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For Immediate Release

Chicago *Dreamgirl* Celebrates the Legendary Aretha Franklin at GSU

University Park, IL, November 9, 2017: Joseph Jefferson Award-winning actress Donica Lynn (Effie White in *Dreamgirls*, 2016) brings a deeply moving tribute to GSU's Center for Performing Arts on Saturday, **November 18 at 8 p.m.** in **Aretha Franklin: Queen of Soul**, presented by Artists Lounge Live.

Chicago Tribune named her among the Chicagoans of the Year (2016) citing, "Lynn has stepped up to Chicago stardom." Lynn, whose vocals shine on Aretha's chart-topping hits and who has appeared alongside her onstage, has many things in common with the superstar. When asked how she identifies with Aretha and her music, Lynn said "I'm able to identify with Aretha's music on such a spiritual level. She was once told you can't serve two masters [gospel & secular music]. I began singing in church, as did she, and from that world found my way into singing all types of music. Everything she sings is given the same passion and grit whether it's "Mary Don't You Weep" or "Natural Woman." The "Master" being served is the gift [of song] given from God."

This is Lynn's first partnership with Artists Lounge Live and Center for Performing Arts' third collaboration with the performance series. Last season, the Center presented Evan Tyrone Martin in *Unforgettable: Falling in Love with Nat King Cole; an experience that spurred the connection*. "I was able to see my dear friend Evan perform his Nat King Cole show last fall and it blew me away," Lynn said. "I've seen Angela Ingersoll and know Michael's work quite extensively. There are other artists that I've worked with that are part of the Artists Lounge Live family, and I'm really grateful to now call myself a member of that family."

Donica spent part of her youth growing up on the south side in Calumet City, where she attended Thornton Fractional North High School. It is there that she met some of the people who would make her the strong woman she is today. Lynn, cancer survivor and mother of three, shares Aretha Franklin's determination—something she is modeling for her children. "They see that I never stop," Lynn told the *Chicago Tribune*. "They see that mommy has a job to do. I never give up. I don't let anything get in my way, including my illness. I keep moving. I want my children to understand that you cannot let anything become a hindrance when it comes to moving forward with your life."

"We are so pleased to present such a talented vocalist and to continue our partnership with Artists Lounge Live. Donica Lynn is a class-act, both personally and professionally," said Lana Rogachevskaya, director of the Center.

As Aretha Franklin said on what R-E-S-P-E-C-T means to her, "Give people dignity and respect, and you have to receive it." (TIME, 2010) Donica Lynn embodies that gracious spirit, and it shines through in her music. Come see her live at Governors State University.

For Tickets and Information: Tickets are \$36 and \$28, based on seating location.

Online: CenterTickets.net

By Phone: 708.235.2222

In Person at the Box Office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL

Box Office Hours: Monday- Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (open until 6p.m. on Thursdays) and two hours prior to all performances

Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484. Conveniently located off of I-57 (Sauk Trail exit), the Center for Performing Arts is easily accessible from all neighboring

south suburban communities. Parking is free. For best GPS directions always use the location search term "Governors State University" only.

About Center for Performing Arts

The Center for Performing Arts (CPA) serves over 50,000 patrons annually, offering diverse, high quality, and affordable cultural and arts education experiences. CPA presents concerts, dance, theatre, opera, and family programs from national touring acts, Chicago-based artists, and community and academic theatre as part of the Governors State University Theatre and Performance Studies program.

About Artists Lounge Live

Artists Lounge Live is a dynamic concert series showcasing tremendous talent in an intimate light. These evenings of stories and song play like a backstage tour of show-business life. Series producer Michael Ingersoll performed in and co-produced three live *Under the Streetlamp* PBS concert specials, as well as several successful music events for venues including Paramount Theatre, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, and Northlight Theatre. Michael is also known for portraying Nick Massi of the Four Seasons in the Tony Award-winning smash hit *Jersey Boys* in original Broadway in Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles companies. www.artistslounge.com

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