FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: T. Chase Meacham
press@mosaictheater.org, 202-399-7993 (ext.155)
Press/Opening Night: Sunday, May 22 at 7:30 PM

April 27, 2016

MOSAIC THEATER COMPANY OF DC ANNOUNCES AREA PREMIERE OF
CORI THOMAS’ WHEN JANUARY FEELS LIKE SUMMER
UNDER DIRECTION OF MANAGING DIRECTOR & PRODUCER SERGE SEIDEN

Off-beat romantic comedy about five lives in dynamic transition, during the heat of
global warming, closes out Mosaic Theater’s 2015-16 Inaugural Season

(Washington, DC) Mosaic Theater Company of DC’s Inaugural Season arrives at a climactic finale with the lively and comedic Off-Broadway hit, When January Feels Like Summer, written by Cori Thomas and directed by Mosaic Theater Managing Director & Producer Serge Seiden (Bad Jews, Apple Family Plays). This DC premiere follows five ordinary lives colliding in one extraordinary January—two immigrants make their way in New York City; two teens make their way to adulthood; and one New York sanitation worker in the wake of divorce builds an ice cream sundae for two.

When January Feels Like Summer builds on Mosaic Theater’s mission to present work by authors on the frontlines of conflict zones, provoking and entertaining audiences with plays that matter. Inspired by the magic and mystery of city life, this rousing comedy introduces audiences to the inspired stories of strangers and subway companions. Thomas’ unforgettable characters navigate immigration, gender transition, interracial relationships, coming of age, homophobia, racism, death, and divorce—all while looking for and finding love during one strangely warm winter.

“It’s time for some comedy!” roars Founding Artistic Director Ari Roth. “We knew that much when we programmed this season; that Mosaic was going to be making the case for hope even in the midst of plumbing the depths of what ails us. Well, we’ve explored some troubling interiors in our world this season, and we’ve made that case for humanity and for the resolution of conflict. But this play is a much-needed anthem for the restoration of love; of romance in all its urban poignancy and humbled yet ecstatic expression. The play is a valentine to the wounded spirit; that it might exercise resilience. And by the grace of Ganesh, it does! As it’s proven during its hit runs at Pittsburgh’s City Theatre and New York’s Ensemble Studio Theatre, this play really heals the fractured heart. It should prove to be an incredibly inspiring way to end our inaugural season.”

The play follows two immigrants from India running a bodega in Upper Manhattan—the proprietress Nirmala (Lynette Rathnam) and her sibling Ishan (later ‘Indira,” portrayed by Shravan Amin), who is in the midst of a gender transition. The divorced Joe (Jason B. McIntosh), a charming but lonely sanitation worker, longs
for companionship. Meanwhile two teenagers working at two different Burger Kings, Devaun (Jeremy Keith Hunter) and Jeron (Vaughn Ryan Midder) push themselves and the audience to look beyond first impressions—while sounding the alarm about the impending climate crisis.

The play received a 2008 workshop at the Sundance Theatre Lab before its world premiere at the City Theatre Company in Pittsburgh in 2010, where it received the Edgerton Foundation Award. It was presented as part of the 2011 Humana Festival, where it received the 2011 American Theater Critics Osborn Award for Best New Play. The show later became a New York Times “Critics’ Picks” in its New York premiere Off-Broadway at Ensemble Studio Theatre in 2014, a collaboration with Page 73 Productions and Women’s Project Theater.

“There aren’t a lot of plays that so well portray the diversity of urban life,” shares director Serge Seiden. “Cori’s point of view is hopeful and loving. This play is about the serendipity of city life…the noise and rattle of subway cars, intercultural encounters on the street, and intimate relationships found in unlikely places. It’s a play about very ordinary people making extraordinary decisions. It’s about coming out. Coming of age. And coming together. And most importantly, it’s about overcoming obstacles.”

Seiden makes his Mosaic directorial debut with When January Feels Like Summer which, in addition to expanding the theater’s repertoire into the comedic, broadens the company’s “mosaic” with new sounds and colors. The issues of romantic intercultural encounters, gender and sexual identity, and inner-city stereotypes introduced in this play are deeply explored in Mosaic’s recently announced 2016-17 season. The company will continue to offer an extensive array of post-show discussions to follow performances of When January Feels Like Summer, providing audience members, community and faith leaders, activists, and artists a platform to safely engage with the issues on stage.

Cori Thomas (Playwright) is a playwright and actress. Her plays include: When January Feels Like Summer (World Premiere City Theatre Co., Pittsburgh); Pa’s Hat (Pillsbury House Theatre, MN); Flight 109, My Secret Language of Wishes (Various theaters and University productions including Mixed Blood, MN); The Princess, The Breast, and, The Lizard; The Unusual Love Life of Bedbugs and Other Creatures; Waking Up; His Daddy; our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor. Cori’s plays have been developed and produced at Sundance Theatre Lab, Goodman Theatre, City Theatre Co. (Pittsburgh), Page 73, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Playwrights Horizons, Lark Play Development Center, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Going To The River, Pillsbury House Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Penumbra Theatre, Passage Theatre, The Playwrights Realm, New Federal Theatre, New Georges, The Black Rep (St. Louis), The New Black Fest, and Queens Theatre in the Park. She has been commissioned by South Coast Rep Theatre, The Sloan Foundation, NYSCA, EST, Pillsbury House Theatre. Publications: (Viking Press) Plays for Two Waking Up; (Smith and Krauss) Selected monologues and scenes When January Feels Like Summer. Awards, Residencies, and Honors: New Dramatists, MacDowell Fellow, Edgerton New Play Award, Sundance Theatre Lab, and 2011 American Theatre Critics Association Osborn Award for Best New Play (When January Feels Like Summer); 2005 Theodore Ward Prize (My Secret Language of Wishes), 2003 2nd Place Theodore Ward Prize (“our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor…..”). Cori is a co-founder of The Pa’s Hat Foundation, Inc. an organization focused on helping the former child soldiers of Liberia heal after the long-standing civil war through focus on arts education and literacy.

—continued—
Serge Seiden (Director) joined Mosaic Theater Company as Managing Director & Producer to help found a company committed to social justice. In 2013 Seiden received the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Director/Resident Musical for Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris... at MetroStage. His production of Bad Jews at Studio Theatre was nominated for four 2015 Helen Hayes Awards including Outstanding Director, and was remounted this season. Seiden also directed Studio’s acclaimed Apple Family cycle. From 1990 to 2015, Seiden held many positions at Studio including stage manager, Literary Manager, and Producing Director. Seiden was a key player in Studio’s 1996 and 2004 expansions—developments crucial to the re-emergence of 14th Street NW as a DC cultural hub. For 20 years Seiden has been a member of the faculty of the Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory, where he trained as an actor and director. More recent directing credits include Everett Quinton’s A Tale of Two Cities at Synetic Theater, Freud’s Last Session at Theater J, and Clifford Odets’ Awake and Sing! at Olney Theatre Center. Other Studio Theatre credits include The Motherfucker with the Hat, The Golden Dragon, Superior Donuts, In the Red and Brown Water, Grey Gardens, My Children! My Africa!, and Souvenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins and Old Wicked Songs. His productions at Adventure Theatre MTC—A Little House Christmas and Charlotte’s Web—were both nominated for Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Production/Theatre for Young Audiences.

The creative team for When January Feels Like Summer includes set designer Debra Booth, lighting designer Max Doolittle, sound designer David Lamont Wilson, costume designer Robert Croghan, properties designer Michelle Elwyn, and stage manager Allie Roy.

For full company bios and additional production information visit mosaictheater.org/january. Full company information is included below.

When January Feels Like Summer Opening Night:
Sunday, May 22 at 7:30 PM

Production Information
When January Feels Like Summer
By Cori Thomas
Directed by Serge Seiden
May 19—June 12, 2016

ABOUT: From the inspired team of Liberian-American playwright Cori Thomas, and Bad Jews director Serge Seiden, comes this off-beat, Off-Broadway hit about five city-lives colliding with magical results. When January Feels Like Summer is about coming out, coming of age, and overcoming obstacles. Charged with the presence of the Hindu god Ganesh, two teens in dead end jobs becoming community heroes while shuttered souls open to new opportunities find love. This heartwarming romantic comedy from Cori Thomas shows us the true beauty of American diversity.

CAST:
Indira / Ishan: Shravan Amin
Devaun: Jeremy Keith Hunter
Joe: Jason B. McIntosh
Jeron: Vaughn Ryan Midder
Nirmala: Lynette Rathnam

—continued—
Plan Your Visit:
TICKETS: Tickets for When January Feels Like Summer are $40-$60, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as student discounts, neighborhood nights, community nights, military and first responder discounts, and others, visit mosaictheater.org/tickets. Tickets may be purchased online at mosaictheater.org, or by phone at 202-399-7993 ext. 2, or at the Atlas Performing Arts Center Box Office at 1333 H Street NE, Washington DC 20002.

Atlas Performing Arts Center Box Office: 202-399-7993 ext. 2

PRICING TIERS:
General: $40-60 tickets
Senior: 10% discount
Military and first responder: 10% discount
Under 30 and student: $20 tickets
Neighborhood Night: $15 tickets on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sunday nights for Mosaic Theater neighbors in Northeast or Southeast.

PERFORMANCE DATES:
Preview performances at 8:00 PM Thursday 5/19 (Pay-What-You-Can), Friday 5/20, and Saturday 5/21
Opening night at 7:30 PM on Sunday 5/22
Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8:00 PM
Saturdays at 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM
Sundays at 4:00 PM
Student matinee at 11:00 AM on Thursday 6/9
Closing performance at 7:00 PM on Sunday 6/12
Full calendar: mosaictheater.org/january

DC STREETCAR: Mosaic Theater Company is in residence at the Atlas Performing Arts Center. Patrons arriving at the Union Station Metro Station (Red Line) can catch the new DC Streetcar by exiting the station, and following the signs to the bus parking garage. Exit the back of the garage and turn right onto H Street, where the Eastbound Streetcar can be caught in the middle of the bridge.

Exit the Eastbound Streetcar at H St & 13th St. The Westbound Streetcar to Union Station can be caught across the street at the same intersection. The DC Streetcar is free until further notice.

—continued—
Mosaic Theater closes Inaugural Season with Cori Thomas’ *When January Feels Like Summer*—Page 5

**METRO AND METROBUS:** If coming by the Metro Center or Chinatown Metro Stations, patrons can catch the X2 or X9 busses, getting off at H St & 14th St NE.

Additional directions: [mosaictheater.org/plan-your-trip](http://mosaictheater.org/plan-your-trip).

**PARKING:** Mosaic Theater Company has partnered with the Atlas and H Street Parking to provide valet parking throughout the season for nearly every performance. Patrons can pre-purchase valet parking for $20, which can either be used at the nearby valet drop-off, or as a self-parking voucher at the lot at 1008 H Street NE.

For more information, or to purchase valet parking: [mosaictheater.org/parking](http://mosaictheater.org/parking).

**Mosaic 8** packages are now on sale and may be purchased by calling the Atlas Performing Arts Center box office at 202-399-7993 ext 2, or by visiting [mosaictheater.org](http://mosaictheater.org).

*Mosaic Theater Company of DC* is committed to making powerful, transformational, socially-relevant art, producing plays by authors on the front lines of conflict zones and providing audiences with a dynamic new venue for the dramatizing and debating of ideas including an annual intercultural festival, like our acclaimed *Voices From a Changing Middle East* series.

With an emphasis on the playwright’s vibrant voice, muscular structures and a powerful collaborative fusion with directors of vision and story-telling integrity, Mosaic plays marry a love of ideas, character, conflict, immediacy, and personal and public resonance, working with the finest actors in our city to create thrilling performances that matter. Our plays speak truth to power and to the private parts of our soul prompting reflection, discussion and uplift, while creating lasting impression; in short, we make art with a purpose and strive for impact.

### # # #

**Opening Nights for Mosaic Theater Company of DC’s 2016-17 season:**

*Satchmo at the Waldorf:* Monday, August 29th at 7:30 PM

*Milk Like Sugar:* Sunday, November 6th at 7:30 PM

**Charm:** Monday, January 9th at 7:30 PM

**Hooded: Or Being Black for Dummies:** Monday, January 30th at 7:30 PM

**The Blood Knot:** Sunday, April 2nd at 7:30 PM

**A Human Being Died That Night:** Sunday, April 9th at 7:30 PM

**Ulysses on Bottles:** Monday, May 22nd at 7:30 PM

**The Return (Oved Shabbat):** Monday, June 12th at 7:30 PM

Meet Mosaic:

[MosaicTheater.org](http://MosaicTheater.org)

Facebook: facebook.com/MosaicTheater

Twitter: twitter.com/Mosaic_Theater

Instagram: instagram.com/MosaicTheaterDC

Blog: mosaictheater.org/blog