



For Immediate Release
January 7, 2019

Contact: Hilarie Carpenter (616) 742-6397

**Ryan Speedo Green: Sing for Your Life; A Conversation with Daniel Bergner
comes to DeVos Performance Hall on March 26 as part of
“The Series: Creative Expressions of African-American Culture”
Tickets go on sale Thursday, January 10 at 10:00 AM**

Grand Rapids — SMG-managed [DeVos Performance Hall](#), [DeVos Place®](#), and the Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention/Arena Authority (CAA) Community Inclusion Group (CIG) have announced **Ryan Speedo Green: Sing for Your Life; A Conversation with Daniel Bergner** as the second event of “**The Series: Creative Expressions of African-American Culture**” on **Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at 7:00 PM** in SMG-managed [DeVos Performance Hall](#).

Join in the conversation between Met Opera singer [Ryan "Speedo" Green](#) and author of his biography, *Sing For Your Life*, [Daniel Bergner](#) discussing a story of race, music and family. A touching and triumphant story of a young black man's journey from violence and despair to one of the world's most elite artistic institutions. Live on DeVos Performance Hall stage, Speedo will showcase his natural talent performing a few arias (long song accompanying a solo voice), followed by a Q&A session with Speedo Green and Daniel Bergner.

Tickets go on sale to the general public beginning Thursday, January 10 at 10:00 AM. Tickets will be available at the DeVos Place® and Van Andel Arena® box offices, online at [Ticketmaster.com](#), and charge by phone at 1-800-745-3000. See Ticketmaster.com for all pricing and availability. VIP tickets are also available via Ticketmaster and include a copy of Green's biography and a meet and greet with Green and Bergner.

Bass-Baritone Ryan Speedo Green, a native of Suffolk, Virginia, has been praised by Anthony Tommasini of the *New York Times* for his “robust voice” and Anne Midgette of the *Washington Post* as an artist “fully ready for a big career,” and is quickly establishing himself as an artist of international demand at the world's leading opera houses.

In the fall of 2016, Green's biography [Sing for Your Life: A Story of Race, Music, and Family](#), by *New York Times* journalist Daniel Bergner was released to rave reviews on its way to becoming a *New York Times* bestseller. The book tells the story of Ryan's personal and artistic journey: from a trailer park in southeastern Virginia and from time spent in Virginia's juvenile facility of last resort to the Met stage.

Green's honors and awards include National Grand Finals winner of the 2011 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a 2014 George London Foundation Award, a 2014 Annenberg grant recipient, a 2014 Gerda Lissner Foundation First Prize winner, both the Richard and Sara Tucker Grants from the Richard Tucker Foundation, and a finalist in the Palm Beach Opera Competition. Mr. Green received his Master of Music degree from Florida State University and his Bachelor of Music degree from the Hartt School of Music.

The Series: **Creative Expressions of African-American Culture** is a program of the CAA and CIG that is designed to provide consistent, high-quality programming for members of the West Michigan region who have an interest in the various forms of arts and entertainment inspired by African-American culture. **Ryan Speedo Green: Sing for Your Life; A Conversation with Daniel Bergner** is the second event of the program following *Dance Theatre of Harlem* on November 12, 2018.



Van Andel Arena®
130 West Fulton
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2601
616.742.6600



DeVos Place®
303 Monroe Ave. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2233
616.742.6500

About CIG

The Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention/Arena Authority's Community Inclusion Group (CIG) is a task force comprised of local community leaders that strive to make DeVos Place, Van Andel Arena and DeVos Performance Hall West Michigan's premier multicultural entertainment venues. Established in 2005, the Community Inclusion Group actively guides the venues in increasing community access and awareness, attracting top level events and talent, and fostering inclusive staff and supplier development and engagement. As a result of these ongoing efforts, the West Michigan community has enjoyed visits from a number of diverse artists, including Gerardo Ortiz, Pepe Aguilar, Kevin Hart, Shen Yun, Snoop Dogg and more, and several community events such as the annual Spectrum Health Jump Jam and Grand Rapids Community College Giants Awards. The support of the Community Inclusion Group continues to ensure that DeVos Place, Van Andel Arena and DeVos Performance Hall remain "Three Premier Venues: Welcoming All."

About SMG

DeVos Performance Hall and DeVos Place are managed by SMG. SMG provides management services to more than 230 public assembly facilities including convention and exhibition centers, arenas, stadiums, theaters, performing arts centers, amphitheaters, equestrian facilities, science centers and a variety of other venues. With facilities across the globe, SMG manages more than 15 million square feet of exhibition space and more than 1.5 million sports and entertainment seats. As the recognized global industry leader, SMG provides venue management, sales, marketing, event booking and programming; construction and design consulting; and pre-opening services for such landmark facilities as McCormick Place & Soldier Field in Chicago, Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, Houston's NRG Park and the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans. SMG also offers food and beverage operations through its concessions and catering companies, currently serving more than 140 accounts worldwide. For more information visit www.smgworld.com.

###



Van Andel Arena®
130 Fulton West
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2601
616.742.6600

DEVOS PLACE

DeVos Place®
303 Monroe Ave. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2233
616.742.6500

