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KARAMU HOUSE CANCELS ALL REMAINING SHOWS OF 2019-20 PERFORMANCE SEASON

Because of COVID-19, *Hoodoo Love* and *Next to Normal* are canceled.

(Cleveland, Ohio)— For the past 104 years, Karamu House has honored its historic founding and served as a joyful gathering place for the community. In an effort to protect the very community that it serves from the coronavirus (COVID-19), Karamu House has canceled all remaining shows of its 2019-20 mainstage season, including all performances of *Hoodoo Love* (March 19 – April 12) and *Next to Normal* (May 7 – 31).

Additionally, all classes, workshops, and community events at Karamu House are postponed until further notice.

With continuing community support, Karamu remains committed to its capital campaign and many of the facility renovations that are still scheduled for 2020. As a non-profit arts organization, Karamu House depends on this continuing support of patrons, donors, and the Greater Cleveland community during these uncertain times. At this time, the Karamu House annual benefit, the Second Line Parade and Sneaker Ball, remains scheduled for July 25, 2020.

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About Karamu House

Recognized as the oldest African American performing arts institute in the nation, Karamu House is listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places and featured in the Smithsonian's African American Museum. Legendary artists including Langston Hughes, Ruby Dee, Robert Guillaume, Ron O'Neal, Bill Cobbs, James Pickens, Jr., Vanessa Bell Calloway and Imani Hakim have been associated with the 104-year old "place of joyful gathering" (the meaning of "Karamu" in Swahili.)

In 1915, Oberlin College graduates Russell and Rowena Jelliffe opened the Playhouse Settlement in an area called Cleveland's "Roaring Third." The Jelliffes wanted to build an environment where people of different races, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds could come together to share common ventures through the arts. Karamu was established as a gathering place for racially diverse members of the surrounding community at that time. Today, Karamu is a beating heart for the entire community, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification, or age. Core programs include socially relevant and professional quality theatre; arts education programming for all ages; and community programming, such as comedy, live jazz, and spoken word performances, that invites participation and engagement, reflection, and a re-commitment to cultural values.

For more information, visit www.karamuhouse.org.