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For Immediate Release:

**KARAMU ANNOUNCES 2007/2008 THEATRE SEASON:
"LIVING IN AMERICA."**

Cleveland- June 19, 2007 - Terrence Spivey, Karamu House, Inc.'s Artistic Director, selects plays for Karamu's 84th theatre season. Karamu is known for providing thought provoking theater and the 2007/2008 Theatre Season theme: "*Living in America*" offers it all.

The subscription season opens with the late Ossie Davis classic comedy *Purlie Victorious*, followed by the holiday favorite *Black Nativity*, and a co-production with Ensemble Theatre, *Bourbon at the Border*; then history gets a remix in *Julius X*, followed by *Holes*, the stage adaptation of the Disney movie; and closes with the classic drama, *The Blacks: A Clown Show*. Then pull out your platform shoes, wiggle into your old polyester pants and get ready to be taken higher in the world premier production of Lee Summer's (from the original Dreamgirls cast) production of *The Funkentine Rapture*.

The Youth and Young Adult Theatre selections also rise to the challenge as they open with "There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom"; "Babies Having Babies"; "Little Red Riding Hood (and the Power Mutants)" and "Birds of a Feather"; and the Young Adult Theatre offering of "A Raisin in the Sun" has an all teen cast, has been adapted by teens and will be directed by a teen.

Make your plans to come to Karamu, where history and great careers have been inspired.

Purlie Victorious (Classic Comedy) by Ossie Davis

Director: Terrence Spivey

Sept. 28 - Oct. 21, 2007 (Jelliffe)

Previews: Sept. 26th & 27th

Newly ordained preacher, Purlie Victorious Judson, returns to his family's sharecropper cabin to reacquire the local church and ring the "Freedom Bell." An inheritance from a cousin supplies the needed cash, but unfortunately it is

controlled by Colonel Cotchipee, who owns the land that Purlie's family works. Purlie attempts to trick the colonel out of the inheritance, and complications ensue in a surprising and hysterical comedy.
(For the entire Family)

Black Nativity (Gospel Musical) by Langston Hughes

Dec. 7 - Dec. 30, 2007 (Jelliffe)

Previews Dec. 5th & 6th

Black Nativity is a theatrical presentation focused on the religious and spiritual aspects of the Christmas story. It is performed with electrifying gospel music, colorful costuming and with stunning dance context. One of the most produced Christmas classics of all time and a Karamu holiday staple, *Black Nativity* is written by Karamu alumnus, Langston Hughes. This year's production is a tribute to Mike Malone, former Artistic Director; director/choreographer/ and the person who first brought *Black Nativity* to Karamu and to many other theatres across the country. (For the entire Family)

Co-Production with Ensemble Theatre

Bourbon at the Border by Pearl Cleage

Director: Terrence Spivey

Jan. 4 – Jan. 20, 2008 (Studio One Theatre at the Cleveland Play House)

When May and Charlie joined hundreds of other Americans who went to Mississippi in the summer of 1964 for a massive voter registration drive, they had no idea their lives were about to change forever. **Bourbon at the Border** puts a human face on the unknown soldiers of the civil rights movement by refusing to romanticize them even as it honors their specific sacrifices and the price they paid.

Karamu subscribers receive a complimentary ticket to this Ensemble production.

Bonus for Subscribers

Karamu Subscribers: (2) Comp tickets to any Ensemble production.

Ensemble Subscribers: (2) Complimentary tickets to any Karamu subscription package production

16th Annual R. Joyce Whitley ArenaFest

Festival of New Plays

Jan 7. - Jan 18, 2008 (Annie Mae's)

Michael Oatman, Coordinator; James K. Spriggs – Co-Coordinator

Julius X (Drama) by Al Letson (Ohio Premiere)

Director: E.B. Smith

Feb. 1 – Feb. 24, 2008 (Arena)

Jan. 30th & 31st

HISTORY GETS A REMIX! Inspired by Shakespeare's tragedy of Julius Caesar, *Julius X* explores those same themes by viewing them through the life of civil rights activist Malcolm X. Set in Harlem in 1965, Julius X is a leader of The Nation. Fearing that Julius' growing strength and ambitions threaten The Nation, a group of its members led by Brutus Mohammed and Cassius X plot to assassinate him. But when Julius is killed, chaos engulfs Harlem. Alive with hip hop dance, slam poetry and multimedia, *Julius X* investigates the intoxicating effects of power and the danger of pride. Karamu first staged *Julius X* at the Second Annual Ingenuity Festival in 2006.

**Holes (Comedy-Drama Adventure) adapted by Louis Sachar
(Ohio Premier- Women's Month)
March 14 - April 6, 2008 (Jelliffe)
Previews: Mar. 12th & 13th**

Karamu is proud to bring the adaptation of this popular Disney motion picture to our main stage season. *Holes* follows a young man, Stanley, who is thrown into a detention camp in the middle of a desert for allegedly stealing a very expensive pair of sneakers. There, he is given chores by a Warden to dig holes along with a new found juvenile friend, Zero, for treasure that was buried years ago by Kissin' Kate Barlow, a notorious bandit. This is a story about tolerance, friendships, discoveries, legacies, morality and justice. (For the entire Family)

**The Blacks: A Clown Show (Classic Drama) by Jean Genet
Director: Terrence Spivey
April 18 - May 11 2008 (Arena)
Previews: April 16th & 17th**

The Blacks: A Clown Show was written in 1958 at the request of a black actor. But Jean Genet, a white, French novelist and playwright (*The Balcony*), wrote the drama focusing on a troupe of black actors, who come together to perform a ritual that requires the corpse of a white woman. Originally written for an all-black cast, *The Blacks* offered a new voice to American theatre. It won an Obie for Best Off Broadway play in 1961.

NOTE: Audience members are required to wear mask for this production (which will be provided by ushers). Discretion is advised due to content, language, and unexpected audience interaction. Do not come alone!

***** Special "Parliament" Performance (not part of the Subscription season)
The Funkentine Rapture
(An original funktastic musical-comedy) (World Premiere)
book by Lee Summers and Ben Blake; music and lyrics by Lee Summers
May 30 - June 22, 2008 (Jelliffe)
Previews: May 21st & 22nd**

Funkentine pays homage to "Parliament Funkadelic," The soaring 1970s, platform shoes, sky-high afros and a beat that will take audiences even higher when an aspiring funk master, George Preston, who reaches for the stars and is

caught in an uproarious battle between good and evil, funk and disco. Kentucky fried and Harlem's catfish surprise. He will try to win the girl, gain the gig, and rescue the secret recipe from heinous hands.

Ticket Prices:

Comedies and Dramas Thurs. & Sundays \$20.00; Fri. & Sat. \$25.00

Black Nativity Thurs. \$20.; Fri. & Sat. \$30; Sun. \$25

The Funkentine Rapture Thurs. \$25; Fri. \$35; Sat. \$45.; Sun \$30.

Preview Nights \$10.00 for Dramas & Comedies; \$15.00 Black Nativity

Senior Discounts \$3.00 off published Ticket Price

Student Discount with ID \$15.

No Senior nor Student Discounts apply on Preview Nights or for The Funkentine Rapture

Youth & Young Adult Productions: \$10.00

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### **2007/08 Youth Theatre Season**

**"There's a Boy in the Girls Bathroom" by Louis Sachar**

**Adapted from the novel by Heidi Bedrossian**

**Directed by: Heidi Bedrossian October 13 - November 4, 2007 (Arena)**

Bradley Chalkers is the oldest kid in the fifth grade. He tells enormous lies. He picks fights with girls. No one likes him—except Carla, the new school counselor. She thinks Bradley is sensitive and generous, and knows that Bradley could change, if only he weren't afraid to try. But when you feel like the most-hated kid in the whole school, believing in yourself can be the hardest thing in the world.

**Babies Having Babies by Jeffrey Auerbach and Kathryn Montgomery**

**Directed by: TBA October 27 – November 18, 2007 (Arena) 4:00 p.m.**

Finding themselves together in a teen pregnancy counseling session, five very different girls find common ground and begin to understand the impact of their choices. This is a frank, sensitive, humorous script, always honest in its treatment of young women facing the prospect of an unplanned, unwanted pregnancy. (12 and up)

**Little Red Riding Hood (and the Power Mutants) by Ed Monk**

**Directed by: Judy Mazur December 22 - January 6, 2008 (Arena)**

Little Red, of Little Red's Gourmet Catering and Home Delivery Service, is on a mission to deliver some goodies to Grandma's house. Unfortunately, Oswald The Big Bad Wolf, president and founder of Oswald's School for Wolves, is trying to teach his somewhat dim students how to steal baskets of goodies. Only The Power Mutants, a strange and mysterious group of mutant superheroes with rather silly powers, can help Little Red. Will the goodies get to Grandma's house on time?

**Birds of a Feather by Charles Briggs**

**Directed by: Richard Morris Jr. February 9 - March 2, 2008 (Arena)**

*Birds of a Feather* is loosely based on the story of Rosa Parks and the jitney bus boycott of the 1960's, but in this version, all the characters are birds. A Lavender Sookoo Secretary bird boards a bus, and asks a Humble Wrenkoo seamstress to relinquish her perch (seat). What ensues will turn the land of the Amakoos upside down, and lead to its first bus birdcott. It is up to Vesper Sparrow and the Court of White Owls to make civil rights out of civil wrongs, and calm the ruffled feathers of all the birds in the land of the Amakoos. "It is better to hop awhile, so one may ride in style" ----- the Wrenkoo Examiner.

### **Young Adult Series**

**A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry**

**One Act adaptation by Shambrion Treadwell and Lamont Livingston**

**Directed by: Lamont Livingston May 17 - June 18, 2008 (Arena)**

This play tells the story of a lower-class black family's struggle to gain middle-class acceptance. When the play opens, Mama, the sixty-year-old mother of the family, is waiting for a \$10,000 insurance check from the death of her husband, and the drama will focus primarily on how the \$10,000 should be spent. The story is based upon Hansberry's own experiences growing up in Chicago's Woodlawn neighborhood. It is the first play written by a black woman to be on Broadway.

An all-teen cast and director takes on this classic.