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Baltimore Center Stage and Everyman Theatre See Record Theater Ticket Sales

The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, Baltimore Center Stage and Everyman Theatre host Roundtable Discussions on Promoting Baltimore Theater

Baltimore, MD-----With just a few days remaining on the 2017/18 production schedules of two of Baltimore's venerable theaters, Baltimore Center Stage and Everyman Theatre are experiencing unprecedented box office sales and overwhelmingly positive reviews for their current productions. *SOUL The Stax Musical* and *The Book of Joseph* have both become the highest grossing productions in the history of the respective theaters, with nearly 30,000 combined tickets sold.

To build on this historic momentum, both theaters, along with the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, are hosting roundtable conversations for Baltimore's theater leaders to foster discussions around the collective growth, vision and impact of Baltimore theater. Additionally, Baltimore Center Stage and Everyman Theatre are promoting a social media campaign utilizing the hashtag #BaltimoreTheatre, intended to unify and galvanize theater patrons and venues and provide a social media community landing space for all things related to Baltimore theater. "Baltimore theater is on a hot streak," said Jeannie L. Howe, Executive Director of the GBCA. "There is no denying that the quality and diversity of work in Baltimore is one of the city's best stories. From the wildly successful productions at Baltimore Center Stage and Everyman, to the exciting performances taking place at nearly 40 organizations around the city, there is a wealth of theater to see and experience."

SOUL The Stax Musical surpassed 2015's *Marley* to become the highest grossing revenue show in Baltimore Center Stage's 57-year history. With stellar reviews, the world premiere tells the story of Memphis, Tennessee based Stax Records, its impact on the American cultural landscape, and the launch of iconic artists who created the foundation of what we know today as soul and rhythm & blues music. Featuring stirring performances by an incredible cast, *SOUL The Stax Musical* features the music of such legendary acts as Otis Redding, The Staple Singers, Isaac Hayes, Rufus and Carla Thomas and others. Directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah, *SOUL* also represents his Baltimore Center Stage finale, as he moved on earlier this year to become the Artistic Director of the Young Vic Theatre in London. Designated the

State Theater of Maryland, Baltimore Center Stage has also experienced a record shattering season in overall revenue and is the recipient of recent awards for the design of its \$28 million renovation, and for diversity in the workplace.

The critically acclaimed East Coast premiere of *The Book of Joseph*, at Everyman Theatre, is an epic historical drama that has discovered similarly epic box office returns—surpassing August Wilson’s *Fences* to become the theatre’s #1 advance sales record holder as well as the highest-grossing play in Everyman’s 28-year history. Despite relatively limited name recognition, Karen Hartman’s play (which received its World Premiere in Chicago only last year) has struck a deep chord with audiences in its chronicle of a real-life Baltimore family who, with inspiring resilience and truth-tracking determination, resurrected and regained their historic legacy. Based on the life of Joseph A. Hollander and his family, *The Book of Joseph* is directed by Everyman Theatre Associate Artistic Director Noah Himmelstein and continues on stage through June 10, 2018. Founded in 1990, Everyman Theatre is a professional Equity theatre company known for its commitment to affordable and accessible, high quality theatre, and a Resident Company of artists from the Baltimore/DC area.

