



*Experience the Unforgettable*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 28, 2014

Contact: In-Fin Tuan, 651.292.4323 x106  
pr@historytheatre.com

## **New play explores hard work, humor and heartbreak by first brave women breaking through stained glass ceiling**

SAINT PAUL, MN – History Theatre will produce the world premiere of a play by St. Paul, Minnesota-native Kristine Holmgren. ***God Girl*** tells Holmgren's story of being one of the first large classes of women accepted to the Master of Divinity program at an elite Ivy League seminary. In 1975, when the war in Vietnam was over and the women's liberation movement was in full swing, a bright, spirited Macalester graduate decided to change the world starting with her ordination to ministry.

This new play by Presbyterian pastor and former *Star Tribune* columnist reflects on the hard work, humor and heartbreak experienced by the brave women who dared to break through the stained glass ceiling within the protestant church. The play tells the stories of women who felt assaulted rather than nourished within the seminary walls. Physical attacks, humiliation, sexual harassment and inappropriate use of power are a few of the realities Holmgren and her classmates experienced and are portrayed in the play.

Holmgren and other female students at the time believed themselves to be on the front lines, challenging a system of theological education that saw no need to change and frequently pushed away people who insisted it should. Her new play explores the hard work, humor, and heartbreak experienced by the first brave women who dared smash the stained glass ceiling of protestantism.

"My story is one of perseverance, tenacity, outrageous hope and determination," Holmgren shared. "I had people in my life who told me that it was important and ... we knew we were making history. We knew we were changing things."

"I found Kristine's story to be dramatic and it struck a chord with me. It became clear that the women of the 21st Century and women of Kristine's "baby boomer" generation see gender issues quite differently. It is almost as if the "women's lib" movement of the '60s and '70s have been forgotten. As a result, I found myself totally engaged in bringing Kristine's story to the History Theatre stage," said History Theatre Artistic Director Ron Peluso.

Although Holmgren has retired from active ministry, she still feels she is making a difference through her plays. Her stories deal with people and circumstances and provoke thought.

"I hope to be having an impact. It's what my life is about. I went into the ministry to change the world. Everything I've done, I've done to try and inform myself on how to be a better person, how to make a difference wherever I am, and this playwriting has certainly been that way," she said.

***God Girl*** will premiere Saturday, February 7, 2015 as part of the 2014-15 season.

## **God Girl**

OPENS: Saturday, February 7, 2015  
CLOSES: Sunday, March 1, 2015  
PLAYING: Thurs, Fri, Sat. @ 8 p.m. | Sun. @ 2 p.m. | Thurs. @ 10 a.m. (Feb 12, 19)  
Complete performance schedule is included on page 4  
TICKETS: Tier 1 **\$38**; Tier 2 **\$34**; Tier 3 **\$30**  
Seniors (60+ years old) get \$2 off | Students (5 to 18 years old): **\$15**  
Discount rates are available for groups of 12 or more.

Audio Described and ASL interpreted performance on 2/22/15 at 2:00 p.m.

Performing at History Theatre, 30 East Tenth Street | St. Paul, MN 55101

History Theatre Box Office at 651.292.4323 or [www.historytheatre.com/tickets/](http://www.historytheatre.com/tickets/)

Promotional photos and photos are available upon request.  
Please email request to [pr@historytheatre.com](mailto:pr@historytheatre.com)

---

## **About the Play**

The war in Vietnam is over - the women's liberation movement is in full swing - and a bright, spirited 1975 Macalester graduate is determined to change the world. See what happens when she joins the first large group of audacious women seeking the Master of Divinity degree from an elite Ivy League seminary. Minnesota playwright Kristine Holmgren is a Presbyterian pastor and former *Star Tribune* columnist. Her new play explores the hard work, humor, and heartbreak experienced by the first brave women who dared smash the stained glass ceiling of protestantism.

---

## **About the Artists**

### **Kristine Holmgren**

#### PLAYWRIGHT

For over a decade, Kristine Holmgren's thoughtful political commentary was featured on the editorial pages of the *Star Tribune*. And ordained Presbyterian pastor, Holmgren's social commentary has appeared in the *Guardian*, *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Boston Globe*, *Baltimore Sun*, and *Los Angeles Times* and other magazines and periodicals. Her short stories are anthologized in *The Magic of Christmas Miracles*, published by William and Morrow Press and her life outlined in *In the Company of Women*; published by Minnesota Historical Society Press. She is a frequent commentator to National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. Holmgren's plays include "Paper Daddy" (Northfield Arts Guild, 2011, Talking Horse Theatre, Columbia MO 2014), "Sweet Truth" (Berlin Theatre, Columbia, MO, 2013). "God Girl" is her first autobiographical play. Holmgren is currently under commission by the Minnesota Historical Society to write *The Giving House*, a play based on the exhibit "Open House" and slated for 2015 production. As a single mother, Kristine raised two successful, adult daughters. She lives in a Como Park cottage in St. Paul with two progressive Scottish Terriers where she reads the Sunday funnies to the neighborhood kids.

### **Ron Peluso<sup>\*†</sup>**

#### DIRECTOR

Now in his 20th season as Artistic Director, Ron has commissioned over 60 playwrights and composers and produced more than 50 original works, including the popular *Sisters of Swing* and *Beyond the Rainbow*. He has also commissioned and directed Jeffrey Hatcher's critically acclaimed scripts *A Piece of the Rope* and *Tyrone & Ralph*. He commissioned *The Incredible Season...* from Eric Simonson after directing his Broadway-hit play *Lombardi* in 2012. He has directed over 150 professional productions with such companies as Florida Stage, Riverside Theatre, Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre, Old Creamery Theatre, and the Minnesota Opera. Ron holds an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Minnesota.

continued

## Special Events

### Afterthoughts

Sundays at 4:15 p.m.

Patrons are invited to stay for a lively post-show discussion following every Sunday matinee featuring artists and special guests talking about topics related to the production

*FREE to ticketed patrons*

### 2/8: Family & Marriage

- Kristine Holmgren, Playwright
- Emily Barker, Ecofeminist
- Adam Arnold, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

### 2/15: Pay Equality

- Aviva Breen, Chair, Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights
- Patty Tanji, Pay Strategist and Equal Pay Advocate

### 2/22: Women's Equality

- Nina Rothchild, Founder of Minnesota Women's Consortium and First Executive Director of the Council on the Economic Status of Women
- Jen Thissen, University of Minnesota

### 3/1: Women in Ministry

- Gretchen Colby Rode, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries
- Dr. Cathy Myers Wirt, Regional Minister of Disciples of Christ

**Complete performance schedule is included on page 4**

---

## About History Theatre

Since 1978, the History Theatre Experience has created:

- Inspiration. The History Theater Experience brings real stories about real people to the stage in an immediate experience that touches our lives.
- 116 world premiere performances, more than any other theater in the Twin Cities. The History Theatre is one of the country's most impressive new play development homes – bringing to full production new work by Jeffrey Hatcher, Melanie Marnich, Craig Wright, Kim Hines, Dorie Baizley, John Olive, Kira Obolensky, and more.
- Brave, entertaining explorations of all the histories that make up our diverse community. From *Farm Boys* to *Snapshots: Life in the City*, from the celebratory *Wellstone!* to the dark, complex *Piece of the Rope* about Minnesota's first public execution, HT has moved Minnesotans to rediscover, relive, and respect every piece of their history. More than 200,000 students have connected with history through performances at HT.

## ACCESSIBILITY

History Theatre is equipped with an FM hearing enhancement system. We offer ASL interpreted and Audio Described performances. We have complimentary wheelchairs for those patrons who need extra assistance into the building. The handicap-accessible entrance is on Cedar St. Just inside the entrance is an elevator that will take patrons to the theatre level. Patrons are asked to indicate any special needs that when ordering tickets.

continued

# History Theatre

## **God Girl**

### Performance Schedule, 2015

Thursday, February 5	<i>Preview (Pay What You Can)</i>	8:00 p.m.
Friday, February 6	<i>Preview</i>	8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 7	<i>Opening</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 8	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m.
		4:15 p.m.
Thursday, February 12		10:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.
Friday, February 13		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 14		8:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 15	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m.
		4:15 p.m.
Thursday, February 19		10:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.
Friday, February 20		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 21		8:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 22	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m. ASL/AD
		4:15 p.m.
Thursday, February 26		10:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.
Friday, February 27		8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 28		8:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 1	<b><i>Afterthoughts</i></b>	2:00 p.m.
		4:15 p.m.

AD/ASL = Audio Description & American Sign Language interpreted performance