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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## GEVA THEATRE CENTER NAMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-C.E.O

*Tom Parrish joins New York State's most attended regional theatre following eight-month national search.*

**Rochester, NY. December 15, 2010** – Peter Messner, Chair of the Board of Trustees for Geva Theatre Center, and Mark Cuddy, Artistic Director and C.E.O., have announced that, following an eight-month, national search, **Tom Parrish** will join the theatre as Executive Director and partner with Cuddy as co-C.E.O. Mr. Parrish's appointment ushers in a new era in the rich history of the 38-year old organization.

Mr. Parrish comes to Geva from Merrimack Repertory Theatre (MRT) in Lowell, Massachusetts where he has served as Executive Director since 2006. During his tenure there, Mr. Parrish, in partnership with the organization's artistic director, was responsible for eliminating the company's accumulated deficit, stimulating audience growth and donor development, transferring the company's first Off-Broadway production, establishing an endowment, building the company's local and national reputation and leading the company through a challenging economy, all while operating the company in the black each season. Prior to joining MRT, Mr. Parrish served as Associate Managing Director and General Manager of San Diego Repertory Theatre, where he received the NAACP Theatre Award for Best Producer, managed a variety of education and outreach initiatives and produced the theatre's annual Kuumba Fest Celebration, the largest African American cultural festival of its kind on the West Coast.

"It is a great time to be at Geva!" said Peter Messner. "It is a privilege that Tom Parrish is joining the Geva Theatre Center Leadership Team. His skills and vision will bring us to new heights."

Mr. Parrish, who will start full-time at Geva Theatre Center at the beginning of March 2011, was born in Buffalo and has worked in various capacities at Arena Stage, Dallas Theater Center, The Cleveland Play House, Meadow Brook Theatre, Dobama Theater and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. He received both an M.B.A and M.A.in Arts Administration from Southern Methodist University, a B.A. in Theatre Arts and Economics from Case Western Reserve University, and attended the National Theater Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center.

“Geva Theatre Center has an incredible reputation as one of the country’s finest theatre companies, and I am honored and thrilled to have the opportunity to steward and lead this organization in partnership with Artistic Director Mark Cuddy and Geva’s Board of Trustees,” commented Mr. Parrish. “Together, we will endeavor to build on Geva’s tradition of excellence in theatre production, arts education and community service. I look forward to making Rochester my home in the coming months and to becoming an active member of this wonderful community.”

Theatre executive search consultants Albert Hall & Associates were retained to conduct a nationwide search for an Executive Director/Co-CEO. The firm, with offices in California and Connecticut, is a full-service consulting and executive search firm providing support to many of America's most prestigious arts and entertainment companies, nonprofit organizations and allied agencies. Principals Steve Albert and Tom Hall met with trustees and staff earlier this year to develop Geva’s attractive job profile. Five semi-finalists visited Rochester in September, and in October, three finalists visited Geva for a second time. A search committee, chaired by trustee Sergio Esteban and composed of current trustees, worked closely with Mr. Cuddy and Albert Hall & Associates.

“Geva’s Search Committee looked long and hard at a number of cultural executives from across the country to find just the right leader who not only could have a tremendous impact in Rochester, but also who believes in the values of Geva and our community,” said Artistic Director Mark Cuddy. “Tom Parrish is an exceptional professional and a forthright person, with an enviable record of success. I couldn’t be happier with this appointment. Together, Tom and I will partner to bring Geva Theatre Center into its next exciting phase of growth and artistic excellence.”

**For further information, or to arrange an interview, please contact:  
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#### **GEVA THEATRE CENTER**

Geva Theatre Center is Rochester’s leading professional theatre and the most attended regional theatre in New York State. Founded in 1972, Geva attracts over 170,000 patrons annually, including more than 16,000 students. The 552-seat Elaine P. Wilson Mainstage offers a wide variety of shows, from musicals to American and world classics.

The 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Nextstage is home to Geva’s own series of cutting-edge drama, comedy and musical theatre; Geva Comedy Improv; WHAT’S NEXT - Geva’s New Play Reading Series and the Hornet’s Nest - an innovative play-reading series facilitating community-wide discussion on timely issues. The Nextstage also hosts visiting companies of both local and international renown.

Geva Theatre Center offers a wide variety of educational, outreach and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Since 1995 the organization has been led by Artistic Director Mark Cuddy.

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