For Immediate Release

Victory Gardens Theater and the Black Women’s Expo present the Black Beauty Festival in conjunction with Ensemble Playwright Marcus Gardley’s A Wonder In My Soul
Directed by Artistic Director Chay Yew

February 25 and 26, 2017

Chicago, IL—Victory Gardens Theater and The Black Women's Expo present the Black Beauty Festival February 25 from 12:00pm – 7:30pm and February 26 from 12:00pm – 3:00pm. Featuring products from Black-owned and operated Chicago beauty companies, the Black Beauty Festival is presented in conjunction with the World Premiere of A Wonder In My Soul, written by ensemble playwright Marcus Gardley and directed by Artistic Director Chay Yew, with original music by Jaret Landon at Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Avenue. Tickets to the Black Beauty Festival are $30 with code BEAUTY and can be purchased by calling the box office at 773.871.3000 or online at victorygardens.org.

For two days, Victory Gardens is transformed into a shopping destination for the finest products from the best Black owned and operated beauty companies in Chicago. Tickets include entrance into the Black Beauty Festival, a champagne cocktail to sip while perusing local beauty products, a Victory Gardens Theater swag bag, and a ticket to playwright Marcus Gardley’s A Wonder in My Soul on February 25 or 26.

Longtime hair salon owners, Bell and Birdie, grapple with the decision to remain in their beloved South Side neighborhood or relocate under the pressures of gentrification and crime. Told through music, poetry and dance A Wonder In My Soul looks at one neighborhood’s evolution through the eyes of two best friends and their lifetime of friendship. From the artistic team that brought you The House That Will Not Stand, The Gospel of Lovingkindness, and An Issue of Blood, director Chay Yew and playwright Marcus Gardley now explore Chicago history, beauty, and friendship.

The cast for A Wonder In My Soul includes Linda Bright Clay, Donica Lynn, Greta Oglesby, Jeffery Owens Freelon, Jr., Camille Robinson and Jacqueline Williams.

About Victory Gardens Theater
Under the leadership of Artistic Director Chay Yew and Managing Director Erica Daniels, Victory Gardens is dedicated to artistic excellence while creating a vital, contemporary American Theater that is accessible and relevant to all people through productions of challenging new plays and musicals. Victory Gardens Theater is committed to the development, production and support of new plays that has been the mission of the theater since its founding, set forth by Dennis Začek, Marcelle McVay, and the original founders of Victory Gardens Theater.
Victory Gardens Theater is a leader in developing and producing new theater work and cultivating an inclusive Chicago theater community. Victory Gardens' core strengths are nurturing and producing dynamic and inspiring new plays, reflecting the diversity of our city's and nation's culture through engaging diverse communities, and in partnership with Chicago Public Schools, bringing art and culture to our city's active student population.

Since its founding in 1974, the company has produced more world premieres than any other Chicago theater, a commitment recognized nationally when Victory Gardens received the 2001 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Located in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, Victory Gardens Biograph Theater includes the Začek-McVay Theater, a state-of-the-art 259-seat mainstage and the 109-seat studio theater on the second floor, named the Richard Christiansen Theater.

Victory Gardens Ensemble Playwrights include Luis Alfaro, Philip Dawkins, Marcus Gardley, Ike Holter, Samuel D. Hunter, Naomi Iizuka, Tanya Saracho and Laura Schellhardt. Each playwright has a seven-year residency at Victory Gardens Theater.

The Playwrights Ensemble Alumni includes Claudia Allen, Lonnie Carter, Steve Carter, Gloria Bond Clunie, Dean Corrin, Nilo Cruz, Joel Drake Johnson, John Logan, Nicholas Patricca, Douglas Post, James Sherman, Charles Smith, Jeffrey Sweet and Kristine Thatcher.

For more information about Victory Gardens, visit www.victorygardens.org. Follow us on Facebook at Facebook.com/victorygardens, Twitter @VictoryGardens and Instagram at instagram.com/victorygardenstheater/


About The Black Women's Expo

The Black Women's Expo (BWE), is a three-day, experiential exposition celebrating the aspirations and achievements of women of African descent. Under the theme “She Matters,” the BWE offers women an opportunity to get informed, empowered and enlightened, while discovering the latest trends and amazing new products and services specifically created for them. The Black Women’s Expo is now the longest running exposition of its kind, and is scheduled for Chicago, April 7 – 9, 2017 @ McCormick Place. While BWE targets women, there are elements for men, families and children. There is continuous live entertainment on the main stage featuring national recording artists, daily fashion and hair shows. For more information or tickets to the Expo, visit our website at www.theblackwomensexpo.com or call 312-454-6100. Follow The Black Women’s Expo on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram and use the hashtag #SheMatters.

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