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UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL DECEMBER 4, 2018

TWO-TIME TONY AWARD-WINNER CHITA RIVERA TO PERFORM AT GARDEN THEATRE ON MARCH 9, 2019

WINTER GARDEN, FL (December 4, 2018): Legendary Broadway icon and Tony Award-winner Chita Rivera will headline the Garden Theatre's annual Encore celebration on March 9, 2019. Ms. Rivera will perform her signature songs and share behind-the-scenes stories from her illustrious career. Corporate sponsorship packages are available now for the Garden's benefit gala. Individual tickets (\$125 - \$325) will be available starting Thursday, December 6 at 12:00 pm.

Guests will enjoy an evening of sparkling champagne, elegant food, exquisite desserts, and a special appearance by Chita Rivera. A limited number of VIP tickets are available. Guests taking advantage of this premium seating opportunity will be guaranteed the best seats in the house, plus access to a post-show party featuring a meet-and-greet with the incomparable Chita Rivera.

Nao Tsurumaki, Garden Theatre's Executive Director, is thrilled to host Ms. Rivera for this special performance: "We are honored to have someone of Ms. Rivera's caliber perform at the Garden – I think it really speaks to the organization's growing reputation," says Tsurumaki. "Ms. Rivera, truly a national treasure, is the perfect guest to elevate this unique cultural experience for the Winter Garden community.

A theatrical icon and one of Broadway's greatest triple-threat talents, Chita Rivera is one of the most nominated performers in Tony Award history having earned 10 nominations, won twice and received the 2018 Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre.

A versatile actress/singer/dancer, she recently starred in *The Visit*, the final John Kander/Fred Ebb/Terrence McNally musical directed by John Doyle and choreographed by Graciela Daniele on Broadway, the Broadway revival of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, the Broadway and touring productions of *The Dancer's Life*, a dazzling new musical celebrating her spectacular career, written by Terrence McNally and directed by Graciela Daniele, and the revival of the Broadway musical *Nine* with Antonio Banderas.

She trained as a ballerina (from age nine) before receiving a scholarship to the School of American Ballet from the legendary choreographer George Balanchine. Chita's first appearance (age 17) was as a principal dancer in *Call Me Madam*. Her electric performance as Anita in the original Broadway premiere of *West Side Story* brought her stardom, a role in which she repeated in London.

Her career is highlighted by starring roles in *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Rink* (Tony Award), *Chicago*, *Jerry's Girls*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Tony Award), and the original Broadway casts of *Guys and Dolls*, *Can-Can*, *Seventh Heaven* and *Mr. Wonderful*. On tour: *Born Yesterday*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Call Me Madam*, *Threepenny Opera*, *Sweet Charity*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Zorba*, *Can-Can with The Rockettes*.

Chita was awarded The Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama in 2009 and received the coveted Kennedy Center Honor in 2002. In 2018 she was honored as a Living Landmark by the New York Landmarks Conservancy; in 2016 she headlined at Carnegie Hall and in 2015, Great Performances aired their special *Chita Rivera: A Lot of Livin' To Do*, a retrospective of her extraordinary life and career nationally on PBS.

Her solo CD is entitled *And Now I Swing*. Her most treasured production is her daughter, singer/dancer/choreographer Lisa Mordente.

Tickets: Tickets begin at \$125. A limited number of VIP tickets, beginning at \$200, are available for purchase and include access to a post-show party with Chita Rivera. Corporate sponsorships packages begin at \$3,500.

Tickets may be purchased by calling 407-877-4736 ext. 0, in person at the Garden Theatre Box Office at 160 West Plant Street in Winter Garden, or online at gardentheatre.org.

For information regarding corporate sponsorships, please contact Melissa Braillard, Director of Patron Development, at melissa@gardentheatre.org, or 407-877-4736 x203.

Photography

Photos by Laura Marie Duncan.

Dates: March 9, 2019

Garden Theatre's Encore is presented by Orlando Health. This project is funded in part by Orange County Government through the Arts and Cultural Affairs Program, the Department of State, division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture, and the State of Florida. Additional funding from United Arts of Central Florida, home of OrlandoAtPlay.com and UAArtsEd.com.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: *Garden Theatre Encore: An Evening with Chita Rivera*

Broadway's incomparable triple-threat Chita Rivera will grace the Garden stage for a one-night-only conversation and performance on March 9, 2019.

Guests will enjoy an evening of sparkling champagne, elegant food, exquisite desserts, and a special appearance by Chita Rivera. A limited number of VIP tickets are available. Guests taking advantage of this premium seating will be guaranteed the best seats in the house, plus access to a post-show party Chita Rivera.

WHEN: March 9, 2019 at 7:30 pm

WHERE: Garden Theatre, 160 West Plant Street, Winter Garden, Florida 34787

TICKETS: For tickets (\$125 - \$325) or more information, contact the Garden Theatre box office at 407-877-4736 ext. 0 or www.gardentheatre.org.

ABOUT THE GARDEN THEATRE

Garden Theatre of Winter Garden celebrates its 11th anniversary during the 2018-2019 performance season. Originally built in 1935 as a single-screen

cinema, the theatre was the first in Central Florida built for “talkies” and was a gathering place for locals to watch the latest newsreels and films of the day. The building was restored to its former glory in 2008, and the 295-seat Garden Theatre, with a current annual budget of \$1.5 million, has grown to a performing arts center with extensive programming that includes professional live theatre, concerts, dance, special events, movies and a thriving year-round arts education program. Visit gardentheatre.org or contact 407-877-4736 for details about the 2018-2019 season.