

Press Release

17 August 2016

The Woman is Present: WOMEN'S STORIES OF WWII

Re-imagined moments from the lives of women in WWII by Deirdre Kinahan,
Fiona Bawn Thompson, Mary Moynihan and Paul Kennedy

14, 15, 16 September, nightly 7.30pm



PLUS

Women War and Peace INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Speakers include Ruwanthie de Chickera, Sri Lanka and Senator Ivana Bacik, Ireland

16 September, 9.30am-5pm

Smashing Times Theatre Company presents

Performance of *The Woman is Present: Women's Stories of WWII*

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The Woman is Present: Women's Stories of WWII

The Woman is Present: Women's Stories of World War II, premieres at the Samuel Beckett Theatre, Trinity College, Dublin, on the 14, 15, 16 September 2016, nightly at 7.30pm. The performances are re-imagined moments from the lives of women in WWII, featuring the world premiere of *Ode to Ettie Steinberg* by internationally-acclaimed playwright Deirdre Kinahan and new Irish writing by Mary Moynihan, Fiona Bawn Thompson and Paul Kennedy recalling stories of bravery, sacrifice and love as powerful women stood up against Fascism and refused to accept oppression.

Women's stories that have inspired the performance include **Ettie Steinberg** (1914-1942) the only Irish-born Jewish person known to have been murdered in Auschwitz; **Mary Elmes** (1908-2002), a Cork woman who was the first Irish person honoured as 'Righteous Among Nations' for her work saving Jewish children from the Nazi gas chambers during World War II; **Margaret Skinnider** (1893-1971) a revolutionary feminist and maths teacher who came to Dublin from Scotland at the age of 23 to fight in the 1916 Easter Rising and who remained in Ireland and campaigned for women's rights in the trade union movement from the 1930s onwards; **Martha Hillers** from Germany who wrote her autobiography *Eine Frau in Berlin (A Woman in Berlin)* under the name 'Anonyma' (Anonymous), detailing her experiences of the last days of WWII as she and over one million other women were raped and abused by Allied soldiers of the Red Army; **Neus Català Pallejà** from Spain, a member of the United Socialist Party of Catalonia during the Spanish Civil War, an active collaborator with the French Resistance during WWII and the only living Spanish survivor of Ravensbrück, one of the largest concentration camps set up by the Nazis especially for women; **Maria Eugenia Jasińska** from Łódź in Poland who worked for the resistance and gave up her own life rather than 'name names'; and **Dolores Ibarurri** or **La Pasionaria** (1895-1989), from Spain, a revolutionary leader, political activist, Communist and crusader against Fascism during the Spanish Civil War and who created the famous cry 'They Shall Not Pass'.

Women War and Peace International Symposium

The **Women War and Peace International Symposium** features guest speakers, workshops, a film launch, reflection, discussion and debate and takes place at the Samuel Beckett Theatre, Trinity College, Dublin on Friday 16 September 2016 from 9.30am-5pm. The symposium brings artists and the general public together to create a remembrance of women's stories from World War II and to explore the power of the arts and the EU in promoting peace and gender equality today.

The international guest speaker is **Ruwanthie de Chickera**, Sri Lanka, an Eisenhower Fellow and leading playwright, currently working with the Sri Lankan government to develop an arts policy for the country. We are also delighted to have speaking **Senator Ivana Bacik**, LLB, LLM (Lond), BL, FTCD, the Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology at Trinity College Dublin. She is a qualified Barrister and a Senior Lecturer and Fellow of Trinity College Dublin (elected in 2005). Her grandfather Karel Bacik was in the Czech resistance and was imprisoned by the Nazis. After the war, he moved to Ireland with his young family, where they lived in Waterford.

A special occasion at the symposium is the launch of a short film *Tell Them Our Names* directed by Mary Moynihan, scripted by Paul Kennedy, Fiona Bawn Thompson and Mary Moynihan from a devising process with the cast including Raymond Keane, Fiona Bawn Thompson, Romana Testacecca, Margaret Toomey and Ella Brady. A Youth Symposium also takes place on Thursday 15 September from 1-4pm (invitation only).

Women War and Peace

These events are presented as part of **Women War and Peace**, an innovative year-long transnational project with four European partners from Ireland, Spain, Germany and Poland. The project uses creative processes of theatre and film to explore the role of women in Europe from 1916 to World War II to the present and the power of the EU in promoting peace and gender equality today. The project is co-funded by the **Europe for Citizens programme of the European Union** and the **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Reconciliation Fund** and the four European partners are:

- Smashing Times Theatre Company, Ireland, www.smashingtimes.ie
- Institute de Formacion Y Estudios Sociales (IFES), Valencia, Spain, www.ifes.es
- Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universitaet, Hannover, Germany, www.uni-hannover.de
- University of Humanities and Economics in Lodz, Poland, www.ahe.lodz.pl

Smashing Times are delighted to welcome the Drama Department, School of Drama, Film and Music, at the Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College as a partner for the **Women War and Peace** International Symposium and performance.



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Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade



University of Humanities
and Economics in Lodz

INSTITUTO DE FORMACIÓN
Y ESTUDIOS SOCIALES



Leibniz
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Listing:

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Samuel Beckett Theatre, Trinity College Dublin

Admission free to both events, booking essential as places limited.

Bookings: + 353 (0) 1 865 6613 or www.eventbrite.ie Info: www.smashingtimes.ie

Come and be inspired at the Samuel Beckett Theatre, Dublin and add your voice to the creation of multiple visions and possibilities for Europe and the world in 2016. All welcome.

Smashing Times Theatre Company Ltd

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