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THE GAMM TO HOST “TRUTH AND TYRANNY” COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

WARWICK, RI (August 29, 2022) – The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre (The Gamm) announces “**Truth and Tyranny**,” a community discussion around Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, its centuries-long imperial ambitions, and the manufacture of “truth” in an age of amplified, instantaneous, globalized information and disinformation. “**Truth and Tyranny**” will take place on **Sunday, September 25 following the matinee of *Describe the Night* (approx. 4:30 pm)** at The Gamm Theatre, 1245 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI.

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Special guests are **Nicolai Petro**, professor of political science at the University of Rhode Island (URI) and **Ammina Kothari**, director of the Harrington School of Communication and Media at URI. The discussion will be moderated by Gamm Resident Scholar **Rachel Walshe**.

The discussion aims to enhance the theater’s upcoming production of ***Describe the Night*, Rajiv Joseph’s epic and timely play** exploring the fraught relationship between observation and truth, storytelling and history, and the shaping of reality. Unfolding in two acts that take place over 90 years in Poland, Russia, and East Germany, Joseph’s play connects eight fascinating characters – both historical and invented – across time and place.

This event is **open to the public at no charge**. Show attendance is not required. Info at gammtheatre.org/shared-sunday

“**Truth and Tyranny**” is made possible through funding support from the **Rhode Island Council for the Humanities**, an independent state affiliate of the **National Endowment for the Humanities**. The council seeds, supports, and strengthens public history, cultural heritage, civic education, and community engagement by and for all Rhode Islanders.

ABOUT NICOLAI PETRO

Nicolai Petro is a professor of comparative and international politics at the University of Rhode Island. From July 2013 to July 2014, he was a Fulbright Research Scholar affiliated with I. L. Mechnikov National University in Odessa, Ukraine. He holds a B.A. summa cum laude in history, an M.A. in public administration, and Ph.D. in foreign affairs, all from the University of Virginia. He taught at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, where in 1987 he founded the Center for Contemporary Russian Studies. He served as special assistant for policy in the Office of Soviet Union Affairs in the U.S. Department of State from 1989-90, and as temporary political attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. While in the Soviet Union, he monitored local elections in Russia, Belarus, and Latvia.

Petro has received two Fulbright awards (to Russia and to Ukraine); a Thornton D. Hooper International Affairs Fellowship at the Foreign Policy Research Institute; and research awards from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies in Washington, D.C., and the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. He held URI’s biennial Silvia-Chandley Professorship of Nonviolence and Peace Studies (2017-2019). He is a board member at the Simone Weil Center and the American Committee for U.S.-Russian Accord.

Petro’s articles have appeared in many prominent American and Russian publications. He has authored numerous books, including *The Rebirth of Russian Democracy: An Interpretation of Political Culture*. His upcoming book, *The Tragedy of Ukraine: What Classical Greek Tragedy Can Teach Us About Conflict Resolution*, will be available in December 2022.

ABOUT AMMINA KOTHARI

Ammina Kothari is the director of the University of Rhode Island’s Harrington School of Communication and

Media, as well as a professor of journalism. Previously, Kothari was an associate professor of communication and the graduate program MS in the School of Communication at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Her interdisciplinary research explores the role of technology in transforming communication and journalism practices. Her research is often grant-funded and in April 2021, Kothari was one of the recipients of the Eisenhart Award for Outstanding Teaching, RIT's highest honor for tenured faculty.

Kothari has a B.A. in print journalism and English from North Central College, an M.A. in communication and society from the University of Oregon, and a Ph.D. in mass communication from Indiana University.

ABOUT THE GAMM THEATRE

Founded in 1984, the non-profit Gamm Theatre is proud to tell stories that entertain, provoke, and engage seriously with the most important issues of our time. The Gamm further serves the public with educational programming that enriches the cultural and civic life of our community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Tony Estrella and Managing Director Amy Gravell, The Gamm is a regionally recognized, award-winning theater and a proud member of New England Area Theatre (NEAT), a bargaining unit of the Actors' Equity Association.

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