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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Baltimore Center Stage Announces the *Baltimore Butterfly Sessions*

*A new civic dialogue series will kick-off October 28 at the State Theater of Maryland*

**Baltimore, Maryland----** Baltimore Center Stage has announced that its new civic dialogue series, The Baltimore Butterfly Sessions, will begin this month. Featuring music, poetry, literary excerpts, and thought-provoking keynote addresses, The Baltimore Butterfly Sessions is a series of free community gatherings that will take place at Baltimore Center Stage throughout the 2019/20 season.



Inspired by Citizen University's Civic Saturday series, The Baltimore Butterfly Sessions will catalyze conversation and build awareness around today's most pressing issues. Tapping into some of the brightest voices around the nation and in Baltimore, each Butterfly Session will bring together artists, activists, organizers, and thinkers to unpack a civically resonant topic. "Like so much of the world, Baltimore is in the midst of some really complicated and consequential conversations and I believe that arts institutions are uniquely positioned to participate. said Stephanie Ybarra, Artistic Director. "I am thrilled that Baltimore Center Stage will be hosting these joy-filled gatherings as we take another step towards becoming a home not only for thought-provoking plays, but also for civic dialogue." The series is produced by Annalisa Dias, Baltimore Center Stage Director of Artistic Partnerships and Innovation.

The first Baltimore Butterfly Session will take place on October 28, 2019 at 7:00pm in the Deering Lobby, and is a part of Baltimore Center Stage's season-long partnership with Olney Theatre Center called "Home", in service of an unprecedented collaboration to engage communities throughout the State of Maryland in building awareness and creating opportunities for meaningful conversations about immigrant experiences and immigration issues.



A symbol of growth and emergence, transformation and borderless migration, butterflies remind society that tiny shifts in one place can set profound change in motion. Butterflies also have a special resonance in Baltimore. The city is sometimes referred to as a “Black Butterfly and White L.” According to Dr. Lawrence Brown of Morgan State University, who has eloquently written that “Baltimore’s hyper-segregated neighborhoods experience radically different realities.” Typically, Black neighborhoods fan out to the east and west resembling the shape of a butterfly while white neighborhoods run down the center of the city in the shape of an “L.”

The Baltimore Butterfly Sessions is made possible with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. For more information, please visit [www.centerstage.org/butterflysessions](http://www.centerstage.org/butterflysessions). For media related inquiries and interview requests, contact Keva Coles-Benton, Communications Manager at [KColesBenton@centerstage.org](mailto:KColesBenton@centerstage.org).

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### **About Baltimore Center Stage**

Designated the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage provides the highest quality theater and programming for all members of our communities, including youth and families, under the leadership of Artistic Director Stephanie Ybarra and Executive Director Michael Ross. Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations and imaginations by producing an eclectic season of professional productions across two mainstages and an intimate 99-seat theater, through engaging community programs, and with inspiring education programs. Everything we do at Center Stage is led by our core values—chief among them being Access For All. Our mission is heavily rooted in providing active and open accessibility for everyone, regardless of any and all barriers, to our Mainstage performances, education initiatives, and community programming.

