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For immediate release.
Revised

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP LAUNCHES NEW DIGITAL STAGE
OFFERING AN ONLINE HOME TO PRODUCE AND PRESENT A HOST OF NEW
THEATRICAL PROGRAMMING FOR AUDIENCES IN LOS ANGELES AND BEYOND**

**CTG BRINGS TOGETHER A COLLECTIVE OF ARTISTIC VISIONARIES TO
RECONCEIVE THE THEATRICAL LANDSCAPE IN A RAPIDLY EVOLVING WORLD**

**CTG Creative Collective Includes Luis Alfaro, Culture Clash (Richard Montoya,
Ric Salinas and Herbert Siguenza), Elephant Room (Steve Cuiffo, Trey Lyford and
Geoff Sobelle), Lars Jan, Daniel Alexander Jones, Miwa Matreyek,
Dominique Morisseau and Kristina Wong**

**In Addition, Renowned Artists Casey Nicholaw, Phylicia Rashad and Paula Vogel
Join Center Theatre Group as New Associate Artists**

Center Theatre Group has announced the immediate launch of their newest venue, the Digital Stage. Currently housing its ever-expanding library of education, community outreach and Art Goes On videos, CenterTheatreGroup.org/DigitalStage will also feature a collection of new audio and video series including **Live from the KDT, Theatrical Experiences, The Forum** and **Audio Adventures**. Center Theatre Group is partnering with artists and arts organizations from around the world to produce, present and create streaming theatrical content. Many of these offerings will be provided free to the public, with a larger catalogue of videos provided free of charge to Center Theatre Group season ticket subscribers and supporters. Certain programs will require an individual streaming fee.

CTG Creative Collective and New Associate Artists

Among the artists Center Theatre Group is collaborating with on these digital ventures are members of the newly formed **CTG Creative Collective**, a dozen inspiring, innovative and highly collaborative artists who have come together to seize upon this unprecedented moment as an opportunity to challenge the basic tenets of theatre and the long held theatrical traditions that both build and bind the art form. These artists will help Center Theatre Group discover what theatre can be during a global crisis and help

shape the contours of the theatrical landscape of the future. Made possible by a \$200,000 grant from an anonymous donor, the CTG Creative Collective includes **Luis Alfaro**, **Culture Clash** (**Richard Montoya**, **Ric Salinas** and **Herbert Siguenza**), **Elephant Room** (**Steve Cuiffo**, **Trey Lyford** and **Geoff Sobelle**), **Lars Jan**, **Daniel Alexander Jones**, **Miwa Matreyek**, **Dominique Morisseau** and **Kristina Wong**. Formed in June of 2020, the collective will work together until May of 2021.

In addition, Center Theatre Group is thrilled to welcome three renowned artists, Tony Award-winning director/choreographer **Casey Nicholaw**, Tony Award-winning director/actor **Phylicia Rashad** and Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright **Paula Vogel**, as its latest Associate Artists. Each Associate Artist has joined Center Theatre Group for a five-year term which began in July of 2020. They join Sir Matthew Bourne, Danai Gurira and Anna D. Shapiro who joined as Associate Artists in 2017 and will continue through 2022.

“At a time when our traditional model of creating and attending theatre is upended, we felt it was vital to pause and reflect on the endless possibilities our unique art form provides, both for today and for the long-term vision of a more equitable future,” said Michael Ritchie, Center Theatre Group Artistic Director. “We realized it was absolutely necessary not only to find a way to keep creating and sharing theatrical events during this uniquely challenging moment, but we also needed to look at what theatre could become as we strive to make real and impactful changes to our institution and our field once we are all able to come back together. With the CTG Creative Collective, we have gathered some of our field’s great minds—artists with whom our connections run deep—to create experiences for our Digital Stage today, devise ways to bring audiences together outdoors or in other safe ways during this time of social distancing and to dream differently about the world we want to see when we can all return to our theatres.

“It was through a generous anonymous donor that we were able to ensure that these artists we asked to join in our visionary look ahead could also receive the financial support they wholeheartedly deserve. We are honored to have such talented minds make up our CTG Creative Collective and know that what they will help us create will not only speak to the current moment, but also to a more inventive, inclusive and necessary future. Center Theatre Group began performing in the midst of the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement as theatres around the country were pushing boundaries to make sense of a changing world. We believe another mission-defining moment is upon us, and only through collective thinking and doing can we aim for bold success. The Collective is already in robust discussion with our artistic staff and I greatly look forward to sharing the ideas we generate in the coming months. And while the initial grant period for the Collective is one year, we look forward to learning from this collaboration how best for these colleagues, and a growing list of artists, to become integral partners in CTG’s ongoing creative work.”

Ritchie added, “As we gather the Collective and launch our Digital Stage, I’m also delighted to have three long-time members of the Center Theatre Group artistic family deepen their relationship with us as Associate Artists. It’s been a privilege to collaborate with Casey Nicholaw, Phylincia Rashad and Paula Vogel throughout my career, and knowing that they will have an increased creative presence within our organization, both in working on upcoming productions, across our vast artistic programs, and collaborating

with our Creative Collective, I'm certain Los Angeles will reap the rewards of this shared creative energy for years to come."

Live from the KDT

Live from the KDT, a series of new multicamera, virtually produced readings and productions recorded at the Kirk Douglas Theatre, will launch with readings of CTG Creative Collective member Alfaro's acclaimed three-play series of Chicano adaptations, **"The Greek Trilogy of Luis Alfaro"** presented in partnership with the Getty. **"Electricidad"** (adapted from Sophocles' "Electra") premieres online November 6,* **"Oedipus El Rey"** (adapted from Sophocles' "Oedipus the King") premieres online November 13* and **"Mojada"** (adapted from Euripides' "Medea") premieres online November 20.* Transplanting themes of the ancient Greek tragedies into the streets of Los Angeles, Alfaro's plays give voice to the concerns of the Chicanx and wider Latinx communities. From performances around the world including celebrated runs at the Mark Taper Forum, Public Theater, Getty Villa and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Alfaro's electric adaptations question the role that citizens and community play in social issues facing us all today. All three readings will be free to the public and performed in English with Spanish captioning available. Each reading will be available on demand until December 31, 2020.

Live from the KDT will continue with **"Kristina Wong for Public Office"** (premiering online October 30 and continuing on demand through November 29, 2020) featuring CTG Creative Collective member Wong in a virtually staged production exploring the performance artist's leap from potential reality TV stardom to hyperlocal politics. Presented in partnership with The Broad Stage, the video will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and members of The Broad Stage. All others can access the event for \$10.

Center Theatre Group's annual L.A. Writers' Workshop Festival: New Plays Forged in L.A. will be represented this season as part of Live from the KDT beginning with a virtually produced reading of **"Christa McAuliffe's Eyes Were Blue"** written by Kemp Powers (2019-2020 L.A. Writers' Workshop member), a haunting meditation on race and privilege in America. Additional L.A. Writers' Workshop Festival readings will be announced. The videos will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and \$10 for all others.

Live from the KDT will also include **Not a Moment, But a Movement**, a series of three events pairing play readings with visual artists and musicians to create an interdisciplinary collaboration intended to amplify and center Black artists. Presented in conjunction with Watts Village Theater Company and The Fire This Time Festival, each event will feature a host who guides the audience through an audio-visual experience which leads into a virtually produced play reading and is paired with a post-event Community Conversation to create a uniquely comprehensive cultural event. The first in the series will premiere in December 2020. The video will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and \$10 for all others.

Theatrical Experiences

Center Theatre Group is partnering with artists and arts organizations both nationally and internationally for **Theatrical Experiences**, a series of films, livestreams and other digital content that will remind theatregoers of the powerful and engaging theatrical experiences we are missing in our socially distanced world. The series launches with the show that started one of Center Theatre Group's longest relationships, Associate Artist **Matthew Bourne's "Swan Lake,"** the revolutionary production that made its American premiere at the Ahmanson in 1997 and has returned twice due to popular demand. Captured during its sell-out run at Sadler's Wells the film will be streamed five times beginning November 13 and continuing through November 15, 2020. Other Matthew Bourne productions made available by New Adventures include **"The Car Man"** (December 11 – 13, 2020), **"Cinderella"** (January 15 – 17, 2021) and **"Romeo and Juliet"** (February 19 – 21, 2021). "Swan Lake" will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and \$10 for all others. "The Car Man," "Cinderella" and "Romeo and Juliet" will require a \$10 fee for all viewers. All presentations will be preceded by a personal introduction from Matthew Bourne.

Center Theatre Group is also pairing with North America's leading classical theatre company, Canada's Stratford Festival, to present lavish films of their top Shakespeare productions, including **"Romeo and Juliet"** (available December 8, 2020, through March 7, 2021) **"Love's Labour's Lost"** (January 14 through April 14, 2021), **"Antony and Cleopatra"** (February 11 through May 12, 2021), **"King Lear"** (March 11 through June 9, 2021) and **"Macbeth"** (April 8 through July 7, 2021) as part of the Theatre Experiences series. Stratford Festival films will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and \$10 for all others. All presentations will be preceded by a personal introduction from Stratford Festival Artistic Director Antoni Cimolino.

"Until the Flood," which was performed at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in January, explores a community in turmoil following the fatal shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Written and performed by Dael Orlandersmith and directed by CTG Associate Artistic Director Neel Keller, "Until the Flood" draws on her Orlandersmith's interviews with residents across the greater St. Louis area to create composite characters that reflect a wide range of perspectives and experiences of race to discuss the roots of unrest and the search for healing. "Until the Flood," was originally commissioned and produced by The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and subsequently produced around the United States and in Ireland, Scotland and England, with the same performer, director and creative team. Center Theatre Group partnered with Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, A Contemporary Theatre (ACT), Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Goodman Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater Portland Center Stage and Repertory Theatre of St. Louis to present the All Arts televised streaming production of "Until the Flood," premiering November 15, 2020. The presentation will use video footage from the Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre production.

In addition, Center Theatre Group will present **"Circus Kid,"** a documentary directed by Lorenzo Pisoni which expands on his autobiographical play "Humor Abuse" which played at the Mark Taper Forum in 2013. Featuring footage captured at the Taper,

“Circus Kid” tells of Pisoni’s childhood growing up in the legendary Pickle Family Circus and will be streamed on November 21, 2020, at 2 pm with a special conversation between Pisoni and Tony-winning actor, clown and Pickle Family Circus alum Bill Irwin (who is featured in “Circus Kid”). This streamed event will be free to the public with encouraged donations to Center Theatre Group.

CTG Creative Collective members Steve Cuiffo, Trey Lyford and Geoff Sobelle bring “**Elephant Room: Dust from the Stars**” to the Digital Stage December 16 through December 20 for seven performances only. Magicians turned astro-nots Daryl Hannah, Dennis Diamond and Louie Magic return in this live, interactive sci-fi sequel to “Elephant Room” produced at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in 2012. Hailed by The New York Times’ Elisabeth Vincentelli as “‘Wayne’s World’ crossbred with ‘Spinal Tap’ and ‘2001: A Space Odyssey,’ simultaneously very funny and unexpectedly touching ... the most resourceful, gleefully entertaining new theater piece I have seen during the pandemic,” “Elephant Room: Dust from the Stars” was commissioned by Center Theatre Group and developed with assistance and residencies from St. Ann’s Warehouse with additional support from the Orchard Project. Directed by Paul Lazar, “Elephant Room: Dust from the Stars” will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters and \$10 for all others.

Powerhouse L.A.-based Latino/Chicano performance trio and members of the CTG Creative Collective, Culture Clash returns to Center Theatre Group with a reexamination of Los Angeles’ heritage and history in this newly curated and serialized retelling of “**Chavez Ravine.**” Originally commissioned by Center Theatre Group and premiered at the Mark Taper Forum in 2003, “Chavez Ravine” delves into the transformation of a growing city and a small, tightly knit neighborhood, cherished barrio initially slated to be an affordable housing project, however, after years of city wide scandals the land lay dormant and eventually became the site of Dodger Stadium. Selected scenes and allegories curated into nine innings or episodes, will be filmed on location around Los Angeles incorporating music, archival films, period photos, interviews and new performances by Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas and Herbert Siguenza. This digital and cinematic revival of “Chavez Ravine” is co-curated by Culture Clash and longtime creative comrade Lisa Peterson, who directed the premiere and subsequent revival at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in 2015. The first in the series will be released in early 2021. “Chavez Ravine” will be free to Center Theatre Group subscribers and supporters with a small fee required for all others, with exact pricing and release dates to be announced.

The Forum

A large part of the power of theatre is its ability to spark conversation and fuel debate. **The Forum** series is a new home for discussions that allow theatregoers and theatre creators to dive more deeply into the work. Materials that will be available through The Forum include all existing and future **L.A. Theatre Speaks** discussions. The L.A. Theatre Speaks series draws on artistic directors, actors, directors, playwrights, designers and administrators who come together to share ideas, strategize, and support

each other as they chart a path forward for theatre. These videos are available free to the public.

In addition, the popular **Community Conversations** series, bringing together artists, scholars and other experts to discuss the complex themes, histories and other issues connected to Center Theatre Group's other offerings will now be available through The Forum. Each event in the Not a Moment, But a Movement series will feature a Community Conversation. Dates and subjects to be announced.

Audio Adventures

The Digital Stage will also become a home to **Audio Adventures**, a series of audio-only content including podcasts and radio plays. First in the series is a new adaptation of Sinclair Lewis' novel, "**It Can't Happen Here**," written in 1935 during the rise of fascism in Europe following the ascent of a demagogue who becomes president of the United States by promising to return the country to greatness. In 2016 Berkeley Repertory Theatre unveiled a new stage adaptation of Lewis' prescient novel. Now they are reprising the play as a radio drama in four episodes in collaboration with broadcast partners including American Conservatory Theater, Arena Stage, Center Theatre Group, La Jolla Playhouse, Roundabout Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory and many others. "It Can't Happen Here" will be streamed free to the public beginning October 13 at 5 pm Pacific, and available until November 8, 2020.

The Audio Adventures series will also include works curated from L.A. Theatre Works' 500-play catalogue. The three selected recordings feature plays that were also produced or presented by Center Theatre Group beginning with Luis Valdez's landmark play "**Zoot Suit**," which was commissioned and developed by Center Theatre Group before premiering at the Mark Taper Forum in 1978 and returning to the Taper for the theatre's 50th Anniversary season in 2017. "Zoot Suit" will be available from October 21 through December 20, 2020. The second L.A. Theatre Works production available November 11, 2020 through January 10, 2021 is "**Disgraced**" featuring three cast members who also performed in the 2016 production at the Taper. Finally, Tracy Letts' Tony-winning "**August: Osage County**" will be available from December 9, 2020 through February 7, 2021. Tracy Letts' was last represented at the Taper in 2019 with "Linda Vista" and "August: Osage County" was presented at the Ahmanson in 2009. The streaming audio will be free to the public.

Education and Community Partnerships Programming And Art Goes On (Previously Announced)

The previously announced Fall 2020 season of **Education and Community Partnerships programming** will be found on the Digital Stage including classes, workshops, readings, mentorship, career planning and educator training. Among the Education and Community Partnerships video series that will be made available is

Community Stories featuring one-to-five minute pieces created by artists including Anthony Aguilar, Luis Alfaro, Diana Burbano, Juan E. Carrillo, D’Lo Srijaerajah, Estela Garcia, 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 which will be released between October of 2020 and March of 2021. For more information of the Fall season of Education and Community Partnerships programming, please visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/BackToSchool2020.

Existing and future **Art Goes On** videos including **Artists Create**, **Theatre Skills @ Home** and **Scenes from the Vault** will also be presented through the Digital Stage.

Center Theatre Group’s Digital Stage is presented by American Express. As presenting sponsor of The Digital Stage, American Express Card Members enjoy special opportunities on the Digital Stage, including: presales and early access for limited-release premium events, invitations to private pre- or post-show meet and greets and access to exclusive content curated especially for Card Members.

Bank of America is Center Theatre Group’s 2020/2021 Season Sponsor, including Digital Stage programming. For more than 20 years, Bank of America has partnered with Center Theatre Group to provide innovative Education and Community Partnerships programs as well as present world-class productions at the Ahmanson Theatre and Mark Taper Forum. Their generous support now extends online to the Digital Stage.

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.

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October 2, 2020 / Revised October 16, 2020

**Revised with new premiere and closing dates for “The Greek Trilogy of Luis Alfaro”*