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Frederick Speaker Series to Present EGOT-Winning Actress Rita Moreno

FREDERICK, Md., Wednesday, March 14, 2018 — Award winning singer, dancer, and actress Rita Moreno will take the stage at the Weinberg Center for the Arts on Friday, April 6 at 7:30pm as part of the 2018 Frederick Speaker Series. Moreno belongs to a group of only eight living performers who have won entertainment's grand slam of the industry's most prestigious awards: an Oscar, an Emmy, a Tony, and a Grammy.

Tickets begin at \$40 and may be purchased online at WeinbergCenter.org, or by calling the Box Office at 301.600.2828, or in person at 20 West Patrick St. Discounts are available for students, children, military, and seniors. For information about Meet and Greet tickets, please call the box office.

A separately ticketed meet-and-greet reception will take place immediately following the presentation. These exclusive events provide a chance for fans to meet the speaker, take pictures, and obtain autographs. All of the proceeds from the meet-and-greet receptions benefit children's programs at Frederick County Public Libraries.

At just 82 years young, Rita Moreno remains one of the busiest stars in show business. In January 2014, Moreno received the Screen Actors Guild's Lifetime Achievement Award. Her first book, "Rita Moreno: A Memoir," instantly became a New York Times Bestseller. In 2011, she premiered her one-woman show, "Life Without Make-Up," an original play about her life and appeared regularly as Fran Drescher's mother in the TVLand series "Happily Divorced." She has recently begun production on the Latino remake of Norman Lear's classic sitcom "One Day at a Time," for Netflix. This creative diversity has been the hallmark of Moreno's nearly 70-year career.

She belongs to an elite group of only eight living performers who have won entertainment's grand slam of the industry's most prestigious awards: an Oscar, an Emmy, a Tony, and a Grammy. Her Oscar win came in 1962 as spitfire Anita in the film version of "West Side Story," for which she also won a Golden Globe. Her Tony win was for her 1975 comedic triumph as Googie Gomez in Broadway's "The Ritz." Moreno was awarded a Grammy for her 1972 performance on "The Electric Company Album," based on the long-running children's television series. She has won not one, but two Emmys: the first for a 1977 variety appearance on "The Muppet Show" and the following year for a dramatic turn on "The Rockford Files."

Over the decades, she has collected dozens of other show business awards, including a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1995. A favorite of Chicago audiences and critics, Moreno received the city's coveted Joseph Jefferson Award in 1968 as Serafina in "The Rose Tattoo" and in 1985 was awarded the prestigious Sara Siddons Award for her hilarious portrayal of Olive Madison in the female version of "The Odd Couple."

Moreno was born Rosa Dolores Alverio in Humacao, a small town near the Puerto Rican rain forest. At age 5, she moved with her mother to New York where she soon began dance lessons. She made her Broadway debut at just 13 in "Skydrift," starring Eli Wallach. Then, in true Hollywood tradition, a talent scout spotted her and arranged for the teen to meet MGM mogul Louis B. Mayer, who signed her to a film contract.

Her Hollywood career advanced steadily, including early films with stars such as Richard Widmark, Esther Williams, Mario Lanza, Susan Hayward, Tyrone Power and Gary Cooper. She appeared in "Singin' in the Rain" starring Gene Kelly and was featured as Tuptim in the classic "The King and I" with Yul Brynner and Deborah Kerr. Although early roles sometimes found her typecast as a Mexican spitfire or Indian maiden, she also broke the Latina mold playing an Irish teacher, an Italian widow, a female evangelist, a proper Englishwoman and a Southern belle. After her Academy Award for "West Side Story," Moreno was acknowledged as a major big-screen talent.

Other significant film appearances include: "The Night of the Following Day" with Marlon Brando in 1967, with James Garner in "Marlowe," as Alan Arkin's girlfriend in "Popi," and in Mike Nichols's production of "Carnal Knowledge." She reprised the role of Googie Gomez in the film version of "The Ritz," followed by Alan Alda's "The Four Seasons," Columbia Pictures' acclaimed "I Like it Like That" and "Angus" with George C. Scott.

Her long stage career has included starring roles on both sides of the Atlantic. In London, she appeared in Hal Prince's 1962 production of "She Loves Me" and in the 1997 West End run of "Sunset Boulevard." In New York, she has starred in Lorraine Hansbury's "The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window," opposite Robert Shaw in "Gantry," and with Jimmy Coco in "The Last of the Red Hot Lovers." She received a Tony Award nomination for her role in "The National Health" in 1974.

Moreno has guest starred on a wide variety of television productions in the U.S. and abroad. She is proud to have been a featured artist for many years on "The Electric Company," the highly regarded educational show for children. She starred in her own TV series based on the film "9" to "5." In 2007, she starred in the CBS series "Cane" and most recently she was one of the leads in the highly acclaimed HBO series "OZ." Moreno's latest endeavor has been in cabaret, where she has met with great critical success.

She is involved with a number of civic and charitable organizations and events. Moreno has served on the National Endowment for the Arts and as a Commissioner for the President's White House Fellowships. She has also served as a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. At a White House ceremony in June 2004, Moreno was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush. The medal is the highest honor bestowed upon a civilian and ranks only second to the Congressional Medal of Honor as the nation's highest award. It is conferred on individuals for a lifetime of meritorious service. In 2007, Moreno was inducted into the California Hall of Fame by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. In 2010, she was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama as well as the Here I Stand Award for activism in the arts and the HOLA Lifetime Achievement Award. In December 2016, she received a Kennedy Center Honor for her lifetime contributions to American culture.

The 2018 Frederick Speaker Series will conclude with actor and activist Mark Ruffalo. A complete listing of events scheduled for the 2018 Frederick Speaker Series can be found at WeinbergCenter.org.

ABOUT THE FREDERICK SPEAKER SERIES

Since its inception in 2013, the Frederick Speaker Series has featured notable personalities such as Dr. Michio Kaku, Cal Ripken Jr., General Colin Powell, Tom Brokaw, Bill Nye, and George Takei.

This year's series, event, and media sponsors include the Ausherman Family Foundation, The C. Burr Artz Trust, The Randall Family Charitable Trust Fund at The Community Foundation of Frederick County, Leidos Biomedical, the Delaplaine Foundation, PNC Bank, The Helen J. Serini Foundation, Graphcom, Frederick Magazine, and the Frederick News-Post. Presenting sponsors include the Weinberg Center for the Arts and Frederick County Public Libraries.

For further information about the 2018 Frederick Speaker Series, including speaker biographies, ticket availability, pricing, and the meet-and-greet receptions, please visit WeinbergCenter.org.

Photos available upon request.

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