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For immediate release.

**CRITICAL MASS PERFORMANCE GROUP PRODUCTION OF “AMERYKA” OPENS APRIL 21
PART OF CENTER THEATRE GROUP’S BLOCK PARTY 2018**

**Written and Directed by Critical Mass Performance Group Artistic Director Nancy Keystone,
“Ameryka” Will Play Through April 29, 2018 at the Kirk Douglas Theatre**

The Critical Mass Performance Group production of “Ameryka,” which Center Theatre Group is remounting at the Kirk Douglas Theatre as part of the second annual **Block Party: Celebrating Los Angeles Theatre**, will open Saturday, April 21 at 8 p.m. Written and directed by Critical Mass Performance Group Artistic Director Nancy Keystone in collaboration with the company, “Ameryka” is currently in previews and will close April 29.

The cast includes, in alphabetical order, Curt Bonnem, Russell Edge, Ray Ford, Richard Gallegos, Lorne Green, Jeff Lorch, Nick Santoro, Liza Seneca and Valerie Spencer. Lorch will be replacing the previously announced Drew Stafford Harper.

“Ameryka” has scenic design by Nancy Keystone, costume design by Lena Sands, lighting design by Adam J. Frank, sound design and original music by Randall Robert Tico and projection design by Hsuan-Kuang Hsieh. Tom Bryant is the dramaturg and Susie Walsh is the production stage manager.

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.

Block Party 2018 also remounted Playwrights’ Arena’s production of “Bloodletting” March 29 through April 8 and will remount Celebration Theatre’s production of “Die, Mommie, Die!” from May 10 through 20. The three visiting companies 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.”

Center Theatre Group received 53 submissions for Block Party 2018 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, 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). The first performance of the remaining plays (April 19 and May 10) is a pay-what-you-want performance, giving patrons the opportunity to decide what their theatre experience was worth before, during or after the performance.

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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April 20, 2018