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**History Theatre explores American soldiers' experiences
in two shows running in rep**

Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*

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Lonely Soldiers: Women at War in Iraq

March 15 – April 6, 2014

SAINT PAUL, MN – History Theatre's March repertoire will put two plays on stage which each explore the experiences of soldiers during and after two of America's most recent wars. *The Things They Carried* by Worthington native Tim O'Brien in the award winning novel about the Vietnam War seen through the eyes of an American soldier. It is being adapted for the stage by local storyteller Jim Stowell and performed as a one-man show by Stephen D'Ambrose, directed by Leah Cooper.

The role of women in America's military and their treatment both on the battlefield and in the barracks has been growing and coming under more public scrutiny through the media, congressional hearings, political debates, and talk-shows. Helen Benedict, author of *Lonely Soldiers: Women at War in Iraq*, interviewed and compiled the stories of eight women soldiers who had served on the frontlines during the early years of the Iraq War. Benedict has adapted her book for the stage in a powerful and poignant play that will receive its regional premiere at History Theatre under the direction of Austene Van.

The two plays will be performed on an alternating schedule using a shared set designed for quick change over. Both productions share an artistic team made up of scenic designer by Sarah Brandner, lighting designer Wu Chen Khoo, sound designer Martin Guinup, and costume designer Annie Cady.

	<u>Tim O'Brien's <i>The Things They Carried</i></u>	<u><i>Lonely Soldiers: Women at War in Iraq</i></u>
OPENS:	Saturday, March 15 at 8:00 p.m.	Sunday, March 16 at 2:00 p.m.
CLOSES:	Sunday, April 6 at 2:00 p.m.	Sunday, April 6 at 7:00 p.m.
PLAYING:	Tues - Sat. @ 8 p.m. Sat. & Sun. @ 2 p.m. Sun. @ 7 p.m.	
	Complete rep performance schedule is included on page 2	
TICKETS:	Tier 1 \$40 ; Tier 2 \$36 ; Tier 3 \$32	
	Seniors (60+ years old) get \$2 off Students: \$15	
	Discount rates are available for groups of 12 or more.	

Content warning: Both shows include descriptions of violent events, sexual harassment, and abuse; they are recommended for ages 16 and up.

Audio Described and ASL interpreted performance of ***The Things They Carried*** on Sunday, March 23 at 2:00 p.m. and ***Lonely Soldiers*** on Saturday, March 29 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/

Production photos will be available at www.historytheatre.com/about/press after March 14, 2014.

continued

About the Authors

HELEN BENEDICT

AUTHOR – *THE LONELY SOLDIER: THE PRIVATE WAR OF WOMEN SERVING IN IRAQ*

PLAYWRIGHT– *LONELY SOLDIERS: WOMEN AT WAR IN IRAQ*

Helen Benedict [www.helenbenedict.com] was born in London, England, to Anthropologist parents that informed her journalism and novels. She grew up in London and California. She attended University in England and the U.S. In 1981, she moved to New York to be a freelance writer. Helen is a professor of journalism at Columbia University and the author of six novels and five nonfiction books. In 2011, she published the novel *Sand Queen* (Soho Press), about two women fighting on opposite sides of the Iraq War. She published the nonfiction book on which this play is based, *The Lonely Soldier: The Private War of Women Serving in Iraq*, in 2009.

Benedict has testified twice to Congress on behalf of women soldiers. Her work on women soldiers inspired a class action lawsuit in 2011 against the Pentagon and U.S. Secretaries of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates on behalf of members of the military who were sexually assaulted while serving. Her work has also inspired several documentaries and many television programs and articles for the international press, including the award-winning 2012 documentary film, *The Invisible War*. (See above.)

Her writings on the Iraq War have won for Benedict the Exceptional Merit in Media Award from the National Women's Caucus, the Ken Book Award from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Award. Her novels have received citations for Best Book of the Year from the Los Angeles Times and the Chicago and New York public libraries.

Benedict's essays and book reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *The Washington Post*, *Salon*, *The Huffington Post*, *Ms. Magazine*, *In These Times*, PBS, The Women's Review of Books, *The Daily Beast*, and elsewhere.

TIM O'BRIEN

AUTHOR – *THE THINGS THEY CARRIED*

Tim O'Brien was born in Austin, Minnesota and spent his childhood in Worthington, Minn. He was drafted for military service in 1968, two weeks after completing his undergraduate degree in Government and Politics at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. He served a 13-month tour as a regular foot soldier and radio telephone operator. He was wounded twice while in service, and ultimately rose to the rank of Sergeant.

After returning from his tour in March 1970, he resumed his schooling and began graduate work in government and political science at Harvard University. After Harvard, he went to work briefly for *The Washington Post* as a national affairs reporter before his attention was fully devoted to writing. He began and continues to publish regularly in various periodicals, including *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Esquire*, and *Playboy*, frequently excerpting parts of his novels as autonomous short stories.

O'Brien's first published work was a war memoir and account of his year as a "grunt" in Vietnam, *If I Die in a Combat Zone: Box Me Up and Ship Me Home* (1973). He followed up his autobiographical account with a debut novel entitled *Northern Lights* (1975). *Going After Cacciato* (1978) brought O'Brien to wider public acclaim and earned him the 1979 National Book Award in fiction.

In 1987 O'Brien's short story, "The Things They Carried," the first vignette in the later novel of the same name, was first published in *Esquire*, and it received the 1987 National Magazine Award in Fiction. The short story was also selected for the 1987 "Best American Short Stories" volume and for inclusion in the *Best American Short Stories of the 1980s*.

O'Brien published *The Things They Carried* in 1990 and it won the 1990 Chicago Tribune Heartland Award in fiction. The novel was selected by *The New York Times* as one of the year's ten best novels and was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize. In 1991, O'Brien was awarded the Melcher Award for *The Things They Carried* and won France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger in 1992.

The follow-up novel, *In the Lake of the Woods*, published in 1994, won the James Fenimore Cooper Prize from the Society of American Historians and was selected as the best novel of 1994 by *Time* magazine.

O'Brien has received awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, the National Book Award, James Fenimore Cooper Prize, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Most recently, he was awarded the Pritzker Military Library Literature Award in June of 2013. He has been elected to both the Society of American Historians and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

O'Brien currently holds the University Endowed Chair in Creative Writing at Texas State University. He lives with his wife and children in Austin, Texas.

JIM STOWELL

PLAYWRIGHT – *THE THINGS THEY CARRIED*

Jim is a co-founder of the Minnesota Ensemble Theater and the Palace Theater. He has written and directed eleven full-cast plays and written and performed eleven one-man plays. At History Theatre Jim has performed his one-man shows *Cuba Si*, *Joe*, and *Three Rivers Meeting*. His work has been performed at the Guthrie, and in New York City, Chicago, Atlanta, Houston, the back room of a bar, a barn, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Brazil. In 2011 he was a Featured Teller at The National Storytelling Festival. Jim has spent the last eleven summers living on an island, in a lighthouse, working as a Park Ranger for the National Park Service.

About the Artistic Teams

Leah Cooper*

DIRECTOR – *THE THINGS THEY CARRIED*

Leah Cooper has been directing, producing, and managing in theater for 30 years. Locally, she has directed productions for Workhaus Collective, Commonweal, Park Square, Mixed Blood, Theatre in the Round, Gremlin Theater, 20% Theatre, Shakespearean Youth Theatre, Starting Gate, Ministry of Cultural Warfare, Prufrock Theatre, Fortune's Fool Productions, Fringe Festival, and many workshops of new scripts. Leah is Co-Artistic Director of Wonderlust Productions, an ensemble creating new works driven by community stories and participation (most recently the *Veterans Play Project*). She is also the Executive Director of the Minnesota Theater Alliance, and partner and co-founder of MinnesotaPlaylist.com.

Austene Van*

DIRECTOR – *LONELY SOLDIERS*

Austene Van is a company member of Penumbra Theatre where her credits include *Spunk*, *Amen Corner*, *Blue*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, and *Dinah Was*. Austene has recently performed the title role in *AIDA* at the Pantages with Theater Latte Da, Blanche Dubois in *A Street Car Named Desire* with Ten Thousand Things, *In the Next Room* at the Jungle Theatre; and *Gem of the Ocean*, *Crowns* and *A Christmas Carol* at Guthrie Theater. Recent directing credits include *Six Degrees of Separation* at TRP, *Hot Chocolate*, *Gee's Bend*, and *Lady Day* at Park Square; *A Civil War Christmas* at History Theatre; *Blues in the Night* at Ordway; and *Black Nativity* at Penumbra. She is the Artistic Director of New Dawn Theatre Productions.

Sarah Brandner

SCENIC DESIGNER

Sarah Brandner is currently finishing her MFA at the U of MN in scenic and lighting design. Recently she designed for *Six Degrees of Separation* at TRP, *Joan: Voices in the Fire* at the U of MN, *Little Dickens* in conjunction with the Moving Company, *Something About A Bear* in conjunction with Theatre Novi Most, and *Fuddy Meers* and *Cul de Sac* with Loudmouth Collective. She also assisted on *Born Yesterday* at the Guthrie, *Aida* with Theatre Latte Da, *The Threepenny Opera* with the Resident Ensemble Players at the University of Delaware, and *Così fan Tutte* with Boston Lyric Opera.

Wu Chen Khoo

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Khoo Wu Chen is a professional freelance Lighting Designer and Technical Director based in Minneapolis/St. Paul. He has frequently worked with Mixed Blood Theater, Stages Theater, Theatre De La Jeune Lune, Mu Performing Arts, SteppingStone Theater, Bloomington Civic Theater, Jon Ferguson Theatre, Ballet of the Dolls, Workhaus Collective among others. Previously for History Theatre he has designed *A Servants' Christmas*, *A Tale of Twin Cities*, and *As American as Curry Pie*. He also collaborating with Bedlam Theater as part of a training program for technical and design skills in the arts. He shares his life with his wife Kristin and his cat Badger.

Annie Cady

COSTUME DESIGNER

Annie Cady is a freelance Costume Designer and Technician. This is her first design for History Theatre. She has designed costumes for several theatre and dance companies including Black Label Movement, Commonweal Theatre, The Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company, Normandale Theatre, Park Square Theatre, Ten Thousand Things, The University of Minnesota Centennial Showboat, Threads Dance Project, Workhaus Collective, Yellow Tree Theatre, and Zenon Dance Company. Annie holds an MFA from the U of MN in Theatre Design and Technology.

Martin Gwinup

SOUND DESIGNER

Martin Gwinup is an associate professor in the Theatre Arts and Dance department at the U of MN, Twin Cities. He teaches Audio and Video Design and Production. He has also worked in the Twin Cities area as a freelance Sound/Video designer and technician for the past 24 years. He has worked with the Oregon Shakespeare, Palm Beach Opera, Arizona Theatre Company, Penumbra, Frank Theatre, History Theatre, Children's Theatre Company, Cricket Theatre, Ordway Center, Trinity Repertory, Round House, and Eye of the Storm.

Gabriel Gomez

PROPERTIES DESIGNER

Gabriel Gomez is a scenic and properties designer new to the Twin Cities. He recently completed an MFA in scenic design from the University of South Dakota, and is excited to be designing for History Theatre.

Special Events

~~CANCELLED **WOMEN IN WAR WORKSHOP: HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA**~~

~~Curated by World Without Genocide, William Mitchell College of Law~~

~~Saturday, Mar. 22 at 10:30 a.m.~~

~~This workshop will address the increase in women's military sexual trauma, prosecution of perpetrators, services available to women coping with these issues, the role of international humanitarian law in protecting women, and efforts by the United Nations to meet women's needs during and after conflict.~~

~~Speakers and Topics:~~

~~"Sexual Harassment in the Military (Military Sexual Trauma) – Legal Issues"~~

~~– Cheryl Thomas, J.D. of The Advocates for Human Rights~~

~~"PTSD – Challenges in Providing Medical Care for Women Soldiers"~~

~~– Dr. Linda Van Egeren, Ph.D., Veterans' Administration Hospital~~

~~"Women, War, and International Humanitarian Law"~~

~~– Professor Anthony Winer, J.D., William Mitchell College of Law~~

~~"UN Security Council Resolution 1325, consideration of the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction"~~

~~– Senator Sandy Pappas, President, Minnesota Senate~~

~~**\$40 General Public / \$5 William Mitchell Students / \$80 with 2.5 Standard CLE credits**~~

~~Price includes lunch and a ticket to the 2 p.m. performance of **Lonely Soldiers: Women at War in Iraq**~~

Afterthoughts

Sundays following the 2:00 p.m. performances

Patrons are invited to stay for a lively post-show discussion following every Sunday matinee.

March 16, at 3:30 p.m. – Award-winning author Helen Benedict will discuss her work researching sexual assault in the military, the books and articles she has published (including *The Lonely Soldier: The Private War of Women Serving in Iraq*, the book on which the play is based), and the two times she has testified in front of Congress. Book signing will follow in the lobby.

March 23 at 4:00 p.m. – Playwright Jim Stowell and performer Stephen D'Ambrose will discuss adapting Tim O'Brien's award-winning book, *The Things They Carried*, for the stage as a one-man show.

March 30 at 3:30 p.m. – The cast of *Lonely Soldiers* will be joined by real women veterans of the Iraq War.

April 6 at 4:00 p.m. – A panel discussion on post-traumatic stress disorder with experts including a therapist specializing in veterans' issues, a peer support advocate, and Vietnam War veterans.

FREE to ticketed patrons

Complete performance schedule is included on page 6

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.
- 111 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.

History Theatre

Performance Schedule, 2014

Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*

Fri, March 14		10:00 a.m.
	<i>Preview</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sat, March 15	<i>Opening</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sun, March 16		7:00 p.m.
Tues, March 18		8:00 p.m.
Wed, March 19		10:00 a.m.
Thurs, March 20		10:00 a.m.
Fri, March 21		8:00 p.m.
Sun, March 23		2:00 p.m. ASL/AD
	<i>Afterthoughts</i>	4:00 p.m.
Wed, March 26		10:00 a.m.
		8:00 p.m.
Thurs, March 27		8:00 p.m.
Fri, March 28		10:00 a.m.
Sat, March 29		8:00 p.m.
Sun, March 30		7:00 p.m.
Thurs, April 3		10:00 a.m.
		8:00 p.m.
Sat, April 5		2:00 p.m.
Sun, April 6		2:00 p.m.
	<i>Afterthoughts</i>	4:00 p.m.

Lonely Soldiers: Women at War in Iraq

Wed, March 12	<i>Preview</i>	10:00 a.m.
Thurs, March 13		10:00 a.m.
	<i>Preview</i>	8:00 p.m.
Sun, March 16		2:00 p.m.
	<i>Afterthoughts</i>	3:30 p.m.
Wed, March 19		8:00 p.m.
Thurs, March 20		8:00 p.m.
Sat, March 22	<i>Women in War</i> <i>Workshop</i>	10:30 a.m. 2:00 p.m.
		8:00 p.m.
Sun, March 23		7:00 p.m.
Thurs, March 27		10:00 a.m.
Fri, March 28		8:00 p.m.
Sat, March 29		2:00 p.m. ASL/AD
Sun, March 30		2:00 p.m.
	<i>Afterthoughts</i>	3:30 p.m.
Fri, April 4		8:00 p.m.
Sat, April 5		8:00 p.m.
Sun, April 6		7:00 p.m.

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