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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

ARTSEMERSON PRESENTS
MR. JOY:
THE NEIGHBORHOOD TOUR
WRITTEN BY DANIEL BEATY
PRODUCED BY ARTSEMERSON

WHAT: ArtsEmerson, in collaboration with METCO, Inc. presents the 4th annual **Mr. Joy: The Neighborhood Tour** – a series of free theatre performances of Daniel Beaty’s **Mr. Joy**, a play that explores issues of race and class in America to help us find our common humanity. The experience of seeing this play has proven an excellent catalyst to begin important discussions on race, class and community. **Mr. Joy** succeeds in inspiring the public to remember the power of empathy and the need to stand up to injustice.

WHO: **Mr. Joy** is written by **Daniel Beaty**, directed by **David Dower** and performed by **Debra Walton**.

**WHERE &
WHEN:**

Downtown Boston – event has passed

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre
Thursday, February 27, 2020 @ 11:00AM
219 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02116

Concord

Concord-Carlisle High School
Wednesday, March 4, 2020 @ 7:00PM
500 Walden St, Concord, MA 01742

Natick

Wilson Middle School
Tuesday, March 10, 2020 @ 6:00PM
22 Rutledge Rd, Natick, MA 01760

Hingham

Hingham High School
Thursday, March 12, 2020 @ 7:00PM
17 Union St, Hingham, MA 02043

Norwood (hosted by Westwood High School)

Westwood High School @ Norwood Theatre
Monday, March 16, 2020 @ 7:00PM

109 Central St, Norwood, MA 02062

HOW: **ALL PERFORMANCES ARE FREE!**

Tickets must be reserved, and may be accessed 3 ways:

Online: **ArtsEmerson.org**

Phone: **617-824-8400**

In Person: **ArtsEmerson Central Ticket Office**, located in the Emerson Paramount Center (559 Washington Street), open Tuesday-Saturday from 10am-6pm

**MORE
INFO:**

SYNOPSIS

What happened to Mr. Joy? A Harlem community is shaken when Mr. Joy, a Chinese immigrant whose shoe repair shop has been a neighborhood pillar for decades, is the victim of an attack. Through the lens of Mr. Joy's customers, from the bubbly eleven-year-old Clarissa (who captured everyone's heart in Daniel Beaty's **Emergency**) to the sincere and savvy "gangsta granny" Bessie, we learn the profound yet unassuming impact the shop owner has had on each of their lives. Playwright and ArtsEmerson Artist-in-Residence Daniel Beaty (**Breath & Imagination, Emergency**) returns with another moving reflection on transforming pain into power, this time through the virtuosic performance by acclaimed actress Debra Walton. A poignant, funny and stirring solo piece, **Mr. Joy** invites us to consider how we respond to violence as individuals and as a community, and the power of the invisible ties that bind us all.

This year's tour is sponsored in part by: BASI Outside the Box Act 2.

DEBRA WALTON, ACTOR

Debra has been in search of and tracking **Mr. Joy** since she first heard of it back in 2013. Being cast in the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park production of **Mr. Joy** changed her life forever. She is not only thrilled but honored that she has been tapped by the ArtsEmerson family to continue sharing this story with this community! Her recent artistic endeavors include finally being initiated into the "Law & Order SVU" family. In her words, making her now and forever a "Real" New York actor! Other recent adventures include playing Gloria in the Robert Schenkkan play Building the Wall & The Leading Player in Pippin! Favorite roles include Anita in "*West Side Story*", Minnie Fae in "*Hello Dolly*", and Velma in "*CHICAGO*", Broadway and off-Broadway highlights include "*The Pajama Game*", "*Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope*", "*The Bubbly Black Girl*", and "*Cookin' at the Cookery: The Music and Times of Alberta Hunter*", in which Debra created her award-winning roles that earned her a Drama Desk nomination and a Barrymore Award! She made her primetime debut on *Blue Bloods*. National tours include *South Pacific*, *Annie Get Your Gun* and *CHICAGO*.

For more fun facts, check out YouTube. Or follow her on Twitter:

@DebWaltonActs & Instagram: @Debwalton

DANIEL BEATY, PLAYWRIGHT

Daniel Beaty is an award-winning actor, singer, writer, and community activist. He is the co-writer and lead actor of the upcoming feature film *Chapter & Verse* with Loretta Devine and Omari Hardwick about a man who re-integrates into society after eight years in prison. His critically acclaimed plays *Through the Night*, **Emergency**, **Mr. Joy**, **Breath & Imagination**, and *The Tallest Tree in the Forest*, have been produced at leading theaters across the nation and venues ranging from Lincoln Center to the White House, garnering numerous awards including an Obie award for writing and performance and three NAACP Theatre Awards. A highly requested keynote speaker, Daniel has spoken

throughout the U.S., Europe, and Africa. In 2012, Daniel created I Dream, a nationally recognized social justice initiative that uses the tools of the arts, immersive group exercises, and trauma recovery to support young people to rewrite the story of race and class inequity in America, and create social justice projects to make that new story a reality. I Dream has reached over 2000 young people in three cities across the nation: Watts, CA; Omaha, NE; and Boston, MA. A graduate of Yale University (BA) and American Conservatory Theatre (MFA), Daniel has developed original TV shows for Showtime and Fox/Imagine, and recently completed a documentary about the impact of mass incarceration on children and families called *Behind the Glass*. A child of an incarcerated parent himself, Daniel's poem "Knock Knock" is an Internet sensation receiving millions of views and has been made into a children's book, also titled *Knock Knock*, published by Little Brown Books. Penguin-Random House published his empowerment book *Transforming Pain to Power* in 2014.

DAVID DOWER, DIRECTOR

David Dower joined ArtsEmerson as director of artistic programs in 2012. He is also co-founder and a contributing editor to HowlRound. Prior, he served as associate artistic director of Arena Stage (Washington, D.C.); and founded and served as artistic director of The Z Space Studio and co-founded and served as co-artistic director of The Z Collective (San Francisco, CA). With ArtsEmerson he directed Guillermo Calderón's **Kiss**, Daniel Beaty's **Mr. Joy** and **Breath and Imagination**, Melinda Lopez's **Mala**, **Baritones UnBound**, and **Maurice Hines's Tappin' Through Life**. Dower earned the Inclusive Excellence Award (Emerson College); was a Gerbode Fellow (Gerbode Foundation); was named "MVP of Bay Area Theater" (*San Francisco Chronicle*); and was a Policy Fellow (National Endowment for the Arts). He studied at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, American University (Washington, D.C.) and Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico. Originally from Westerly, RI, David resides in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood.

HISTORY OF MR. JOY

Mr. Joy was originally produced by ArtsEmerson in the Emerson Paramount Center in October of 2015. The play's themes of "transforming pain into power" – a signature concept of playwright Daniel Beaty – strongly resonated with Boston audiences both through sold-out performances and provocative post-show conversations. The experience of the play became a catalyst to begin important discussions on race, class and community, and ArtsEmerson felt an urgency to continue them by touring the production as part its ongoing commitment to help transform Boston's reputation, and reality, around race.

April 2017 marked the first iteration of the **Mr. Joy: The Neighborhood Tour** and ArtsEmerson joined forces with the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity in the Boston neighborhoods of Hyde Park (in partnership with Riverside Theatre Works), Allston (in partnership with the BCYF Jackson/Mann Community Center), East Boston (in partnership with ZUMIX), and culminated at Dorchester's historic Strand Theatre (in partnership with The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Fairmount Cultural Corridor) with an official proclamation of April 20, 2017 being Daniel Beaty Day in the City of Boston.

About ArtsEmerson (Production Company & Presenting Organization)

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. Our mission is to bring people together to experience powerful performances that delight, provoke, and inspire, celebrating both our differences and common humanity. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census

confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — we committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. Our imaginative season of globe-spanning performances, film, and dialogue invites each of us to be part of a Boston that is more creative, equitable, and connected. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

About Emerson College

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization at Emerson College. Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals, with the first program launching this fall in Paris. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit Emerson.edu.

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