

PRESS RELEASE

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Tennessee Women's Theater Project Launches Season with a World Premiere
Voices of Nashville opens October 4

Nashville – Tennessee Women's Theater Project offers two firsts and an eighth for its 2013-14 season: the world premiere of a play commissioned by the company, followed by the regional premiere of the 2013 Tony® Award winner for Best Play and the 8th annual Women's Work Festival of performing and visual arts works created by women.

The season kicks off with *Voices of Nashville*, by local playwrights Christine Mather and Sara Sharpe. This original documentary theater piece explores the experience of immigration in our region through the eyes of Nashville's new Americans. The show runs 11 performances over three weekends at Nashville's Looby Theater, from October 4 through October 20.

TWTP Founder and Artistic Director Maryanna Clarke was inspired to commission the play by the recent dramatic increase in Nashville's immigrant population. Clarke says, "I come from the Northeast, and for me the city's growing cultural diversity is exciting, but not every Nashvillian is comfortable with it. We hope the play will help people meet their new neighbors in the non-threatening environment of theater – to get to know them as human beings, in ways that headlines and immigration rhetoric can't accomplish."

Sharpe and Mather interviewed many immigrants of different economic and educational levels, blending their stories into composite characters. *Voices of Nashville* follows their experiences before and since their arrival here, and focuses on the talents, the aspirations and the creative and cultural energy that they bring to the community. The ensemble features Nashville stage veterans Keri Pisapia and David Chattam, who between them have appeared in eight TWTP shows, along with Becky Wahlstrom and Colette Divine, both making their company debut. All told, the four actors portray some 30 characters in the course of the show.

From research to outreach to post-performance discussions, the company is working with such organizations as the Nashville International Center for Empowerment, Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, Conexión Américas, American Center for Outreach and the Coalition for Education about Immigration. An Artober Nashville event *Voices* is sponsored by HCA/TriStar Health and funded in part by grants from the Nissan Foundation, Metro Nashville Arts Commission and the Tennessee Arts Commission. Following its Looby Theater run, *Voices of Nashville* will tour community centers, churches and schools, with performances booked at Casa Azafran on November 9, the Nashville Library Main Branch next January 18 and appearances in Metro Nashville Public Schools under discussion.

The company's next offering is just as exciting. The 2013 Tony® Award winner for Best Play, Christopher Durang's *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, opens a three-week regional premiere run February 28. In Durang's hit comedy, middle-aged Vanya and his sister Sonia live a quiet life in the Pennsylvania farmhouse of their childhood, where they bicker and complain about the circumstances of their lives. Their movie-star sister Masha sweeps in unannounced with her twenty-something boy toy Spike, reviving old resentments and igniting hilarious family discord. Also on the scene are a sassy, prophesying housekeeper named Cassandra and Nina, an aspiring young actress whose looks unsettle the imperious Masha.

May 2 brings the return of Women's Work, TWTP's 8th annual celebration of works created by women. The longest-running festival of its kind in the region, Women's Work spans styles and genres to offer eleven different programs: poetry and essays, one-woman shows, new plays, music, dance, film and visual art. The lineup is pending, but if previous years are any guide, the talent and the diversity will be impressive. Tickets to individual shows are just \$5, and an All Access Pass good for all performances is just \$35.

- more -

Info Phone: (615) 681-7220

Ticket link: www.twtp.org

Voices of Nashville dates: October 4 – 20, 2013

Times:

7:30 pm on October 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 & 19

7:30 pm on October 10 and 17 – all seats \$10

2:30 pm on October 6, 13 & 20

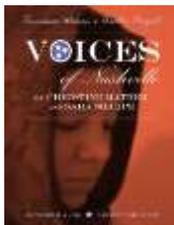
Tickets:

Adults \$15, Students & Seniors (60+) \$12

All seats \$10 on Thursday evenings

Group: Adults \$12 each, Students & Seniors \$10 each. Available for groups of 10 or more, in any combination of ticket categories – group sales, call 615-681-7220

Photos: visit dropbox for hi-res versions of these shots - <http://bit.ly/19hWPGF>



1 Voices handbill, design: Brittany Carlton



2 Voices rack card, design: Brittany Carlton



3 cutline: Actor Keri Pisapia plays a number of characters in TWTP's world premiere play, *Voices of Nashville*. Photo by M. Clarke, TWTP



4 *Voices of Nashville* First preview at NashvilleNext meeting, February 2013. L-R: Christine Mather, playwright; Sara Sharpe, playwright; Remziya Suleyman, American Committee for Outreach; Keri Pisapia, actor; Maryanna Clarke, TWTP Founder and Artistic Director.