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Chef and Grammy-nominated artist KELIS, convict-turned-lawyer Reginald Dwayne Betts and celebrated singer-turned-filmmaker BUIKA show Toronto what it means to be 'BRAVE'

BRAVE: SECRET LIVES, SECOND CHANCES -- Harbourfront Centre's daring arts festival returns for a second year with an in-depth look at the boxes we place ourselves in, the ones we try to break out of and the unexpected paths we take

July 11 to July 21, 2019

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Toronto, ON (June 4, 2019) – Harbourfront Centre brings celebrated musicians, artists, chefs, writers and actors to Toronto for a fresh and daring examination on what it means to be 'brave' and to push boundaries with the second annual multidisciplinary arts festival, *BRAVE*. This year's iteration will uncover the hidden potential and concealed elements of human existence in *BRAVE: Secret Lives, Second Chances*. The festival runs from **July 11 to July 21, 2019** and includes free and ticketed events across experiential theatre, immersive art, music, food and literature.

Headlining events for the second annual festival include a cooking demonstration and intimate conversation with Grammy-nominated artist **KELIS** on her experience as a chef and artist; a fireside chat with convict turned award-winning poet and lawyer **Reginald Dwayne Betts**; a witty and immersive play from Austin creator Kirk Lynn entitled *The Cold Record* and the North American premiere of *The Second Woman*, a 24-hour live cinematic experiment featuring 100 leading male-identifying roles opposite award-winning Canadian actress Laara Sadiq. Musical performances by **BUIKA**, regarded as one of the 50 greatest voices in the world, and the ever-resilient Canadian Soprano **Measha Brueggergosman** are among the highlights of this year's diverse slate of free programming.

"People are often placed in a box and labeled as one thing – everyone thinks they should specialize. In reality, our identities are made up of many parts that are often hidden beneath the surface," Laura McLeod, Director of Cultural Engagement at Harbourfront Centre. "I've long been fascinated by those who buck the norm by defying odds or by pursuing something so opposite to what we expect. Through art, thought leadership and community participation, we will celebrate the artists who bravely share their secret selves, epitomize resilience and inspire us to also pursue our secret dreams."

For the first time, *BRAVE* will engage the public's participation to help shape its programming, offering unique opportunities to contribute and join international artists, thinkers, writers and musicians in three new participatory pieces. Comprised of donated objects from individuals all over the world, the **Museum of Broken Relationships** crowd-sourced additional objects and mementos from Canadians to be on display; **Second Chance Romance** will give future romance writers a chance to pen their 'happily ever after' for prize money; and *The Second Woman* is seeking its leading male-identifying counterpart – make that 100 leading roles – from across the GTA.

BRAVE PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS:

- **CULINARY: An Evening with KELIS – Thursday, July 11, 8:00 p.m. (\$50-125)**
Join chef and Grammy-nominated artist **KELIS** for an intimate cooking demonstration showcasing her signature line of Bounty & Full sauces. **KELIS** describes sauce as "what accessories are to a woman's outfit. Sauce defines where the dish is from and who's making it." After 10 years in the music business **KELIS**, whose hits include Milkshake, received formal training at Le Cordon Bleu. Attending the famous cooking school gave her the confidence to write her first cookbook "My Life on a Plate" and found Bounty & Full. Don't miss this one-of-a-kind evening of beautiful storytelling and exquisite food.
- **KEYNOTE: In conversation with Reginald Dwayne Betts – Tuesday, July 16, 8:00 p.m. (Free. Advance registration recommended)**
At the age of 16, Reginald Dwayne Betts and a friend carjacked a man who had fallen asleep in his car. He was charged as an adult, spending more than eight years in prison, where he completed high school and began reading and writing poetry. Now, he is a poet and memoirist, PhD student at Yale Law School, and the author of three books, including the recently published *Bastards of the Reagan Era* and the 2010 NAACP Image Award winning memoir *A Question of Freedom*. He is proof of the power of second chances.

- **THEATRE: *The Cold Record*, Kirk Lynn – Tuesday, July 16 to Saturday, July 20, 8:00 p.m. daily plus 2:00 p.m. on Sunday (\$15)**
A secret performance. A one man show. The story of a 12-year-old boy who tries to set the record for the most days leaving school sick with a fever and in the process falls in love with the school nurse and learns to appreciate punk rock. You'll leave with a mix tape made from the audience's memories and a promise never to speak about what you witnessed or else you'll get kicked out. *The Cold Record* is a play that fits in a tote bag. Inside are wonders made from minimal materials — a tape recorder and headphones. Written and performed by Kirk Lynn, this tape play can be performed anywhere, it just needs an audience who can keep a secret. Lynn's insightful wit and inventiveness are on full display in this latest project, leaving you with a mix tape of experiences and songs to live by.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EVENTS:

- **THEATRE: *The Second Woman*, Nat Randall and Anna Breckon – Saturday, July 20 to Sunday, July 21 (\$24)**
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE: In an epic endurance performance, actress Laara Sadiq repeats a single scene 100 times over a 24-hour period. Starring opposite her are 100 different men drawn from the local community. The scene is captured on multiple cameras and projected live alongside the staged performance, highlighting minute details of expression and variations in performance. Through the repetition of this intimate encounter, *The Second Woman* explores the complex interplay between identity, performance, gender, emotion, cinema and reality. Harbourfront Centre is seeking 100 male identifying performers (no acting experience required). Application deadline is June 10.
- **VISUAL ART: Museum of Broken Relationships – June 28 to September 8, 2019 (Free)**
ONTARIO PREMIERE: Museum of Broken Relationships, conceived by Olinka Vištica and Dražen Grubišić, is a public space created with the sole purpose of treasuring and sharing your heartbreak stories and symbolic possessions. At its core, the Museum is an ever-growing collection of crowd-sourced items, each a memento of a relationship past, accompanied by a personal, yet anonymous story told through the voice of the owner. Unlike 'destructive' self-help instructions for recovery from grief and loss, the Museum offers the chance to overcome an emotional collapse through creativity. It is a museum about you, about us, and about the ways we love and lose. Harbourfront Centre's presentation will feature selected items from the permanent collection as well as personal mementos donated by Canadians that will become part of a collective global emotional history.
- **LITERARY: The Second Chance Romance Writing Competition – Award ceremony Monday, July 15 (Free)**
Harbourfront Centre, in partnership with the Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA), is giving readers who dream of writing the chance to try their hand at one of the most popular romance sub-genres: *Second Chance Romance*. Submissions for the beginning of the first chapter (1,000-word max) of Second Chance Romance stories are being accepted from Canadian residents and aspiring writers. The competition finalists will be determined during an award ceremony and cash prizes up to \$1,500 will be awarded to the top three winners. Must be 18+ to enter. Submission deadline is June 14.

Submissions for *The Second Woman* and *Second Chance Romance* are open at harbourfrontcentre.com/submissions/brave.

FREE PROGRAMMING

- **MUSIC: Grammy Award nominee BUIKA – Saturday, July 13, 9:30 p.m.**
Grammy Award nominee BUIKA has been dubbed as "The Voice of Freedom" and compared to Billie Holiday, Edith Piaf, Nina Simone and Amy Winehouse. With her critically acclaimed jazz-influenced flamenco fusion sound, BUIKA broke through to mainstream success with her 2006 solo album, *Mi Niña Lola*. She is currently exploring multiple 'second careers,' producing her first movie based on her poem "From Solitude to Hell", penning a novel, working on an opera and an exhibit featuring her photography and her son's artwork. Don't miss her stunning performance at **BRAVE**.
- **MUSIC: Canadian Soprano Measha Brueggergosman – Saturday, July 20, 9:30 p.m.**
Canadian soprano Measha Brueggergosman is a fresh and youthful ambassador for classical music that breaks the stereotype of an opera diva in every way imaginable. Having survived coronary trauma, Brueggergosman is a force to be reckoned with in more ways than one. Her innate musicianship and voluptuous voice have made her one of the most magnificent performers and vibrant personalities of the day.
- **VISUAL ART: The Graffiti BoxMen Project – Saturday, July 13 and Thursday, June 20**
This Toronto-based initiative focuses on the role of graffiti art in the community. Very often, graffiti is seen as nothing more than senseless vandalism; however, there is a deep-rooted culture behind the movement, which is a reflection of the community and environment in which it is situated. This project brings together many talented artists in Toronto to showcase how these aerosol masterpieces are made. Mirroring Toronto's diversity, each artist adds his or her own unique style and vision to the installation, together making the BoxMen into a work of art.

For more information about other programming at ***BRAVE: Secret Lives, Second Chances*** go to harbourfrontcentre.com/brave. Tickets start at \$15, and are available for purchase online at harbourfrontcentre.com, in-person at 235 Queens Quay West or by calling the Harbourfront Centre Box Office at 416-973-4000. Box office hours are Tuesday – Saturday from 1:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Harbourfront Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of their site partners; Government of Canada and City of Toronto, Corporate Site Partners: Agropur-Natrel and Labatt Brewing Company; and Programming Partners: Government of Canada, City of Toronto, Ontario Arts Council and Canada Council for the Arts.

About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is a registered, charitable not-for-profit cultural organization operating a 10-acre campus on Toronto's central waterfront. A leading international centre for contemporary arts, culture, and ideas, we inspire audiences and visitors with a breadth of bold, ambitious and engaging experiences.

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