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## CLEVELAND PLAY HOUSE ANNOUNCES LINEUP FOR THE **2014 NEW GROUND THEATRE FESTIVAL**

Festival includes a CPH presentation of *Grounded*  
by internationally acclaimed playwright George Brant

**CLEVELAND, OH (April 7, 2014) New Ground Theatre Festival**, Cleveland Play House's annual showcase of new theatrical works will open with the world premiere production of Deborah Zoe Laufer's thought-provoking *Informed Consent*. The Festival is comprised of 25 performances of works ranging from fully-produced, large-scale collaborations to solo performances, to readings of plays hot off the writer's printer that represent a variety of new work from nationally-recognized artists. This year's lineup also includes work from Tony Award nominee and CWRU/CPH alumna, Elizabeth A. Davis, as well as critically acclaimed playwrights George Brant and Eric Coble, and Roe Green Award Winner Heidi Schreck. For the third consecutive year, the Roe Green Award brings a leading American playwright to Cleveland to develop a new project culminating in a reading and public conversation with the playwright. CPH is indebted to Honorary Producer Roe Green, Supporting Sponsor Ohio Savings Bank and Associate Sponsors Ulmer & Berne, Westlake Reed Leskosky and Walter Haverfield. The **New Ground Theatre Festival** will run from May 7 – 17. Tickets are on sale now and start at just \$10 for most events!

CPH Artistic Director Laura Kepley claims: "Bringing new work to the Northeast Ohio community is central to what we do at Cleveland Play House. The **New Ground Theatre Festival** is the perfect outlet for us to explore new work, forge new relationships and deepen existing relationships with playwrights, directors and artists alike. This year's Festival will showcase the work of several multi-talented artists whose intelligent, artistic and creative pieces will delight our audiences and engage thought-provoking conversation. We are deeply grateful to all of our sponsors and to Honorary Producer Roe Green for her enthusiastic and generous support of new work at Cleveland Play House."

The Festival will commence on May 7 with two full-scale productions, beginning with the world premiere production of Deborah Zoe Laufer's *Informed Consent*. Laufer's play was workshopped during last year's Festival, culminating in a sold-out reading; this year's full-scale production is co-produced with Geva Theatre Center and will have audiences intrigued by the ethical, political and moral questions it raises. Based on a true story, *Informed Consent* delves into the personal and national debate about science vs. belief and whether our DNA is our destiny. The second production is by multi-award-winning playwright George Brant, who returns to CPH with his highly-acclaimed production of *Grounded*. This profound and moving story of a woman on the verge of collapse was named a Top 10 Play of 2013 in London by both *The Guardian* and *London Evening Standard*. *Grounded* has been described as "Theatre's answer to Zero Dark Thirty"- *The Independent*, and

“Gripping” – *The New York Times*. A TalkBack with Mr. Brant will be held after the Sunday, May 11 performance.

Tony-nominated actress for *Once* and CWRU/CPH alumna Elizabeth A. Davis returns to CPH stages with a reading of her folk musical, *Joe*, a story about the unlikely friendship of a Texas beauty queen and a homeless Native American man. Ms. Davis has written the book, music and lyrics for the piece and will also be featured on stage with her violin during this reading on May 17. Also debuting on May 17 is a reading of *Fairfield* by Clevelander Eric Coble, whom American Theatre Magazine has dubbed “An unqualified original with rich and idiosyncratic works.” Directed by CPH Artistic Director Laura Kepley, this razor-sharp, insightful comedy raises the question of what is appropriate/inappropriate when it comes to race relations. A fully-developed production of *Fairfield*, which the *New York Post* has described as “Funnier than anything on Broadway,” will also be featured as part of CPH’s 2014-2015 Season. Rounding out the Festival will be a new play reading of Roe Green Award Winner Heidi Schreck’s new work, *Grand Concourse*. Schreck and director Kip Fagan will participate in a TalkBack with the audience directly following the reading.

### **Roe Green Award**

Each year, the Roe Green Award is awarded to a nationally recognized playwright for outstanding achievement in playwriting. The award includes a \$7,500 cash prize; a week-long residency including rehearsals; a Master Class with CPH Playwrights’ Unit, Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland State University students; and a public reading of a new play. This year’s winner, Heidi Schreck, will hold a reading of her play *Grand Concourse* on May 10. Heralded as “A Playwright to Watch!” by the *New York Post*, Ms. Schreck is also a multi-award winning actor having won two Obie awards, a Drama Desk Award and the Theatre World Award.

**ROE GREEN** (*Honorary Producer*) is an arts patron, community activist, and chief executive officer of the Roe Green Foundation. With a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Communications from University of Colorado and a master’s degree in Theatre from Kent State University, her experience in stage and business management includes Cain Park, Cleveland Opera, and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. Today she is president emeritus of CAVORT, Inc., the Conference About Volunteers of Regional Theatres; serves on the Kent State University School of Theatre and Dance advisory board; the foundation board of Kent State University; the board of Porthouse Theatre; the board of Maltz Jupiter Theatre in Jupiter, Florida; and the board of Cleveland Play House. She is responsible for the Roe Green Visiting Director Series for the School of Theatre and Dance at Kent State and the University of Colorado. Ms. Green has received numerous awards for her support of the arts and new play development including; the 2009 State of Ohio Governor’s Award for Arts Patron; the Dramatist Guild’s Patron of the Arts Award (2013); and the Muse Award (2014) from the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. In 2013, she received the CPH Centennial Star Award that recognizes select individuals who have made special and important contributions to CPH’s rich legacy of artistic and educational programming. 2014 marks the third year of the Roe Green Award at CPH which recognizes a playwright and the development of a new work.

### **2014 New Ground Theatre Festival Events**

#### **Informed Consent by Deborah Zoe Laufer**

April 23 – May 18

Fully staged production – Second Stage  
Co-produced with Geva Theatre Center  
Directed by Sean Daniels  
Tickets range in price from \$45-\$72 each

Genetic anthropologist Jillian has devoted her life to finding a cure for early-onset Alzheimer's, the inherited disease that took her mother, and will soon overtake her and perhaps eventually her own daughter. When Jillian is brought on to conduct a study on diabetes in the isolated Havasupai tribe, she runs a series of unauthorized tests. Jillian's hopes to discover information that will aid her battle against Alzheimer's soon clashes with the Tribe's beliefs. As Jillian's ethics are thrown into question, this world premiere play asks: Are we defined by our biology or by our memories? And when is knowledge actually power?

InsideCPH events for this production and **New Ground Theatre Festival** include:

**Tech Tuesday: Informed Consent**

April 19, 2014 @ 7:00pm - 8:30pm

**Behind-the-Scenes: New Ground Theatre Festival**

April 26, 2014 @ 11:30am - 1:00pm

*Informed Consent* is the centerpiece of our New Ground Theatre Festival, in which we develop and showcase new work. From the Mainstage Centerpiece Production to lines fresh from the playwright's pen, and everything in between, New Ground puts new play development center stage. Join *Informed Consent* playwright Deborah Zoe Laufer, as well Cleveland's own Eric Coble—whose Fairfield will be workshopped during this year's Festival, and be its Centerpiece Production next year!—for a revealing conversation about new work

**15th Humanism & the Healing Arts Multidisciplinary Conference**

April 29, 2014 @ 1:00pm - 3:00pm

CPH has joined forces with the Summa Health System for this one-day symposium which, like *Informed Consent*, combines Art and Science in a truly unique way. Join CPH artistic staff and *Informed Consent* cast, as well as a diverse group of medical professionals, for this one-of-a-kind event.

**Presentation and Panel Discussion**--Presentation by Cleveland Play House staff and actors from the play *Informed Consent* by Deborah Zoe Laufer

**Panelists:** Kirk A Stiffler, MD, MPH, FACEP - Director, Emergency Medicine Research Center and Chair, Institutional Review Board, Summa Health System Cristie Cole, JD, Fellow, Cleveland Fellowship in Advanced Bioethics, Member of the Mohawk Nation (aka Akwesasne). Cleveland Play House staff and actors.

*The Summa Health System designates this live activity for a maximum of 2.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) TM. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity. The Summa Health System is accredited by the Ohio State Medical Association to provide continuing medical education for physicians.*

**TalkBack: Informed Consent**

May 04, 2014 @ 4:30pm - 5:00pm

Stay after the show to continue the conversation our plays start! TalkBacks offer the chance to interact with the cast, creative team, local experts and fellow playgoers in an open and lively Q&A about the play and the questions it raises.

**TalkBack: Informed Consent**

May 06, 2014 @ 9:00pm - 9:30pm

**TalkBack: Informed Consent**

May 11, 2014 @ 4:30pm - 5:00pm

**Grounded by George Brant**

May 7 – May 17<sup>th</sup>

Fully staged production – The Helen

CPH presents Page 73's production of ***Grounded***

Directed by Ken Rus Schmoll

Tickets range in price from \$10 - \$30 each

An unexpected pregnancy ends an ace fighter pilot's career in the sky. Reassigned to operate military drones from a windowless trailer outside Las Vegas, she hunts terrorists by day and returns to her family each night. As the pressure to track a high-profile target mounts, the boundaries begin to blur between the desert in which she lives and the one she patrols half a world away. A TalkBack with Mr. Brant will be held after the Sunday, May 11 performance.

**Grand Concourse by Heidi Schreck (Roe Green Award Winner Reading)**

May 10

Play reading – The Helen

Directed by Kip Fagan

Ticket price: \$10 - \$20 each

Shelley is tired. A young nun who has successfully run a soup kitchen in the Bronx for years, she has begun to question her faith and the depths of her compassion. When a new volunteer joins the ranks, Shelley faces the ultimate test. Just how far can a person's ability to forgive be stretched before it irrevocably snaps? ***Grand Concourse*** is a finely observed tale of the good, the evil, and the mysterious that exists in the everyday-and in all of us. Schreck and director Kip Fagan will participate in a TalkBack with the audience directly following the reading.

**Fairfield by Eric Coble**

May 17

Play reading - The Helen

Directed by Laura Kepley

Ticket price: \$10 - \$20 each

"Peace. Love. Respect for all." So goes the motto of Fairfield Elementary, a public school located in a liberal minority majority district. But when a young teacher's misguided attempts at celebrating black history month take a dark turn, chaos erupts, students riot, and it seems that it may be near impossible to safely reach the CelebrEthnic potluck scheduled for February 28th. ***Fairfield*** is a razor-sharp insightful comedy from Cleveland playwright Eric Coble that

examines the line between appropriate/inappropriate, how we teach and talk about race and culture, and questions: is it indeed possible to overcome?

**Joe by Elizabeth A. Davis**

May 17

Folk musical reading – The Allen

Directed by Tim Acito

Ticket price: \$10 - \$20 each

A Texas beauty queen befriends a homeless Native American man. Spanning a decade and the Texan plains, their complicated relationship unearths deep cultural divides and challenges the meaning of friendship and charity. *Joe* is a deeply personal and heart-felt testament to joys and struggles of forming a life-long connection with another human being. This autobiographical play with music is penned by CWRU/CPH alumna and Tony award nominee Elizabeth A. Davis.

**Ticket & Multiple-Show Discount Pricing Information**

CPH's ***New Ground Theatre Festival*** will take place May 7 – 17, 2014. Tickets range in price from \$10 – \$72 each. Save up to 50% when you buy multiple Festival shows. Students and anyone under 35 as low as \$10! To order single tickets please call 216-241-6000 or visit [www.clevelandplayhouse.com](http://www.clevelandplayhouse.com). Groups of 10+ save up to 40% off single ticket prices; call 216-400-7027.

**Festival Line-up**

**Wednesday, May 7**

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Thursday, May 8**

1:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Friday, May 9**

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Saturday, May 10**

1:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

3:30 pm – *Grand Concourse* (Roe Green Winner)

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Sunday, May 11**

2:30 pm – *Informed Consent*

5:00 pm – *Grounded*

**Tuesday, May 13**

7:00pm – *Informed Consent*

**Wednesday, May 14**

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*  
7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Thursday, May 15**

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*  
7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Friday, May 16**

7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*  
7:30 pm – *Grounded*

**Saturday, May 17**

2:30 pm – *Informed Consent*  
2:30 pm – *Fairfield*  
5:00 pm – *Joe*  
7:30 pm – *Informed Consent*  
7:30 pm – *Grounded*

Founded in 1915, **Cleveland Play House** is America's first professional regional theatre. Throughout its rich history, Cleveland Play House has remained dedicated to its mission to inspire, stimulate and entertain diverse audiences in Northeast Ohio by producing plays and theatre education programs of the highest professional standards. It has produced more than 100 world and/or American premieres, and over its long history more than 12 million people have attended over 1,300 CPH productions. Cleveland Play House looks toward its centennial while performing in three state-of-the art venues at PlayhouseSquare in downtown Cleveland.

The Ohio Arts Council helped fund Cleveland Play House with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. We also thank the residents of Cuyahoga County for supporting Cleveland Play House through Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

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