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AWARD-WINNING SoCAL THEATER VET **BART DeLORENZO SIGNS ON TO DIRECT JOAN RIVERS**

Yosefa Forma, Tara Joyce and Adam Kulbersh Sign on as Rivers' Supporting Cast
Joan River's Four-Character New Comedy Officially Titled
Joan Rivers: A Work in Progress by a Life in Progress

LOS ANGELES, December 20, 2007 — The Geffen Playhouse welcomes Evidence Room founder and award-winning local director Bart DeLorenzo to helm the world-premiere of *Joan Rivers: A Work in Progress by a Life in Progress* opening in February 2008. DeLorenzo, who is well-recognized throughout the LA theater scene for his experience with new works and world-premieres, is a fitting choice to lead the legendary Rivers on her autobiographical journey.

"I am thrilled beyond words to be invited into this adventure," said director Bart DeLorenzo. "Joan has given me so much laughter in my life, and now unbelievably, I get to collaborate with her. Her play is a very special journey for the audience. It hilariously presents the Joan Rivers that we're all hoping to see, but then it goes on, quite movingly, to show us the Joan Rivers we've never seen before. It's fierce and funny and, I think, unforgettable."

The comedy, which Rivers not only wrote, but also stars in alongside three other cast members, is a fitting peak to the Geffen's season highlighting women in theater. Set immediately before a big awards preshow, Rivers uses her dressing room (B, not A), her cheese plate (puny, not plentiful) and her producer (the bigwig's nephew, not the bigwig), as impetus for an introspective look at aging, going through life's ups and downs and being a woman in Hollywood.

Joining Rivers on stage is Tisch alumna Yosefa Forma as the well-meaning but rather incompetent make-up artist, award-winning local actress Tara Joyce as the newly minted studio executive and prolific television actor Adam Kulbersh as the nepotism-blessed associate producer.

The play, previously entitled *The Joan Rivers Theater Project*, was workshopped at San Francisco's Magic Theater (directed by Mark Rucker) in August of this year to help develop the piece, and the upcoming Geffen Playhouse's production will mark the world premiere of Rivers' third full-length play. Rivers was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Actress for her last appearance on Broadway in *Sally Marr and Her Escorts* and gained international acclaim for her one-woman show *Broke and Alone*, both of which she coauthored as well. In

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addition, Rivers is a best-selling author, screenwriter, film director, columnist, syndicated radio host and Emmy Award-winning television talk show host.

JOAN RIVERS: A WORK IN PROGRESS BY A LIFE IN PROGRESS (World Premiere)

By Joan Rivers

and Douglas Bernstein & Denis Markell

Previews: February 5 to February 12, 2008

Opening Night: February 13, 2008

Closing Night: Sunday, March 30, 2008

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Monday	No performances
Tuesday – Thursday	7:30 pm
Friday	8:00 pm
Saturday	4:00 pm; 8:30 pm
Sunday	2:00 pm; 7:00 pm

Please note the following exception:

There will be no performances Wednesday, February 27 – Sunday, March 2

CAST

Yosefa Forma	Svetlana
Tara Joyce	Evan
Adam Kulbersh	Kenny
Joan Rivers	Herself

BART DeLORENZO (Director)

Bart DeLorenzo is founding artistic director of the Evidence Room in Los Angeles where he has directed many local and world premieres over the last 12 years including plays by David Greenspan, Kelly Stuart, Philip K. Dick, Gordon Dahlquist, David Edgar, Charles L. Mee, Naomi Wallace and Edward Bond. He has also directed his own adaptation of *Hard Times*, *The Cherry Orchard*, and *Don Carlos*, among many others. He produced all the above as well as award-winning productions of *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *The Berlin Circle*, and *Speed-Hedda*, among others. He has participated in the development of new plays at the Taper New Work Festival, South Coast Rep's Pacific Playwrights Festival, A.S.K. Theater Projects, and the Ojai Playwrights Conference. He recently directed the Los Angeles premiere of Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life* in a co-production between Evidence Room and Unknown Theater, the world premiere of Donald Margulies' *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment* at South Coast Repertory, Center Theatre Group's kick-off premiere event of Suzan-Lori Parks' *365 Days/365 Plays* outdoors at the Los Angeles Music Center plaza and on the steps of Walt Disney Hall, and the world premiere of Sandra Tsing Loh's long-running *Mother on Fire* at the 24th Street Theater, with subsequent revivals at the Pasadena Playhouse, the Sundance Film Festival and the Women's Building in San Francisco. For his work, he has received five LA Weekly awards and three Backstage Garlands.

YOSEFA FORMA (Svetlana)

Most recent Regional Theatre credits include the role of Leah in *Last Easter* at the Laguna Playhouse, various understudy roles in *Where's Poppa?* at the Falcon Theater in Burbank, and three full seasons with the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival in upstate NY. Yosefa received a BFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and has also spent time studying at The Moscow Art Theater as well as at Trinity College and The Abbey Theater in Dublin, Ireland.

TARA JOYCE (Evan)

Tara Joyce (who is recently married and was formerly Tara Chocoll) hails from Chicago where she was awarded a Steppenwolf Theatre Acting Fellowship and performed with many of Chicago's prestigious theaters and improv groups. Tara appeared in the world premiere of *Hellcab* (Production of the Year, Best Ensemble-LA Weekly) and is a member of the Evidence Room Theatre where she appeared in *Flow My Tears*, *The Policeman Said* (Revival

Production of the Year-LA Weekly), *Cringe* and *The Strip*. Film and television credits include *Dumber Than Dirt*, *Hellcab*, *Big Thing*, *The JFK Jr. Story*, *ER*, *NYPD Blue*, *The Practice*, *Sex and the City*, *Judging Amy*, *Yes Dear*, *Strong Medicine*, and *The District*. Producing credits include the Edinburgh productions of *Killer Joe* and *Hellcab* and the Evidence Room's *The Cherry Orchard* and *Attempts on Her Life*.

ADAM KULBERSH (Kenny)

A native of the Deep South (Mississippi/Georgia), Kulbersh received degrees in Theatre and in Russian Literature from the University of Texas. He went on to study at the prestigious Moscow Art Theatre where he performed both in English and in Russian. He has been seen in nearly 200 television commercials and on TV shows across the dial. Adam's most recent guest-star appearances include *Desperate Housewives*, *Ugly Betty*, *Dirty Sexy Money*, *How I Met Your Mother*, and a multi-season recurring role on *Law and Order:SVU*. He will be making a splash in multiplexes this February with his hysterical supporting turn in *The Hottie and The Nottie* with Paris Hilton.

JOAN RIVERS (Herself)

Joan Rivers is a force of nature, and one of the hardest working celebrities in the world...comedienne; Tony nominated actress; best-selling author; Emmy Award-winning television talk-show host; playwright; screenwriter; motion picture director; columnist; lecturer; syndicated radio host; jewelry designer and cosmetic company entrepreneur; red-carpet fashion laureate; businesswoman and, most importantly to her, mother and grandmother. She is exhausted! The first sole permanent guest hostess of *The Tonight Show*, Rivers went on to be the first woman host of a nighttime talk show for Fox and then on to win an Emmy for her work on her daytime show which ran for seven years. From her signature question, "Can we talk?" (a Federal trademark), to her red-carpet mantra, "Who are you wearing?" the woman who asks the questions gets the answers America... and the world... wants to hear. In addition to her other accomplishments, Rivers has experienced unprecedented success with the sales of her own Joan Rivers Classics Collection of jewelry and her Joan Rivers Beauty skin care products and signature fragrance on QVC... but most joyous triumph is being grandmother to Melissa's son, Cooper (Edgar Cooper Endicott), who was born on December 1, 2000 – and she's enjoying that immensely!

TICKET INFO

Tickets (\$35 to \$79) are on sale now at the Geffen Playhouse box office, online at GeffenPlayhouse.com, via credit card phone order at 310.208.5454, at all Ticketmaster outlets, or by calling Ticketmaster at 213.365.3500. Student rush tickets are available one hour prior to curtain for \$15.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Awarded the *Preservation Award* by the Los Angeles Conservancy, the *Award of Excellence* from the Society of American Registered Architects, and the *Architectural Award of Excellence* by the Los Angeles Business Council for its acclaimed 2005, \$19 million renovation, the Geffen Playhouse begins its 12th season in 2007/2008, enjoying its stature as a leading West Coast theater company and the crown jewel of Los Angeles theater. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its eclectic mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and musicals, the Geffen continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who donated one of the largest gifts ever made to an already-constructed theater, the company is headed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert (Gil) Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney and Managing Director Stephen Eich, and has produced eight world premieres, four Tony, four Pulitzer, and seven Obie-award winning shows in its 12 season history. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit geffenplayhouse.com.

EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

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