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CENTER FOR ARTS-INSPIRED LEARNING ANNOUNCES THE KICK-OFF OF THE NEA BIG READ IN CLEVELAND

City of Cleveland will come together to read and celebrate Station Eleven

(Cleveland, OH—August 23, 2017) Center for Arts-Inspired Learning (CAL) will launch its NEA Big Read program celebrating *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel with a public kick-off on September 23, 2017 from 10am - 12pm at the Cleveland Public Library's Carnegie West Branch. The **NEA Big Read in Cleveland** is presented in partnership with Cleveland Public Library, Great Lakes Theater, Lake Erie Ink, and Literary Cleveland.

Highlights of the kick-off event include live music performed by In2ative, an overview of public programming, and a reading from the novel. Attendees of the event will also have a chance to explore CAL's interpretation of the book's Museum of Civilization.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to once again partner with the NEA to bring the Big Read to Cleveland and help highlight the importance of literacy in our city," said CAL Executive Director Marsha Dobrzynski. "Set in the Great Lakes region and filled with artistic themes - theater, classical music, and a graphic novel that gives the book its name - *Station Eleven* aligns well with CAL's mission to ignite student learning, creativity, and success through the arts, making it the perfect choice for our read. We look forward to sharing this book and our programming with the entire community."

An initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest, the NEA Big Read broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. One of 75 communities nationwide participating in the NEA Big Read this year, Cleveland will host its celebration of *Station Eleven* from September 23 - November 16, 2017. The full calendar of events includes book discussions, creative writing workshops, and graphic novel workshops - for both adults and teens - hosted by Lake Erie Ink and Literary Cleveland at local Cleveland Public Library branches, plus several other locations including Loganberry Books and Happy Dog at the Euclid Tavern.

In addition to the public programming, CAL's NEA Big Read grant also supports in-school programming, through which Great Lakes Theater will engage over 400 high school students in week-long Shakespeare residencies at Facing History New Tech High School and Garrett Morgan School of Science High School. Both schools will hold in-school kick-off events for their students. Facing History's in-school kick-off is scheduled for August 30.

For more information on the kick-off or other Big Read events, please contact CAL's Special Projects Manager Megan Thompson at megan@arts-inspiredlearning.org. You also can view a full calendar of events for the NEA Big Read in Cleveland at arts-inspiredlearning.org/NEABigRead2017.

Community members can also participate in Cleveland's NEA Big Read via social media by following #NEABigRead or joining the conversation @CenterforArtsInspiredLearning on Facebook and @artsinspiredCAL on Twitter.

*The **Center for Arts-Inspired Learning** ignites student learning, creativity, and success through the arts. As one of the largest of 32 affiliates in the national Young Audiences Arts for Learning network, the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning works with more than 80 professional teaching artists to bring innovative, arts-integrated learning experiences to Northeast Ohio students in grades Pre-K-12. Reaching nearly 206,000 children annually, CAL's arts education programs, workshops, and residencies close learning gaps, teach creative thinking and problem solving, and help students succeed in school, in their first jobs, and beyond. Learn more at www.arts-inspiredlearning.org*

*Established by Congress in 1965, the **National Endowment for the Arts** is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit arts.gov to learn more about NEA.*

***Arts Midwest** promotes creativity, nurtures cultural leadership, and engages people in meaningful arts experiences, bringing vitality to Midwest communities and enriching people's lives. Based in Minneapolis, Arts Midwest connects the arts to audiences throughout the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. One of six non-profit regional arts organizations in the United States, Arts Midwest's history spans more than 25 years. For more information, please visit artsmidwest.org.*

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