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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**WOKE!: A REVOLUTIONARY CABARET DEBATES, SCREAMS AND CELEBRATES RESISTANCE**

*JOANNE GODRON, ALEXANDRA BILLINGS AND THE CSULB COMMUNITY CREATE WOKE!*

**LONG BEACH, CA, October 2017** –Song, dance, and poetry are crafted together by CSULB students in collaboration with Alexandra Billings and Joanne Gordon to create *WOKE!: A Revolutionary Cabaret*. *WOKE!* screams in protest to the policies, actions and words that seek to devalue and discriminate. Director Joanne Gordon said, “We live in extremely challenging times. Our campus community feels under siege. *WOKE!* is our attempt to express our outrage, our passion, our hurt and our inspiration in the only way we know how – by making theatre.” *WOKE!* plays from November 2 - November 12 in the Studio Theater.

*WOKE!: A Revolutionary Cabaret* is the launch of Cal Rep’s 4-year project Devising Democracy. Artistic Director Jeff Janisheski said, “Our Devising Democracy series is about the force, the power, of people – devising, sharing, learning and connecting to audiences and other artists through the medium of theatre.” Confronting the burning issues of race, LGBTQ rights, and political, social, and economic oppression, *WOKE!* was devised by citizens taking an honest look at their families, their relationships and their beliefs. For director Gordon, the title of the piece came from the need to “let us all be alive to and aware of and eloquent about- what is going on around us.”

Alexandra Billings, currently appearing in Amazon’s Golden Globe-winning and Emmy-nominated series *Transparent*, is a main collaborator and performer in *WOKE!*. Her autobiographical show *Before I Disappear* ran Off-Broadway at The Producer’s Club. *S/He & Me*, her autobiographical cabaret directed by Joanne Gordon, was named “Best of 2015 for Los Angeles Theatre” by Broadway World.

*WOKE!* is a “collage, where the structure is not narrative; it’s thematic...it shaped itself around themes” said Gordon. Director Joanne Gordon has received five Drama-Logue Awards, a Los Angeles Critics Choice Award and “Best of the Year” from the Los Angeles Times. She is best known for her work on Stephan Sondheim and Charles Bukowski, employing the same style of collage. Most recently she remounted the hit *S/He and Me* at the Los Angeles LGBT center with Alexandra Billings the subject and star of the show. Billings said of Gordon, “She is the ignition to this show and she is the dreamer.”

*WOKE!* is “dealing with things that are much bigger than the merely rational” said Gordon, in hopes “to get to the truth about a reality or relationship far more profoundly than any word alone can do.” The content of the piece is contextualized by a grid of movable bars that create “the bars of a prison...the high rises of New York or downtown L.A...they are a constantly shifting landscape of what confines us and what shapes us” said Gordon.

**Calendar Listing for *WOKE!: A Revolutionary Cabaret***

***WOKE!: A Revolutionary Cabaret devised by The Ensemble featuring Alexandra Billings***

Directed by Dr. Joanne Gordon

CSULB Theatre Arts, 1250 Bellflower Blvd, Long Beach, CA, 90840

**Performances:**

Thursday, November 2 at 8:00 pm

Friday, November 3 at 8:00 pm (Opening Night)

Saturday, November 4 at 2:00 pm

Saturday, November 4 at 8:00 pm

Sunday, November 5 at 2:00pm

Tuesday, November 7 at 8:00pm

Wednesday, November 8 at 8:00 pm

Thursday, November 9 at 7:00 pm (Inside Look at 6pm with Director Joanne Gordon)

Saturday, November 11 at 2:00 pm

Saturday, November 11 at 8:00pm

Sunday, November 12 at 2:00 pm

**Tickets and Information:**

Tickets: <http://web.csulb.edu/colleges/cota/theatre/on-stage-now/index.html>

Prices: General Admission \$20

Students (w/ID)/ CSULB Faculty & Staff: \$15

Seniors (55+)/ Military: \$17

Groups: Groups of 10 or more start at \$13.5/ticket

Location: Studio Theater in the Theatre Arts Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Street and East Campus Drive

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