

For immediate release

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP'S FALL 2020 SEASON OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
PROGRAMMING TO MOVE ONLINE**

Season Running from August through December 2020 Includes Newly Commissioned Plays and Stories, Access to Past Performances and Working Artists, Performance Competitions, Career Resources, Educator Training, Classroom Engagement and More

Center Theatre Group is moving its entire **Fall 2020 season of Education and Community Partnerships programming** exclusively online, to support the many students, educators and parents adjusting to remote learning. The robust program offerings will include classes, workshops, readings, mentorship, career planning, educator training and a re-imagined approach to its annual August Wilson Monologue Competition and Student Ambassador Program. The season will extend from August through December 2020, with most programs continuing into 2021. Additional programming for the remainder of the 2020 – 2021 season will be announced at a later date.

“While our stages and rehearsal rooms and classrooms across Los Angeles must remain empty, we’re are grateful to be able to continue to keep the arts at the center of our community through a wide array of online programs,” said Center Theatre Group Managing Director / CEO, Meghan Pressman. “When the Safer at Home order came in March we were days away from our popular College & Career Fair but our staff and partners shifted quickly to a fully virtual event that proved both that the new format was possible and that there is a wide audience for these services that extends beyond the people who could come to a set location at a set time. Where our in-person College & Career and Going Pro Fairs would regularly draw 500 people, we were able to reach three times that number, with more young people viewing the program every day.”

“While we value the face-to-face contact and community connection of our traditional programs, our online programming reduces many of the barriers to participation at this time. We also know the arts and very act of art-making is a central element in building and rebuilding our communities. We feel the imperative to offer these experiences and provide resources to our students, teachers and partners. So, while we look forward to the moment that we can all come back together, I’m heartened to know that these programs will help students, educators and members of the larger community keep a connection to this vital artform and continue to cultivate the next generation of artists and arts administrators who will define the future of theatre.”

Continuing its deep commitment to supporting the careers of emerging theatre professionals, Center Theatre Group launched a new virtual **Working in Theatre Series**. Taking its name from and expanding on an existing series of pre-recorded videos meant to spotlight the many arts-related careers available, the new Working in Theatre Series, which launched June 12, 2020, is a ten-week series of courses focused on creating original work and building skills for people who wish to pursue a

career in theatre. Designed for current college and university students but open to all, the series can be attended in real time or viewed later on demand. The first semester reached 400 students with participants across the US and as far away as Saudi Arabia. Digital reading materials and expanded resources are made available before each course. The Fall 2020 series begins October 16, 2020. For more information, to view recordings of the summer courses, or to register for the series, visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/WITseries. The fall program is produced in partnership with Maroon Arts & Culture, an organization dedicated to education and empowerment through cultural programming and performing arts.

As the Ahmanson Theatre, Mark Taper Forum and Kirk Douglas Theatre sit dark, Center Theatre Group has mined its archives for full productions captured on video that can be made available to educators by special request. While Center Theatre Group generally reaches thousands of students with special student matinees and other mainstage performances, these videos will help keep theatre in the school curriculum. To inquire about access to these and other materials, including Discovery Guides, educators should visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/Educators.

Utilizing these same archival production videos, along with countless other video assets and guest speakers, **Center Theatre Group and East Los Angeles College** have adapted to this moment of darkened stages to collaborate on a selection of co-designed college courses. The use of these archival video recordings was piloted this summer with East Los Angeles College and will be included this fall in courses including Acting in History and in Style, Actors Orientation to the Professional Theatre, Introduction to the Theatre and Orientation to Technical Careers in Entertainment. These courses are available for all potential students including people under 18 or already holding degrees. For more information about how to enroll in one of these courses, visit elactheater.org/In-collaboration-with-CTG-Fall-2020.

Another new digital venture this fall is **Theatre Artist Classroom Connections**, which will pair theatre artists with ten local high school and college classroom partners via video conferencing for live webinars. Each class will participate in at least one session tailored to their specific coursework and each of these specialized sessions will be made available to other classrooms and all other interested parties to view live or watch on-demand. The Theatre Artist Classroom Connections webinars will begin in September and run through December. For more information, to register for or stream these webinars, please visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/ClassroomConnections.

The annual **August Wilson Monologue Competition**, which Center Theatre Group has presented since 2012, continues this year in a virtual format. The Tenth Regional Finals competition hosted by CTG will move online as contestants are asked to submit self-taped auditions for the competition. Twelve Regional Finalists will be selected to receive training and rehearsal sessions provided throughout January and February. The sessions will allow the students to refine their performances while gaining valuable acting techniques. The format of the regional finals will be structured in accordance with the recommendations of state and local health officials. For more information about the program, details regarding audition video requirements or to register for the August Wilson Monologue competition please go to CenterTheatreGroup.org/AugustWilson.

Center Theatre Group's Student Ambassador Program will be completely virtual this year with 12 high school students gaining leadership and project management skills, guided by teaching artists and staff, as they engage in a hands-on project related to the organization's artistic efforts. Interested students must apply by September 23. Information and application available at

CenterTheatreGroup.org/StudentAmbassadors. Selected students will receive a stipend for participating.

The Teen Theatregoers program will now bring 30 high school students together to explore virtual theatre experiences and discuss in groups, guided by a teaching artist and Center Theatre Group staff members. Selected students will explore what theatre means in the #SaferAtHome world, delving into diverse and cutting-edge virtual performances, from narrative theatre game apps to play readings with artists to exclusive virtual plays from the theatre's archives to socially-distanced theatre. In addition to watching performances that redefine the art of storytelling and the significance of art making in times of crisis, students will receive mentorship from theatre professionals to explore and define own relationship to theatre. Application deadline for the upcoming session is November 5, 2020; for additional information, please visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/TeenTheatregoers.

Center Theatre Group will also continue its **Library Play Readings**, even as the three Boyle Heights libraries that have hosted the readings for over five years remain closed due to COVID-19. During the closure, the series of 12 plays will be offered online making them available to a wider audience. The series will include six new commissioned works including "Sandi Koto from San Gabriel" by Judy Soo Hoo, "The Crying Cavern" by Forrest Hartl and "Irrompibles" by Diana Burbano. Scheduling to be announced. For more information or to see the readings when they are posted, please visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/Community.

In addition to the plays developed for the Library Reading Series, Center Theatre Group is launching **Community Stories** — one-to-five minute pieces created by artists including Anthony Aguilar, Luis Alfaro, Diana Burbano, Juan E. Carrillo, D'Lo Srijaerajah, Forrest Hartl, Judy Soo Hoo, Manuel J. Marron, Julie Taiwo Oni, Marisol L. Torres and Vilma Villela and meant to be shared online. The first season of Community Stories will feature approximately 50 new works that will be released between September of 2020 and March of 2021. For more information and to view the Community Stories as they are released, please visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/Community.

Center Theatre Group's Education and Community Partnerships programs are made possible in part by Bank of America. Generous funding is also provided by The Dwight Stuart Youth Fund, JP Morgan Chase & Co, The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation and The Edward A. and Ai O. Shay Family Foundation. Additional funding is provided by SoCalGas and the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation. Center Theatre Group's Student Matinee Program is made possible in part by the Rosenthal Family Foundation. The Student Matinee Program also receives generous support from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Betsy and Harold Applebaum, Diana Buckhantz and Vladimir and Araxia Buckhantz Foundation, Cindy and Gary Frischling, The Norman and Sadie Lee Foundation, Renee and Meyer Luskin, Deena and Edward Nahmias, Laura and James Rosenwald and Orinoco Foundation, Union Bank, The Walt Disney Company Foundation and Paramount Pictures. Center Theatre Group's August Wilson Program is made possible by the Michael Shaw Jacobs Fund and The Dwight Stuart Youth Fund. Additional support is provided by the Lawrence P. Frank Foundation and the Sascha Brastoff Foundation. The August Wilson Monologue Competition Los Angeles Regional Finals is presented by the Center Theatre Group Affiliates. Center Theatre Group's Community Workshops and Library Play Readings are made possible by a generous grant from the California Arts Council. Additional funding is provided by the Friars Charitable Foundation. Center Theatre Group's Internship program receives funding from the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture. The Teen Theatregoers program is generously supported by a grant from the California Arts Council. The Front and Center Theatre Collaborative is

made possible by the Culver City Unified School District with funding from Sony Pictures Entertainment and the Culver City Education Foundation.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation's preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles' leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2100-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.

#

August 21, 2020