

**Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright and Hermitage Fellow
Paula Vogel to Present “Pen to Paper”
as Part of “Hermitage @ Booker” Series**

The newly launched “Hermitage @ Booker” series, made possible with support from the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, continues with “Pen to Paper” with Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel on Friday, February 11th.

January 4, 2022 (Sarasota County, Florida) — Hermitage Fellow, Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright, and American Theater Hall of Fame Honoree **Paula Vogel** will present a free community program: “Pen to Paper with Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright Paula Vogel” — on Friday, February 11th at 5pm ET, in the outdoor courtyard at Booker High School. Vogel, whose award-winning plays include *How I Learned to Drive* and *Indecent*, has taught playwriting for thirty years at Brown University and at the Yale School of Drama. For this next installment of “Hermitage @ Booker,” Vogel will lead a writing ‘bake-off’ in which the audience will collectively create and design a short play through writing prompts and exercises. “Pen to Paper” is a continuation of the “Hermitage @ Booker” series, a collaborative partnership between the Hermitage Artist Retreat and Booker High School’s Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) program, which launched in December with Hermitage Fellow and jazz musician Luke Stewart. The “Hermitage @ Booker” series features outdoor public programs intended for adults, as well as high-school and college students in the community.

Vogel's plays include *How I Learned to Drive*, *The Long Christmas Ride Home*, *The Mineola Twins*, *The Baltimore Waltz*, *Hot 'N' Throbbing*, *Desdemona*, *And Baby Makes Seven*, *The Oldest Profession*, *A Civil War Christmas*, *Don Juan Comes Home From Iraq*, and *Indecent*. Vogel has been developing her playwriting memoir *How To Bake A Play* as part of her Hermitage Residency.

"We are honored to welcome legendary playwright Paula Vogel back to the Hermitage, where she will be sharing her extraordinary talent as a writer and experience as an educator with the members of our Sarasota community. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Dr. Rachel Shelley and the Booker VPA faculty as we build meaningful connections between some of the nation's leading artists and our community," said Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**.

"We look forward to introducing more area residents and students to the bold new works and creative journeys of acclaimed Hermitage Fellows from around the world."

"As we seek to embolden our students to soar to new heights, we are thrilled to have Hermitage Fellows work with our students and present their process to the community," says Booker High School Principal **Dr. Rachel Shelley**. "The Hermitage partnership is an extraordinary opportunity for the Booker High School VPA Magnet Program to connect student learning with the experiences of acclaimed professionals working in the visual and performing arts."

The Hermitage's 2022 outdoor programs are free and open to the public with a \$5/person registration fee. "Pen to Paper" is intended for adults, college students, and high-school students. Due to capacity limitations and social distancing, **registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

The Hermitage has shared the gift of education with Booker High School and Booker Middle School students for many years, as well as other schools throughout the region, bringing leading artists from across the country into the classrooms, building bridges with students and teachers alike. As the Hermitage continues to expand its partnership with Booker High School, the organization will continue to present classroom programs and teacher workshops, as well as introducing new mentorship opportunities connecting aspiring young artists with the Hermitage's extraordinary visiting musicians, playwrights, visual artists, dancers, and more. New support for this expanded community engagement is provided this season by the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, as well as additional support for teaching artist residencies provided by the Koski Family Foundation.

The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies, where diverse artists from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of theater, music, visual art, literature, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows participate in free community programs, offering audiences in the region a unique opportunity to engage with some of the world's leading artists and to get an authentic "sneak peek" into extraordinary projects and artistic minds before their works go on to major galleries, concert halls, theaters, and museums around the world. These free and innovative programs include performances, lectures, readings, interactive experiences, open studios, school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

All of the Hermitage's scheduled programming in early 2022 will continue outdoors unless otherwise indicated, all with socially distanced seating.

The program description:

- **“Pen to Paper with Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright Paula Vogel,” *Friday, February 11th, 5pm ET***: Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, American Theater Hall of Fame Honoree, and Hermitage Fellow **Paula Vogel** offers an exploration of playwriting in which Paula and members of the audience will write a short play and work on writing exercises together. Culminating in an event Vogel lovingly calls a “bake-off” in which writers create and design a short play, there are no critiques during the workshop; rather, all writing prompts are seen as gifts to everyone in the room. No knowledge of theater or playwriting required – just an open mind and a willingness to explore the theatrical voice. This event is presented in partnership with **Booker High School**. The “Hermitage @ Booker” series features outdoor public programs intended for adults, as well as high-school and college students in the community. **Registration is required at *HermitageArtistRetreat.org* (\$5/person registration fee). Booker High School (outdoor courtyard), 3201 North Orange Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34234**

About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:

The Hermitage is a nonprofit artist retreat located in Manasota Key, Florida, inviting accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 14 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur ‘Genius’ Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the newly announced \$35,000 Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival’s Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit HermitagArtistRetreat.org.

The Hermitage is supported by:

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; and by the Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture and the State of Florida (Section 286.25 Florida Statutes), as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED HERMITAGE PROGRAMS:

NOTE: For the January 7th program, **Amir ElSaffar** replaces **Chet'la Sebree**.

Friday, Jan 7 @ 5pm, “Journeys of Identity in Poetry & Music” with Hermitage Fellows **Amir ElSaffar** and **Wang Lu** (Live on the Hermitage Beach)

Wang Lu's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Ina Schnell in memory of Susan Brainerd

Friday, Jan 14 @ 5pm, “Walk on Through” with Hermitage Fellow & Tony Award Winner **Gavin Creel** (Live on the Hermitage Beach)

Gavin Creel's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Charlie Huisking

Presented in partnership with leading Sarasota County theaters: Florida Studio Theatre, The Players Centre, Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, Venice Theatre, and Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe

Friday, Jan 21 @ 5:30pm, Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens: “The Work,” with Hermitage Fellow & Pulitzer Prize Winner **Michael R. Jackson** (Live at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens)

Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Friday, Jan 28 @ 5pm, “Natural Inspiration,” with Hermitage Fellow **Ni'Ja Whitson** (Live on the Hermitage Beach)

Presented in partnership with Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast

Friday, Feb 11 @ 5pm, Hermitage @ Booker: “Pen to Paper with Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright Paula Vogel,” with Hermitage Fellow **Paula Vogel** (Live at Booker High School)

Presented in partnership with Booker High School's Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) Program

Friday, Feb 18 @ 5:30pm, “Say Their Names,” with Hermitage Fellow **Matthew Evan Taylor** (Live on the Hermitage Beach)

Presented in partnership with Manasota ASALH

Thursday, Feb 24 @ 6pm, “Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens: “Violin: Dope, Honest, & Evolved,” with Hermitage Fellow **Lady Jess** (Live at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Downtown Campus)

Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

HermitageArtistRetreat.org