual and real unfold onstage, challenging our notions of family, forgiveness, community and courage.

When it played off-Broadway, Charles Isherwood of The New York Times said, “‘Water by the Spoonful’ gives off a shimmering, sustaining warmth. Ms. Hudes writes with such empathy and vibrant humor that regeneration and renewal always seem to be just around the corner.”

Quiara Alegría Hudes is a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. Her play “Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue” premiered Off-Off-Broadway by Page 73 Productions and was a finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. “Water by the Spoonful” premiered at Hartford Stage Company and won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. “The Happiest Song Plays Last” premiered at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago in 2013. Hudes wrote the book for the Broadway musical “In the Heights,” which received the 2008 Tony Award for Best Musical, a Tony nomination for Best Book of a Musical and was a 2009 Pulitzer Prize finalist. Other works include the plays “26 Miles” and “Yemaya’s Belly” and the children’s musical “Barrio Grrr!” Hudes grew up in West Philadelphia where she studied music with Don Rappaport, Dolly Kranzapolski and Linda Hudes. She was later mentored by playwright Paula Vogel at Brown University. Hudes is an alumna of New Dramatists and sits on the board of Philadelphia Young Playwrights, which produced her first play in the 10th grade.

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 “Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue” 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 range from \$25 – \$70 (ticket prices are subject to change). 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).

Tickets to “Water by the Spoonful” are available by calling (213) 628-2772, online at [www.CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://www.CenterTheatreGroup.org) or at the Center Theatre Group Box Office located at the Ahmanson Theatre. Tickets range from \$25 – \$95 (ticket prices are subject to change). The Mark Taper Forum is located at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012.

For more information about the upcoming Community Conversations, please visit [CTGLA.org/Community](http://CTGLA.org/Community). The events are free but an RSVP is encouraged. Refreshments will be provided.

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