



MEDIA RELEASE

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FEAST OF CRISPIAN IN RESIDENCY AT MILWAUKEE REPERTORY THEATER ANNOUNCES FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND NATIONAL VETERANS THEATER FESTIVAL

MILWAUKEE (February 26, 2019) -- [Feast of Crispian](#), a non-profit theater organization that uses the works of Shakespeare to work with military veterans, is proud to announce the first-ever **National Veterans Theater Festival**, which will take place at [Milwaukee Repertory Theater's](#) Stiemke Studio **May 23-26, 2019**. The festival will offer Milwaukee veteran and civilian audiences a chance to see performances by a wide array of veteran actors and artists who will explore issues of race, returning home, and processing their (military) experiences.

"The festival is an important cause for the health and well-being of our veterans who have put their lives on the line for us," says **Feast of Crispian's Nancy Smith-Watson**. "And it will also be a powerful showcase for the talent and the stories of these amazing performers."

The festival is a result of **Feast of Crispian's** residency at **Milwaukee Repertory Theater**, which is one of the largest professional theaters in the country. "The whole organization of Feast of Crispian, staff and veterans, are incredibly excited about what the partnership with The Rep means for us," **Smith-Watson** says. "The level of recognition will be significantly raised both locally and nationally. That means we can reach more veterans and include more of the civilian population in bringing our national warriors fully home."

"We at Milwaukee Rep are thrilled to provide an artistic home for Feast of Crispian and all artists involved in the National Veterans Theater Festival," said **Milwaukee Rep Artistic Director Mark Clements**. "This festival provides a rare opportunity for Milwaukee to experience a variety of stories from talented Veteran performers from across the country, showcasing the breadth of the military experience and how we as civilians and non-civilians can gain understanding and empathy for each other."

The National Veterans Theater Festival artist and performance schedule is as follows:

Thursday, May 23 at 7:30pm - *And Comes Safe Home* by Feast of Crispian

Kicking off the festival will be Milwaukee's own [Feast of Crispian](#) performing *And Comes Safe Home*



which incorporates Shakespearean scenes with original material based on the veteran performers' own experiences.

Friday, May 24 at 7:30pm - *Color of Courage* by Mitch Capel and Sonny Kelly

Based out of Fayetteville, NC, Mitch Capel and [Sonny Kelly](#) perform a series of stories about the 180,000 African-American soldiers who served in the Union Army in the Civil War. Using multi-media, the play brings to life an array of African American soldier's stories and struggles.

Saturday, May 25 at 2pm - *She Went to War* by The Telling Project

[The Telling Project](#) is a national performing arts nonprofit based in Austin, TX that employs theater to deepen our understanding of the military and veterans' experience. *She Went to War* premiered at The Guthrie Theater in 2017. It is an autobiographical performance by four female veterans, all of whom in widely varying capacities, experienced significant combat exposure during their terms in the military. It presents an opportunity for the American public to understand and acknowledge the distinctive and important roles women have played on the battlefield.

Saturday, May 25 at 7:30pm - *AMAL* by Combat Hippies

[Combat Hippies](#) is an ensemble of Puerto Rican Veterans from Miami, Florida. *AMAL*, developed and directed by award winning theater artist Teo Castellanos delves into the impact of war on both combatants and noncombatants. As people of color using spoken word and hip-hop Combat Hippies share experiences of veterans' adjustment to life after war, as well as that of refugees and asylum seekers from war-torn countries.

Sunday, May 26 at 2pm - *Cry Havoc* by Stephan Wolfert

Over 23 million living veterans have been wired for war but never re-wired to come home: *Cry Havoc*, a one-person play by military veteran [Stephan Wolfert](#), seamlessly interweaves Shakespeare's most famous speeches with personal experience to help us understand the national crises we face when we fail in reintegrating our veterans. Performed in over 18 cities in the US and Europe, including off-Broadway with the acclaimed Bedlam theater company, *Cry Havoc* "delivers visceral poetry" (*Houston Chronicle*).

All performances are 90 minutes or less and include a TalkBack immediately following the performance.

The National Veterans Theater Festival runs in the Stiemke Studio May 23-26, 2019. Tickets are \$30 for adults per play, Veterans \$20 per play, Seniors and Students \$25 per play. In addition, we offer festival packages: 3 plays for \$75 and 5 plays for \$100. To purchase visit www.MilwaukeeRep.com, call the Ticket Office at **414-224-9490** or in person at **108 E. Wells Street** in downtown Milwaukee.

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About Feast of Crispian

Feast of Crispian [FoC] is a non-profit organization which uses basic acting tools and the powerful words and stories of William Shakespeare as the core of its work with veterans. FoC helps these wounded warriors to be heard and seen in the expression of their thoughts and feelings. This allows them to more easily hear, see and respect the thoughts and feelings of others, reconnecting them with their own sense of self-worth and with their communities.



Over the last five and a half years, Feast of Crispian has served 100-150 veterans annually through three-day acting intensives delivered primarily in conjunction with the Zablocki VA hospital. They have also mounted three theatrical productions of both Shakespeare's plays and original work devised from the stories of service members. FoC has delivered workshops and trainings across the country including the International Trauma Conference in Boston, MA, the National Shakespeare in the Prisons Conference at Notre Dame University, the National Symposium on *Responsibility, Morality and the Costs of War* at Ohio State University, and a Trauma and Synchrony workshop with internationally renowned trauma researcher Dr. Bessel van der Kolk at the Garrison Institute of New York. They have just returned from Seattle where they began training practitioners to assist in delivering their Shakespeare intensives at the American Lake VA hospital in Tacoma Washington in 2019. Feast of Crispian is the 2018 winner of the Footlights Outstanding Community Outreach Award. www.feastofcrispian.org

About Milwaukee Repertory Theater

Milwaukee Rep is the largest performing arts organization in Wisconsin in terms of audiences served and one of the largest professional theaters in the country. Each year, The Rep welcomes up to 275,000 people at nearly 700 performances of 15 productions ranging from compelling dramas, powerful classics, new plays and full-scale musicals in its three unique performance venues – the Quadracci Powerhouse, Stiemke Studio and Stackner Cabaret. Now in its 65th Season, The Rep has gained a national reputation as an incubator of new work, an agent of community change and a forward-thinking provider of vital arts education programs. Under the leadership of **Artistic Director Mark Clements** and **Executive Director Chad Bauman**, Milwaukee Repertory Theater ignites positive change in the cultural, social, and economic vitality of its community by creating world-class theater experiences that entertain, provoke, and inspire meaningful dialogue among an audience representative of Milwaukee's rich diversity.