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For more information contact:
Marita Meinerts Albinson, 612.225.6142
maritaa@guthrietheater.org

**THE GUTHRIE THEATER PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE
OF THE FULL CIRCLE THEATER PRODUCTION OF *UNDER THIS ROOF*
by Barbara Kingsley and directed by James A. Williams**

Playing May 4 – 20 in the Dowling Studio

(*Minneapolis/St. Paul*)—The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, Artistic Director) is proud to present Full Circle Theater's world premiere production of *Under This Roof*, by longtime Twin Cities actor and theater artist Barbara Kingsley. Directed by award-winning actor/director James A. Williams, *Under This Roof* is the next production in the Guthrie Theater's Level Nine Series, an initiative to present accessible theater that is brave, immediate and community-driven. General admission tickets are \$9 and may be reserved through the Guthrie Box Office at 612.377.2224, toll-free 877.44.STAGE, and online at guthrietheater.org.

Under This Roof centers on Mamie and Raymond Warren, who live in the segregated black neighborhood of central Cleveland in the late 1940s. After Raymond suffers a serious accident, Mamie hires a white woman named Bessie, whose arrival brings new challenges. *Under This Roof* examines issues that resonate with today's realities: race, gender, aging, power, family, disability and love, on an ever-shifting axis, with unexpected results that are comic, painful and healing.

Barbara Kingsley (Playwright) is well-known as an Ivey Award-winning actor who created hundreds of characters over nearly 40 years on Twin Cities stages. Aside from acting, Kingsley has established herself as a playwright (*I Am Proof of Me – A Final Visit with Emily Dickinson*, *Living in The Blue Zone*). Her play *Under This Roof* was selected as a 2015 semifinalist at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Playwrights Conference. She resides in New York City and is a member of The 72nd Street Playwrights Collective (NY), the Dramatists Guild (NY) and The Playwrights' Center (MN).

In 2011 Kingsley received a Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) Artist Initiative Grant to go to Cleveland to carry out research for *Under This Roof* and to obtain oral histories from people who lived in Central Neighborhood, Cleveland in the late 1940s, the setting of the play. Subsequent readings and workshops of *Under This Roof* were done at the Jungle Theater in 2012 and 2013; at the Penguin Rep Theatre, Stony Point, NY, as part of the Just Desserts Play Reading Series; and at the Landing Theatre Company's 2017 New American Play Reading Series.

James A. Williams (Director) is a highly respected and longtime theater artist, locally and nationally, and is one of the founding members of Penumbra Theatre. Directing credits (selected): Twin Cities: *My Children! My Africa!* Park Square Theatre, 2015; *Broke-ology*, Pillsbury House Theatre, 2011; *Adrift on the Mississippi*, The History Theatre, 2011; and *Jelly Belly Don't Mess With Nobody*, Penumbra Theatre, 1989. Regionally: *Little Tommy Parker Celebrated Colored Picture Show*, St. Louis Black Repertory Theater, 1988, and *The Meeting*, Phoenix Players, Nairobi, Kenya, 2004. Acting Credits: Broadway: *Radio Golf*. Off-Broadway: *The Piano Lesson*, *My Children! My Africa!*, *Jitney*, Penumbra Theatre: *Two Trains Running*, *Les Blancs*, *King Hedley II*, *Seven Guitars*, *Fences*, *African Company Presents Richard III*; Pillsbury House Theatre: *Marcus; or the Secret of Sweet*, *The Brothers Size*, *In the Red and Brown*

Water; Park Square Theatre: *The Other Place*, *Othello*; Carlyle Brown & Co.: *Abe Lincoln and Uncle Tom in the White House*. Awards: Ivey Award for performance (2008, 2015); Audelco nominee (2012), *Star Tribune's* Artist of the Year (2008), McKnight Theater Fellowship 2015, and Fox Acting Fellow 2016.

The cast for *Under This Roof* features **Yolanda Bruce** as Mamie Warren, **Brian A. Grandison** as Raymond Warren, **Laura Esping** as Bessie Washington and **Nathan R. Stenberg** as Mason.

The creative team for *Under This Roof* includes **Barbara Kingsley** (Playwright), **James A. Williams** (Director), **Michael Burden** (Set and Props), **Amber Brown** (Costumes), **Tom Barrett** (Lighting), **Katharine Horowitz** (Sound), **Stephanie Lein Walseth** (Dramaturg) and **Roxanne Battle** (Assistant Director).

Performances of *Under This Roof* at the Guthrie Theater are made possible through generous support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In 2016, the Guthrie received a \$1 million grant from the foundation to underwrite a groundbreaking initiative for the theater's entire ninth floor. Conceptualized by Artistic Director Joseph Haj, the Level Nine Series emphasizes the creation of a theater that wrestles with urgent questions and inspires dynamic dialogue with its audience, expands the diversity of voices, visions and styles on its stages, and engages community members currently underserved by its work. All tickets to performances that are a part of the Level Nine Series are \$9, general admission.

Post-play discussions and access services (ASL, Audio Described and Open Captioned performances) are available on select dates. Visit guthrietheater.org or call the Box Office at 612.377.2224 for more information.

FULL CIRCLE THEATER COMPANY (Rick Shiomi and Martha B. Johnson, Co-Artistic Directors) was founded in the fall of 2014 by co-artistic directors and core artists James A. Williams, Stephanie Lein Walseth and Lara Trujillo. The mission of Full Circle is to produce heartfelt groundbreaking theater that artfully addresses issues of diversity and social justice for 21st century audiences. Our core values are to produce theater that is multiracial and multicultural in its representation of life and that is deeply inclusive of artists of color, who share in the artistic vision and leadership of the company. We further strive to create theater that reflects a deep awareness of feminist perspectives, incorporates intergenerational artistic collaboration, integrates color conscious casting and diversity in the creative process, supports the development of emerging theater artists, and powerfully engages diverse audiences and communities.

THE GUTHRIE THEATER (Joseph Haj, Artistic Director) was founded by Sir Tyrone Guthrie in 1963 and is an American center for theater performance, production, education and professional training, dedicated to producing the great works of dramatic literature and to cultivating the next generation of theater artists. Under Haj's leadership, the Guthrie is guided by four core values: Artistic Excellence; Community; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Fiscal Responsibility. The Guthrie produces a mix of classic and contemporary plays on three stages and continues to set a national standard for excellence in theatrical production and performance, serving nearly 400,000 patrons annually. In 2006, the Guthrie opened a new home, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel, located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Open to the public year-round, it houses three state-of-the-art stages, production facilities, classrooms, full-service restaurants and dramatic public lobbies. guthrietheater.org

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