

Horrendous Injustice is Tackled in FemFest 2017 Performance

Winnipeg, August 25, 2017 – FemFest once again faces injustice head on by presenting powerful work torn from the headlines. In *Watching Glory Die*, acclaimed Canadian playwright Judith Thompson turns our attention to the flaws within the Canadian prison system. Inspired by the true story of New Brunswick teenager Ashley Smith who died while under suicide watch in an Ontario prison in 2007, *Watching Glory Die* is a deliberately fictionalized portrait of three women intertwined by systemic abandonment. This powerful production from Mulgrave Road Theatre (Guysborough, Nova Scotia) will see its Winnipeg premiere at FemFest 2017: *Coming of Age* with just three performances on **September 21st and 22nd** at **The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film**.

“Judith Thompson’s *Watching Glory Die* is a call to action and a cri de coeur.” - THE CHRONICLE HERALD
“Politically charged and some of Thompson’s best story-telling” - HALIFAX BLOGGERS
“*Watching Glory Die* shocks, clarifies and engages.” - Evan Andrew Mackay, Post City Toronto

The play does not shy away from the harrowing moments of this story. “The impossible is happening in our country,” shared playwright Judith Thompson. “The system destroyed Smith. And it happened where least expected.” Thompson is a multiple award-winning playwright and is highly regarded as one of Canada’s most studied female playwrights. She is the author of such notable plays as *The Crackwalker*, *White Biting Dog* and *Lion in the Streets*.

After a successful run in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Mulgrave Road Theatre has been touring this powerful production across the country. Director Emmy Alcorn (Artistic Director of Mulgrave Road Theatre, Nova Scotia Established Artist Award) brings this powerful play to the stage with perfect balance. “I believe there is a way to lift everyone up in society. We live in an abundant world and must ensure that everyone is treated fairly, that they have food and shelter; that they are loved”, says Alcorn.

Award-winning actor Stephanie MacDonald brings these three women to life in a performance that is described in a review by the Chronicle Herald as “masterful, intense, deeply focused and totally convincing.” In *Watching Glory Die* MacDonald plays all three characters: Glory, a fictionalized version of Ashley Smith; Rosellen, Glory’s mother and Gail, a guard at the prison where Glory is incarcerated. “It’s not just the precision between roles that is captivating, but how honestly and instantly MacDonald apparates from one woman’s deep emotional state to the next” –HALIFAX BLOGGERS

Watching Glory Die will be performed at FemFest on **September 21 at 2:30pm and 9pm** as well as on **September 22nd at 7pm**, in the **Asper Centre for Theatre and Film** (at the University of Winnipeg, 400 Colony Street). Tickets are \$15. FemFest welcomes all audience members to experience the work of female artists and enjoy the local and national art scene. For more information visit our website: www.femfest.ca.

In addition, to presenting *Watching Glory Die*, the 15th annual festival will include eight days of exciting performances. In celebration of FemFest’s 15th anniversary, Sarasvati Productions will be presenting *Tomboy Survival Guide* by LGBTQ advocate Ivan Coyote, producing *Two Indians* by emerging playwright Falen Johnson, and co-hosting *The Human Library*™, an interactive experience in partnership with The Millennium Library.

About Sarasvati Productions: *Founded in Winnipeg in 2000, we seek to inspire artists and audiences through the use of theatre and to provide a place where artists can develop, showcase their skills and celebrate their creativity. FemFest has been up and kicking since 2003 and to date has showcased hundreds of artists!*

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