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For Immediate Release



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Tickets are now on sale for the World Premiere of
Natalie Parker Lawrence's "A Box of Yellow Stars"

A fictionalized account about the true story of an American Christian man who marries 15 Jewish women during World War II to save them from the concentration camps during the Holocaust.

Memphis, TN, October 20, 2015- When we think of people taking dangerous risks, pictures cliff diving, swimming with sharks, or jumping through rings of fire fill our heads. But what about the danger of being selfless? Natalie Parker-Lawrence's work A Box of Yellow Stars demonstrates that selflessness can be just as risky as jumping off of a cliff. A fictional account based on the powerful true story of an American Christian man that marries 15 Jewish women during the time of World War II, ultimately saving their lives shows that generosity can make a long-lasting impact on total strangers.

The world premiere of Parker-Lawrence's "A Box of Yellow Stars," a Women's Theatre Festival of Memphis, Inc. (WTFM) presentation, began rehearsals in

September at the Memphis Jewish Community Center. Directed by WTFM Founder/Producer Ruby O'Gray, performances begin November 13 and continue through November 22 at TheatreWorks, 2085 Monroe.

Inspired by the true story of an uncle of one of Parker-Lawrence's former students, the play is a riveting and powerful memoir about a few of these women who, through tragic experiences, share powerful bonds and poignant destinies after they meet each other for the first time at his funeral.

November 13th, opening night of "A Box of Yellow Stars" will feature a catered reception immediately following the show. On November 15th and 20th there will be talk back sessions immediately following the show. The session on November 15th will be moderated by Florida Jackson, Director of the Memphis School of Servant Leadership and the session on November 20th will be moderated by Marti Tippens-Murphy, Director of Facing History and Ourselves, Memphis.

The playwright's nine plays have been presented as staged readings/full productions at The Player's Theatre (New York City), The San Miguel's Second Annual International Festival (Mexico), You Heard It First Here (New York City), The Morris Theatre Guild (Chicago area), Rhodes College, Theatre Works, Adelphi University (NY), The Women's Playwright's Initiative (Orlando), Shelby County Memphis Teachers of English Spring Conference, First Unitarian Church, Houston High School, The University of Memphis, and the Women's Theatre Festival of Memphis.

A Box of Yellow Stars is sponsored by the Tennessee Arts Commission, ArtsMemphis, Memorial Park Funeral Home and Ritzee Florists.

The all star cast includes: Dana Terle as Patsy, Donna Lappin as Sonia, Janie Paris as Helena and Daniel Martine as Lea.

Janie Paris is appearing as a courtesy from Actors' Equity, with numerous credits, including *A Curious Savage*, *Courtin' Time*, *View From the Bridge*, *Death of A Salesman*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *Steel Magnolias* and *HeartStrings*. Paris was last seen in New Moon Theatre's *Haint* at TheatreWorks to great reviews.

Dana Terle is a trained professional dancer, but transitioned to acting in drama and comedy in such plays as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Glass Menagerie*, at Germantown Community Theatre, *The Curious Savage* and *Sisters of the Cloth* at The Circuit Playhouse.

Donna Lappin has appeared in numerous productions in Los Angeles before moving to Memphis. Some of her favorite shows are *Young Frankenstein*, *Lost in Yonkers*, and *Les Miserables*. Donna most recently appeared in the *Best of Broadway 3* at

Stage Door Productions and at TheatreWorks in *Standing on Ceremony*.

Daniel Martine is a show biz veteran of over 35 years. Daniel is an actor, working screenwriter and filmmaker. He was recently seen onstage in Hattiloo Theatre's acclaimed production of *In the Heights*.

Stage Veterans Kathy Haaga is the set designer, Mandy Heath is the Lighting Designer and Ruby O'Gray is directing the production.

An art exhibit featuring the work of **Betsy Rose Besser** will be mounted in the lobby during the run of the show and a reception honoring her work will be held on November 22nd.

Tickets are on sale now at eventbrite.com. Call the WTFM Box Office at 901.213.7566 for Group Sales & Fundraiser opportunities.

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About Women's Theatre Festival of Memphis, Inc.

The Women's Theatre Festival of Memphis, Inc. (WTFM) was founded by Karen Moore and Ruby O'Gray in 2012 to address the gender bias in the theatre industry. The organization became a 501 (c) 3 in 2013. It is Memphis' first and only theatre festival designed to provide educational and performance opportunities to women and celebrate the contributions of women in the theatre arts industry. WTFM showcases performances about women, written and directed by women. In 2014, WTFM became the first international women's theatre festival when they presented the Australian submission *Bijou's Secret*. The next festival is scheduled for July 2016.

It is the policy of the Women's Theatre Festival of Memphis, Inc. (WTFM) not to discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin or disability, or in the operations of its programs, services, or activities. Men and women participate in the festival as performers, stage crew, and production staff. For more information, visit www.womenstheatrefestivalofmemphis.org

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