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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CAST ANNOUNCED FOR GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE WORLD PREMIERE OF  
“BLACK SUPER HERO MAGIC MAMA”**

**WRITTEN BY INDA CRAIG-GALVÁN AND DIRECTED BY ROBERT O’HARA**

**FEATURING NOAH ABBOTT, REIKO AYLESWORTH, WALTER BELENKY, DARYL C. BROWN,  
KEVIN DOUGLAS, KIMBERLY HÉBERT GREGORY, CEDRIC JOE AND CYNTHIA KAYE McWILLIAMS**

**PREVIEWS BEGIN MARCH 5 - OPENING NIGHT IS MARCH 13**

LOS ANGELES (January 29, 2019) – Geffen Playhouse today announced the full cast for its world premiere production of *Black Super Hero Magic Mama*, written by Los Angeles-based playwright **Inda Craig-Galván** (*I Go Somewhere Else, Welcome to Matteson!*) and directed by two-time OBIE Award winner and NAACP Award winner **Robert O’Hara** (*Barbecue, Bootycandy, Eclipsed*).

The cast features **Noah Abbot** (independent feature film *Thriller*) as Flat Joe/Joseph A. Hughes, **Reiko Aylesworth** (*Les Liaison Dangereuses, Top Girls*) as Connie Wright, **Walter Belenky** (*Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, New Year’s Eve*) as Dave Lester, **Daryl C. Brown** (*Rent, The Lion King*) as Coach Corey Brackett, **Kevin Douglas** (*Our Town, Mr. Rickey Calls a Meeting*) as Tom Blackman, **Kimberly Hébert Gregory** (*Barbecue; By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*) as Sabrina Jackson, **Cedric Joe** (*Loving Him and He’s Not Ready, Modern Family*) as Tamarion Jackson and **Cynthia Kaye McWilliams** (*First Breeze of Summer, Prince of Peoria*) as Lena Evers.

Previews for *Black Super Hero Magic Mama* begin Tuesday, March 5, in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse. Opening night is Wednesday, March 13, and the production will close Sunday, April 14.

Both heartbreaking and highly inventive, *Black Super Hero Magic Mama* gives us the hero we have been waiting for. When Sabrina loses her 14-year-old son Tamarion to a police shooting, she is unable to face the ensuing flurry of media attention. Crippled by grief, she retreats into a fantasy world of superheroes and arch villains that inhabit the comic book created by her son before his death. Assuming the role of the Maasai Angel rather than the expected part of grieving mother, Sabrina battles her enemies along the way to peace.

Major support provided by the Edgerton Foundation New Play Production Fund, with additional support from The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation and The David Lee Foundation.

**BLACK SUPER HERO MAGIC MAMA**

Written by **Inda Craig-Galván**

Directed by **Robert O'Hara**

**Previews:** Tuesday, March 5 – Tuesday, March 12, 2019

**Opening Night:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019

**Closing Night:** Sunday, April 14, 2019

### **CAST**

**Noah Abbot** as Flat Joe/Joseph A. Hughes

**Reiko Aylesworth** as Connie Wright

**Walter Belenky** as Dave Lester

**Daryl C. Brown** as Coach Corey Brackett

**Kevin Douglas** as Tom Blackman

**Kimberly Hébert Gregory** as Sabrina Jackson

**Cedric Joe** as Tramarion Jackson

**Cynthia Kaye McWilliams** as Lena Evers

### **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Scenic Designer **Myung Hee Cho**

Costume Designer **Karen Perry**

Lighting Designer **Alex Jainchill**

Original Music and Sound Design by **Lindsay Jones**

Production Stage Manager **Susie Walsh**

Casting Director **Phyllis Schuringa, CSA**

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

Monday No performance

Tuesday – Friday 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 3:00 and 8:00 p.m.

Sunday 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

### **LOCATION**

Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets currently priced at \$30.00 - \$120.00. Available in person at the Geffen Playhouse box office, by phone at 310.208.5454 or online at [www.geffenplayhouse.org](http://www.geffenplayhouse.org). Fees may apply.

Rush tickets for each day's performance are made available to the general public 30 minutes before showtime at the box office. \$35.00 General / \$10.00 Student

### **COLLEGE AUDIENCES**

Through a variety of events and other opportunities, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes college students to experience the live storytelling presented on our stages. We are proud of our association with UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television, and open our doors to all college students throughout Los Angeles. More information is available at [www.geffenplayhouse.org/college](http://www.geffenplayhouse.org/college).

### **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

**Inda Craig-Galván (Playwright)**

Inda is a Chicagoan living in Los Angeles. Where it's warm. Inda's plays have been developed and presented at theaters including Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Oregon Shakespeare Festival Black Swan Lab, Kitchen Dog Theatre New Works Festival, The Old Globe, Chalk Repertory Theatre, Skylight Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, Playwrights' Arena New Pages Lab, MPAACT, Trustus Theatre Playwrights Festival and Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. Honors: The Kilroys List, The Kennedy Center Rosa Parks Playwriting Award, Blue Ink Playwriting Award, Urbanworld Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize for Best Screenplay, Jane Chambers Student Award for Feminist Playwriting, Black & Latino Playwrights Conference Winner, WomenWorks Playwriting Winner, Humanitas Play LA and Princess Grace Award in Playwriting (runner-up). In addition to writing theater, Inda is a television staff writer on ABC's *The Rookie*. M.F.A. in Dramatic Writing, University of Southern California.

**Robert O'Hara (Director)**

Robert O'Hara has received 2 NAACP Awards (Best Director and Best Play), the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play, two OBIE Awards, Alpert Award and the Oppenheimer Award. He directed the world premieres of Nikkole Salter and Dania Gurira's *In the Continuum*, Tarell McCraney's *The Brother/Sister Plays (Part 2)*, Colman Domingo's *Wild with Happy*, Kirsten Childs' *Bella: An American Tall Tale*, as well as his own plays *Mankind*, *Bootycandy* and *Insurrection: Holding History*. His recent plays *Zombie: The American* and *Barbecue* world premiered at Woolly Mammoth Theater and New York Shakespeare Festival, respectively. His recent directing projects include Kirsten Childs' *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin* at City Center/Encores Off Center, Universes' *Uni/Son* (inspired by the poetry of August Wilson) at Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Shakespeare's *Macbeth* at Denver Center for the Performing Arts. He holds a Directing M.F.A. from Columbia University.

**Noah Abbott (Flat Joe/Joseph A. Hughes)**

Noah Christopher Abbott is an up-and-coming American actor. He began his career in commercials, modeling, television and film at the early age of four. Noah lives in Inglewood. He attends Frank Parent Middle School in Los Angeles where he excels in sports and loves math. At the age of four, Noah said to his mom that he wanted to be inside the television. His aunt Terry took his pictures and a star was born. Noah loves acting and his family has always encouraged him to pursue his dreams as an actor and athlete. Noah is elated to play Flat Joe and is thankful for the opportunity to be in his first big stage play. He knows he is a lucky kid! Noah's favorite genre is comedy and thrillers. Look for Noah in the independent feature film *Thriller*, coming soon. Noah thanks his agent and manager, who believe in him.

**Rieko Aylesworth (Connie Wright)**

Last seen as La Marquise De Merteuil at Antaeus Theater in *Les Liaison Dangereuses. Top Girls* (Williamstown Theatre Festival, directed by Jo Bonney), *Expats* (New Group Theater, directed by Ari Edelstein), *Humpty Dumpty* by Eric Bogosian (McCarter Theatre Center), *Robbers* by Lyle Kessler (American Place Theater, directed by Marshall Mason), *Missing Marissa Kissing Christine* (Primary Stages, written and directed by John Patrick Shanley). Television/film: *The Good Doctor*, *Scorpion*, *Hawaii 5-0*, *Lost*, *Damages*, *ER*, *24*, *The Good Wife*, *Revolution*, *Oh Lucy*, *Mr. Brooks*, *Alien vs. Predator: Requiem* etc... For Andre and Nick.

**Walter Belenky (Dave Lester)**

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Walter is an actor and visual artist. He is thrilled to be making his Geffen Playhouse debut. He has starred on television, in film and on Broadway, as well as in many commercials. Most notably, he was in the original production of Christopher Durang's *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* on Broadway that won the Tony Award for Best Play. He also originated the role of Mikey in

the world premiere of Arthur Laurents' *New Year's Eve* opposite Marlo Thomas and Keith Carradine at the George Street Playhouse. He has his M.F.A. from University of California, San Diego. Much love to Rebecca, Leo and Luzella. Follow him on Instagram @walter\_belenky or through his website [www.walterbelenky.com](http://www.walterbelenky.com)

### **Daryl C. Brown (Coach Corey Brackett)**

Simply thrilled to be alongside the creative team at the Geffen Playhouse. Broadway and National Tours: *Rent* (Benny), *The Lion King* (Mufasa/Ensemble). Off-Broadway: *Club 12* (Sebastian), *Wrapped* (Lionel), *All Americans* (Duncan), Regional theater: *Six Degrees of Separation* (Paul), "*Master Harold*" and *The Boys* (Willie), *Godspell* (John), *Innocent Black* (Percy), *Wait Until Dark* (Mike). Film/television: *All American* (Pastor Weeks), *NCIS* (Commander Prasad), *Castle*, *Gossip Girl* (Jeffrey), *Days of Our Lives* (Orin Holt), *The Young and The Restless* (Edward James), *New York Undercover* (Officer Bronson). Special thanks to my love and my family for their unending love and support.

### **Kevin Douglas (Tom Blackman)**

Kevin Douglas is excited to make his Geffen Playhouse debut! Kevin and his family transferred to L.A. from Chicago. Chicago theater credits include: Northlight Theatre, Court Theatre and Lookingglass Theatre Company, where he is also an ensemble member. Some of Kevin's favorite credits include: *Black Diamond: The Years the Locusts Have Eaten*, *Lookingglass Alice*, *Around the World in 80 Days* (Jeff Award nomination for Best Supporting Performer), *Our Town* (Co-directed by Anna Shapiro and Jessica Thebus), and *Mr. Rickey Calls a Meeting* (Jeff Award nomination for Best Ensemble). Regional credits include: Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Adrienne Arsht Center in Miami, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Baltimore Centerstage, Alliance Theatre and Kansas City Repertory Theatre. A playwright in his own right, Kevin Douglas' play *Plantation!*, directed by David Schwimmer, had its world premiere at Lookingglass Theatre Company last season. Kevin holds a B.F.A. in Acting from DePaul University. More at [www.hereiskevin.com](http://www.hereiskevin.com)

### **Kimberly Hébert Gregory (Sabrina Jackson)**

Kimberly Hébert Gregory is a combination of undeniable humor, clarity, intelligence and strength. You know her best from her roles in HBO's *Vice Principals*, ABC's *Kevin Probably Saves the World*, *Better Call Saul*, *Two and a Half Men* and *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*. She starred in two previous shows at the Geffen Playhouse, *Barbecue* and *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*, earning Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel nominations, as well as a NAACP Award. She holds two degrees, a B.A. in Psychology from Mount Holyoke College and a Masters in Clinical Social Work from The University of Chicago. Kimberly is an advocate for families and special needs children, and a voice for mental health services in underserved communities. She is an actor, a thinker, an advocate, a mother and a friend. She is happy to be sharing the message of this important work, and may a change soon come.

### **Cedric Joe (Tramarion Jackson)**

Cedric Joe, also known as "CJ" among family and friends, is 13 years old and currently in the 8th grade. He attends KIPP Philosophers Academy. Cedric Joe is very active and has participated in many sports activities involving football, baseball and basketball. With football being his favorite and well-played sport, he has a high football IQ and can eye football from a mature perspective. Upon being physically active, he began his acting career at the age of 5 months by winning a Baby Gap contest. He then found an agent that led him in the right direction to auditions. He started doing print work, leading to several national commercials, as well as television shows such as *Game Shakers* (Nickelodeon), *Modern Family* (ABC) and *Good Trouble* (Freeform). He just finished his first short film. Along with this, he starred in his first stage play called *Loving Him and He's Not Ready*, where he played the character of Seth, the son of a single mom. Cedric Joe is an A-B student and excels well in the subjects of math and science. He is

sociable and funny and is a leader amongst his peers. Cedric Joe has raw, natural talent that gives him the courage to sing, dance and act, which has led him to the path he is on now. Cedric Joe is a well-rounded good kid.

### **Cynthia Kaye McWilliams (Lena Evers)**

Cynthia Kaye McWilliams was born in Berlin, Germany, grew up in Kansas City, Kansas and graduated from the Theater School of DePaul University in Chicago. Her Chicago stage credits include *First Breeze of Summer* (Court Theatre) and several staged readings for Goodman Theatre and Steppenwolf Theatre Company. She is honored to be making her L.A. stage debut at the Geffen Playhouse. Cynthia currently stars in the Netflix series *Prince of Peoria*. Other television credits include recurring roles on *Prison Break*, *Chicago Code* (FOX), *Survivors Remorse* (STARZ), *Nashville* (ABC), *Bosch* (Amazon) and five seasons as a series lead on *Real Husbands of Hollywood* (BET). Film credits include *Of Boys and Men*, *One Small Hitch* and Warner Brothers' *The Lake House*. Cynthia has also voiced for Cartoon Network, the animated feature film *Bilal* and several video games, including *Far Cry 5*, *State of Decay 2*, *CyberPunk3000*, *HALO 5*, *Batman*, *Arkham Asylum* and more.

### **OPENING NIGHT SPONSORS**

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### **ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE**

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Board Chair Howard Tenenbaum. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve underserved young people and the community at large in the arts.

[www.geffenplayhouse.org](http://www.geffenplayhouse.org)

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