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Theatrical Outfit Continues 40th Anniversary Season with the One Man Tour de Force, *Thurgood*, September 29 – October 16

ATLANTA, GA – September 19, 2016

“This election year, as we exercise our civic responsibility to choose our future leadership, what better instruction and inspiration do we have than this, to attend to the true story of an American who made our nation, and our world, a more hopeful place to be?”

– **Tom Key, Artistic Director, Theatrical Outfit**

Theatrical Outfit continues its 40th Anniversary Season of Hope with the one man tour de force *Thurgood*, running September 29 – October 16, 2016 at the Balzer Theater at Herren’s. The Outfit run of *Thurgood*, in which judicial politics meet personal triumph, is the Atlanta premiere of the play starring prolific local stage and screen actor Geoffrey Williams as the first African American Supreme Court Justice. The original Broadway production featured Laurence Fishburne and was subsequently filmed as an HBO original movie. Of *Thurgood*, *The L.A. Times* said, “If the curriculum in the schools were presented with half as much personality, the gaps in our knowledge wouldn’t be so pronounced.”

ABOUT THE PLAY

Thurgood

By George Stevens, Jr.

September 29 – October 16, 2016

Based on the life and career of the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, this riveting narrative charts Thurgood Marshall's evolution from back-alley Baltimore, to Howard University law school, to his fight for equality in the South, all the way to a seat on the highest court in the land in 1967. In addition to his victorious challenge of segregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, humorous and inspiring milestones of Marshall's journey reveal the remarkable brilliance, perseverance and hope of one of the greatest American heroes of all time.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT: George Stevens, Jr. is an American writer, author, playwright, director and producer. He is the founder of the American Film Institute, creator of the AFI Life Achievement Award and instigator/producer of the Kennedy Center Honors. Since 2009 he has served as Co-Chairman of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. Accolades to date for his professional career include seventeen Emmys, eight Writers Guild awards, two Peabody Awards, the Humanitas Prize and an Honorary Academy Award.

ABOUT OUR STARRING ACTOR: Geoffrey D. Williams (Thurgood in *Thurgood*) has appeared on many Atlanta stages: Theatrical Outfit, Alliance Theatre, Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company, Horizon Theatre Company and Theatre in the Square, to name a few. Regional theatre credits include Huntington Theatre, Geva Theatre Center, Indiana Rep Theatre, Burt Reynolds Theatre, Jomandi Productions, Mill Mountain Playhouse, among others, and several national touring companies. You might have seen Geoffrey in *The Piano Lesson*, *King Hedley, II*, *Fences*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, or *Ain't Misbehavin'*. He has also acted in more than a dozen film or television productions for Showtime, Millennium Filmworks, and HBO. Geoffrey trained at Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of Fine Art, Dallas, Texas; the BFA Theatre Program at the Burt Reynolds Institute for Theatre and Film Training in Florida; and in the Professional Intern Program at Northside School for Performing Arts (Atlanta)!

PERFORMANCE DATES & TICKETS*

Previews: September 29 – 30, 2016 at 7:30PM

Opening Night: October 1, 2016 at 7:30PM

Regular Performances: October 2 – 16, 2016

Performances of *Thurgood* are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30PM and Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30PM. Tickets range from \$20-\$50 and may be purchased online

at theatricaloutfit.org or by calling **678.528.1500**. Group pricing is available. For info, email boxoffice@theatricaloutfit.org.

*Ticket prices are subject to availability. Fees and taxes apply. Order early for best pricing.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS:

Atlanta Public School Matinees — Thursdays, October 6 and 13, 11:00 am
Students from the Atlanta Public School System will attend *Thurgood* as part of the Cultural Experience Project of the Office of Cultural Affairs.

Downtown Dialogue — Sunday, October 9, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Be downtown and join a panel of special, non-theatre guests in an open dialogue about the social, political and global themes in the show! Open to all patrons with a ticket to any performance of the current production.

Macy's Page to Stage Talk Back — Friday, October 14, post-show
Representatives from the creative team/staff share how they moved the show from script to finished production.

Atlanta History Center Photography Gallery — on view for run of *Thurgood*
Visitors to Theatrical Outfit may view a "Local Legends and Legacies" gallery of reproduced photographs on loan from the Atlanta History Center celebrating local Civil Rights icons and history-shaping activists.

CAST

Geoffrey DWilliams* – Thurgood Marshall

CREATIVE TEAM

Eric J. Little* - Director
R. Paul Thomason - Scenic Designer
Andre Allen - Lighting Designer
Paula Renee - Costume Designer
Kay Richardson - Sound Designer
MC Park - Properties Designer
Clifton Guterman - Casting Director
Lisa Watson* - Stage Manager

**Member of Actors' Equity Association*

PUBLICITY AND PRODUCTION PHOTOS (WHEN AVAILABLE): may be accessed here:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qprypaeiy4os4mo/AAApmH0zKbeiy-6jGPkAvwA-a?dl=0>

COMMUNITY PARTNERS: The Center for Civil and Human Rights, The Atlanta History Center, Compassionate Atlanta, City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs Cultural Experience Project

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS: Fulton County Office of Cultural Affairs, Turner Broadcasting, City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, Jackson Spalding, Publix Super Markets Charities, The Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund

ABOUT THEATRICAL OUTFIT: Atlanta's second-oldest continually-operating professional theatre company was founded in 1976 and has been led by Artistic Director Tom Key since fall 1995. Key led the company through the creation of its award winning downtown home, the Balzer Theater at Herren's, the first U.S. theater to achieve LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The Balzer Theater is also the historical site of Herren's, the first restaurant in Atlanta to voluntarily desegregate in 1962; its first African American patrons, Dr. Lee and Delores Shelton, remain Theatrical Outfit patrons and season ticket subscribers. Key's programming of classics, regional and world premieres tell soul-stirring stories, with themes that explore diversity, equality, ethnicity, race, and religion; and often feature the best writers of the American South, including Ernest Gaines, Lauren Gunderson, Horton Foote, Harper Lee, Flannery O'Connor, Janece Shaffer, Sherry Shephard-Massat, Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder and Tennessee Williams. After ten years of capital investment, T.O. is in new territory. Having retired its mortgage, staff, trustees and artists are in the midst of a 2014-17 Strategic Plan designed to expand mission-driven, artistic offerings of genres ranging from dramas and comedies to large scale musicals, engaging many more of Atlanta's world class theatre artists. The plan now has the benefit of two leaders, Artistic Director, Tom Key and Managing Director, Lee Foster, hired in June 2014, who together have achieved the theatre's most successful season of ticket sales since the 2005 opening of The Balzer Theater at Herren's and the most Suzi Bass Award nominations for one season ever garnered by Theatrical Outfit.

ABOUT OUR VENUE: *Thurgood* will be performed at The Balzer Theater at Herren's at 84 Luckie Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30303. Theatrical Outfit utilizes a Loop Listening System, making The Balzer Theater at Herren's the first theater in the state of Georgia to incorporate this technology. Attendees with T-coil hearing aids may participate automatically, and others needing enhancement may obtain system-compatible headsets from our lobby Box Office.

OUR VISION: Creating compassion — one story at a time.

OUR MISSION: Starting the conversations that matter.

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