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**For Immediate Release**

### **Governors State University Stages Biting Satire that Spans Centuries**

**University Park, IL** – Governors State University (GSU) Theatre and Performance Studies' (TAPS) Fall 2022 production [Cloud 9](#) runs November 3-6 on the Center for Performing Arts' (the Center's) stage. Tickets are available at [www.centertickets.net](http://www.centertickets.net).

*Cloud 9* is a satirical commentary of the British Empire and its rigid perspectives on gender roles and sexuality. Director Dr. Patrick Santoro shares that he chose this play because, "as a director, I am drawn to scripts that are conceptually rich, those full of world-making possibilities both on and off the stage, and to stories that are timely. *Cloud 9* is a world of such possibilities. It is performative and political commentary, writ large."

The first act follows Clive, a colonial administrator, and his family as they try to contain the British colonies in Africa during the Victorian era. The second act follows the surviving characters in London, 1980. Between the acts, the characters have only aged 25 years and have been freed from their sexual repression, as well as from the Empire.

Actor Kevin Kohn reflects on the relevancy of *Cloud 9*'s thematic elements, "the themes of colonialism, power, family, race, sexuality, and gender identity are still very much a part of our society today. Perhaps they weren't being discussed as publicly as they are now but just because we don't talk about a particular subject or issue, doesn't mean it's been resolved or has gone away on its own. This ongoing pandemic, the various election cycles in recent years—not just in the US—and even the recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II have really forced all of us to reexamine our lives and who we are as people both individually and as a society."

*Cloud 9* features a cast of seven tasked with doubling and tripling roles to tell this cheeky story. This production will be set on a fashion runway-style stage, with the performers strutting their stuff as audience members gaze upon the characters' fashions and faux pas as front-row guests seated on stage with the actors. Santoro states that by "framing the play in the context of a fashion show, itself a violent and scandalized industry, it sets up a particular way of seeing: with its emphasis on superficial beauty, it asks us to consider which 'looks' of the play—oppression

or liberation—we find the most attractive and choose to ‘wear.’ Whether it's in the latest fashion, or a fashionable new war, [...] we are reminded of our choices and the powerful, sometimes profound impact we have on the pages of history.”

“The audience can expect to be taken on a wild ride. They can expect to laugh a lot, while being intellectually challenged,” says actor Maya Shelton, GSU graduate student and TAPS alumna, who is returning for her fifth TAPS production.

GSU Freshman Matthew Barta adds, “I feel the audience will expect to see a raunchy comedy with a bit of something to learn about each other. I would not be surprised if people got emotional over this show, because it delves deep into societal structures of both the past and what they are like now.”

In *Cloud 9*, adults play children; men and women play opposite genders; and a white man plays a black man. With its inventive casting and Churchill’s biting analysis of social structures, *Cloud 9* is an intelligent and comedic show that will challenge yesterday and today’s society.

*Cloud 9* includes explicit language and mature themes.

### **The Cast of *Cloud 9***

Matthew Barta as Clive and Martin

Joshua Tisdale as Betty and Gerry

Kevin Kohn as Joshua and Edward

LaT’ya Johnson as Edward and Victoria

Lynne Clayton as Maud and Betty

Maya Shelton as Ellen, Mrs. Saunders, and Lin

Ethan Walker as Harry Bagley, Cathy, and Soldier

### **Know Before You Go**

The Center is committed to promoting practices that prioritize the health and safety of its patrons. Currently, face masks are optional for audience members. Hand sanitizer will be made readily available throughout the venue, and patrons are strongly encouraged to make use of them. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and do not attend an event.

The Center's COVID-19 policies coincide with Governors State University's. For the most updated COVID-19 policies being implemented across campus please visit: <https://www.govst.edu/coronavirus/>

## **Tickets and Information**

*Cloud 9* runs

Thursday, November 3 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, November 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, November 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 6 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 (\$10 for students) and can be purchased at [www.CenterTickets.net](http://www.CenterTickets.net), at the Box Office, or by phone at 708.235.2222. Student discounts cannot be applied online.

Box Office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL

Hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursdays, and two hours prior to all performances.

## **About GSU Theatre and Performance Studies**

Performance is not limited to theatrical production—the act is central to human nature as we move and function in the world. When you pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre and Performance Studies from Governors State, you will learn to bridge theory with practice and the verbal with the visual. Whether in theatrical presentations proper or in everyday acts of living—you will be equipped as a transformative agent of social, cultural, political, and personal change. Choose from specializations in Theory and Practice, Technical Production, and History and Dramaturgy to focus your studies on your intended career path.

To stay informed of TAPS audition announcements, upcoming productions, course information, and campus and community happenings, like their Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/TAPSGSU](http://www.facebook.com/TAPSGSU)) and follow on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/TAPSGSU](http://www.instagram.com/TAPSGSU).