

MEDIA RELEASE

RENAISSANCE THEATERWORKS' RUSSIAN TRANSPORT: AN ENGROSSING MORAL THRILLER

A Russian Immigrant family's story of struggle to achieve the "American Dream"

Renaissance Theaterworks partners with Exploit No More, The Benedict Center, & LOTUS Legal Clinic

Milwaukee, Wis. (December 12, 2017) - Renaissance Theaterworks (RTW) presents Erika Sheffer's engrossing moral thriller, RUSSIAN TRANSPORT following the 2018 New Year. Directed by "Renaissance woman," Laura Gordon, RUSSIAN TRANSPORT will feature Elizabeth Ledo, Reese Madigan, April Paul, Max Pink, & Mark Puchinsky. This drama runs January 19 – February 11, 2018 in the Studio Theater at the Broadway Theatre Center (158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, Wis.).

Set in the Russian enclave of Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, RUSSIAN TRANSPORT is the story of an immigrant couple, their two assimilated teenagers, and the fierce and fiery upheaval they experience when the mysterious Uncle Boris from Russia comes to stay with them for his shot at the "American Dream." Part family drama, part heart-pounding thriller, RUSSIAN TRANSPORT captures the complex and conflicting layers of one immigrant experience, centered on human trafficking.

RUSSIAN TRANSPORT tickets are currently on sale through the Broadway Theatre Center Box Office (158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, Wis, 414-291-7800 or www.r-t-w.com). For more information, visit www.r-t-w.com.

HAPPENING HERE

Although this particular story takes place in Brooklyn, New York, it hits a little too close to home. Milwaukee is among the top cities in the United States that is considered a "hub" for human trafficking. Perceived to be a problem confined to faraway countries and only the most crime-ridden US cities, human trafficking is happening today, in our own community. Human trafficking, is the illegal movement of people for the purpose of exploitation in the form of commercial sex, domestic service or manual labor.

Milwaukee is experiencing a surge in the number of cases where the average age of children being groomed and sold for sex is 13. Now, more than ever, it is important to educate our community of this increasing issue and the ways it can be prevented. (Information provided by Human Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee at www.unluckythirteen.org)

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Renaissance Theaterworks is proud to partner with three Milwaukee-based non-profits, Exploit No More, The Benedict Center, & LOTUS Legal Clinic, each dedicated to eradicating human trafficking in our city. Through the story of RUSSIAN TRANSPORT and these Community Partnerships, Renaissance Theaterworks will provide education and awareness of human trafficking to our community as a way to continue the conversation, beyond the stage.

Exploit No More (ENM) is dedicated to ending child sex trafficking in the Greater Milwaukee region. ENM works with private, public, and other non-profit community organizations dedicated to serving youth and eradicating child sex trafficking. www.exploitsnomore.org

Renaissance Theaterworks will be hosting a care drive throughout the run of RUSSIAN TRANSPORT to benefit clients of Exploit No More. Patrons are encouraged to bring care items to the Broadway Theatre Center Studio lobby for donation to Exploit No More.

The Benedict Center is an interfaith, non-profit agency working with victims, offenders, and the community to achieve a system of criminal justice that is fair and treats every person involved in trafficking with dignity and respect. www.benedictcenter.org

LOTUS Legal Clinic serves victims of gender-based violence and human trafficking through trauma-informed legal advocacy, policy initiatives, education, and survivor empowerment. www.lotuslegal.org

LOTUS Legal Clinic's Untold Stories project gives survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking an opportunity to transform personal trauma into powerful messages for advocacy and change. These messages are then interpreted into art by Milwaukee-area high schoolers through a partnership with Arts @ Large and Mount Mary's Art Therapy program. A collection of these art pieces will be displayed in the Renaissance Theaterworks' lobby during the run of RUSSIAN TRANSPORT.

A Scholar Afternoon with all three Community Partners will be held following the 2:00 PM performance of RUSSIAN TRANSPORT on Sunday, February 4. Exploit No More, The Benedict Center & LOTUS Legal Clinic will provide in-depth information about the work they do in our community, relating to the play's themes. All are welcome to attend.

TICKETS

Single tickets \$40 (plus tax and fees), groups (10+), student, and senior discounts are available.

- Online at www.r-t-w.com or <https://tickets.broadwaytheatrecenter.com/public/default.asp?cgCode=3>
- By phone: 414-291-7800
- In person at the Broadway Theatre Center box office, 158 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, Wis.

WHEN

January 19 – February 11, 2018

Evenings: Wednesday - Friday, 7:30pm - select Saturdays, 8:00pm

Matinees: Saturday 4:00pm, Sunday 2:00pm, select Wednesday 1:00pm

RUSSIAN TRANSPORT by Erika Sheffer

M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su
				Jan 19 7:30pm	20 4:00pm 8:00pm	21 2:00pm
		JAN-FEB 2018				
22	23	24 7:30pm	25 7:30pm	26 7:30pm	27 4:00pm 8:00pm	28 2:00pm
29 7:30pm	30	31 7:30pm	Feb 1 7:30pm	2 7:30pm	3 4:00pm	4 2:00pm
5	6	7 1:00pm 7:30pm	8 7:30pm	9 7:30pm	10 4:00pm	11 2:00pm

For tickets & more information, visit www.r-t-w.com | Box Office 414-291-7800



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SPECIAL EVENTS



Preview Performance; be the first to see the show! Jan 19 at 7:30pm & Jan 20 at 4pm



Opening Night! Join us on the 2nd floor for our post-show **Cast Party** around 10pm on Jan 20! All are welcome to attend.



Wednesday Nights @ RTW - Wine Wednesdays! Enjoy a FREE glass of wine with every Wednesday night ticket AND engage with our creative team at **Wednesday Night Insights**. Pre-show talk at 6:45pm on Jan 24 and post-show talkbacks on Jan 31 & Feb 7.



Play Club - A book club for theater-lovers! Learn more about this special subscription package at www.r-t-w.com/engage



Pay What You Can performance on Monday, Jan 29 at 7:30pm.



Scholar Afternoon Talkback following the 2pm performance on Sunday, February 4. Stay for an in-depth conversation with our Community Partners on the themes of the play and how their work impacts Milwaukee.



For all group rates and reservations, call 414-273-0800 x201

RUSSIAN TRANSPORT by Erika Sheffer previews on January 19 & 20, opening the evening of January 20, running through February 11, 2018. Tickets are \$40 and are available through the Broadway Theatre Center box office by calling (414)-291-7800 or online at www.r-t-w.com. All performances are in the Studio Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center (158 N. Broadway, Historic Third Ward, Milwaukee, Wis.)

RUSSIAN TRANSPORT ARTISTS

DIRECTOR - Laura Gordon*

DIANA – Elizabeth Ledo*

MISHA – Reese Madigan*

MIRA – April Paul

BORIS – Mark Puchinsky

ALEX – Max Pink

STAGE MANAGER – Veronica Zahn*

COSTUME DESIGN – Jason Orlenko~

SOUND DESIGN - Megen Henninger~

PROPS DESIGN - Ana McHenry

SCENIC/LIGHTING DESIGN - Jason Fassl~

ASST SCENIC/LIGHTING DESIGN - Marisa Abbott

LANGUAGE COACH/DRAMATURGY – Graham Billings

DIALECT COACH – Raeleen McMillion

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER – Reese Madigan*

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE CAPTAIN – Mark Puchinsky

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR - Anthony Lyons

* Member of Actors' Equity Association

~ Member of United Scenic Artists

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF PROVIDING ROLES FOR WOMEN ONSTAGE AND OFF

2017-2018 marks 25 years of debt-free operation for Renaissance Theaterworks, a milestone worth celebrating. For 25 years, Renaissance Theaterworks has been an advocate for women theater artists; providing roles for women both onstage and off and keeping women's stories and perspectives center stage.

Since its inception in 1993, RTW has mounted **over 100** productions and staged readings. Among these are **nine** original works by Wisconsin playwrights, **seven** World Premieres and **one** North American Premiere. RTW has shared many women's stories and provided opportunities for over **700** theater professionals, **75%** of these have been women.

Today RTW remains Milwaukee's only women-founded, women-run professional theater company. *The Mission of Renaissance Theaterworks is to create moving theater that connects with our shared sense of being human; dedicated to promoting the work of women onstage and off.*

Suzan Fete, Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Renaissance Theaterworks shares, "Renaissance Theaterworks has come a long way since 1993, but the mission and vision [born at that kitchen table with co-founders Marie Kohler, Jennifer Rupp, Raeleen McMillion, & Michele Traband] remain vibrant and vital 25 years later. We are determined to make our next quarter century as spectacular as our first."

This season, we're proud to produce 3 compelling, mainstage shows that highlight fierce, ambitious and complex stories about women. In addition to our mainstage shows, we've helped develop the work of 9 Midwestern women playwrights through our Fourth Annual Br!NK New Play Festival, featured in September, and sharing an additional woman's story through RTW's 2nd Groundworks's production that will perform in December 2017. A season truly dedicated to women, focused on improving gender parity in the arts. For more information about RTW's 25th Anniversary Season, visit www.r-t-w.com.

Renaissance Theaterworks is a member of Theater Wisconsin and the Third Ward Arts District. We receive support from the United Performing Arts Fund, The Brico Fund, CAMPAC, the Evinrude Foundation, The Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the Richard & Ethel Herzfeld Foundation, Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation, Milwaukee Arts Board, Sempercor Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the Steigleder Charitable Trust, Wisconsin Arts Board, and private donors and foundations.

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