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**September 11, 2019** – National Players, America’s longest-running touring theatre company, will perform *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett (Wendy Kesselman adaptation), a stage adaptation of the book *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank, at \*VENUE\* on **DAY OF WK, MONTH DAY at 0:00 AM/PM**. Admission is \$XX. National Players is the professional touring troupe and signature outreach program of Olney Theatre Center in Olney, Maryland.

National Players is an **entirely self-contained and self-sustaining tour**, meaning that the ensemble members who act in the plays also serve as the tour’s stagehands, electricians, truck drivers, wardrobe crew, and much more. It is an ensemble of true “theatre-makers” in the fullest sense of the word.

In 1942 Amsterdam, 13-year-old Anne Frank goes into hiding with her family from the Nazis. For the next two years, she never leaves the attic where her family is concealed. With fear of discovery ever present, Anne finds solace writing in her diary, capturing the daily lives of the secret annex’s inhabitants—from the horrors of war to the excitement of first love—with wit, determination, and idealism.

With a multicultural cast, National Players brings the true story of this incredibly insightful young girl that is often read in school to the stage in hopes of inspiring the next generation to stand up for justice rather than sit back in apathy.

Says **director Raymond O. Caldwell**, “*The Diary of Anne Frank* continues to hold relevance years after its discovery and publication. Perhaps that relevance is tied to the universal themes of family, fear, love, and loss that Anne Frank poignantly articulates throughout her diary. Perhaps its relevance is tied to the paucity of first person narratives that account and document the horrors of the Holocaust. But I believe the most fundamental reason for the diary’s relevance, the power of it being an agent of inspiration and change, is rooted in one core facet: Anne’s age. Throughout the world, the voices and ideas of young people are often shunned, discouraged, or silenced. Anne Frank unknowingly through her diary awakens the idealism, hope, and love that are intrinsically tied to youth culture. Through this production it is my hope that a new generation of young people of every race and religion are inspired by Anne’s strength, courage, and resilience. I hope young people are inspired to confront the innumerable injustices of their world, and to see themselves as active agents of change. But above all else, I hope young people are inspired to write their stories because as Anne wrote: “how wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

Raymond O. Caldwell was appointed Producing Artistic Director of Theater Alliance in January 2019. In 2009, he was the recipient of the Arena Stage Allen Lee Hughes Fellowship, after which he joined Arena's staff for six consecutive seasons. A DC-based director, his recent DC credits include *Everybody Black* (Kennedy Center) *Notes on Notes of A Native Son* (Mosaic Theater Company), *The Frederick Douglass Project* (Solas Nua - 2019 Helen Hayes Award recipient for Outstanding Ensemble). Raymond has toured nationally and internationally as a performer and directed/developed work throughout the United States, India, Ukraine, Greece, Germany, and the UK.

Says **Tiffany Quinn**, choreographer: "I am completely fascinated by the process and talent of the National Players Tour. Their ability to multitask being on stage while working technical elements not only amazing, but makes them extremely marketable and well versed. This type of work ethic made my process quite enjoyable -- the actors were able to problem solve within the choreography as well as collaborate. Their passion and humility is commendable specifically in honoring the story of Anne Frank. I am most appreciative of the diversity with the players as it allows these stories to be seen from a human perspective."

**Miranda Pepin** plays the role of Anne Frank, with **Faith Ore** and **Anna Shafer** playing Otto and Edith Frank, respectively, and **Saira Grewal** playing Anne's sister, Margot Frank. **Lisa Danielle Buch** and **John J. Yazzo** play Mrs. and Mr. van Daan, with **Cedrick L. Riggs, Jr.** as their son, Peter van Daan. **Emma Stern** plays the heroic Miep Gies, and **Matt Merline** plays Mr. Kraler - the friends who risked their lives by helping the Van Dannels and the Franks go into hiding. **Merline** also plays Mr. Dussel, a Jewish dentist who also joins the families in the secret annex. **Liz Monasky** is the stage manager for the tour.

**Patti Kalil** is the set designer, with costumes designed by **Jen Gillette**. **Sarah Tundermann** designs lights for the traveling troupe and **Justin Schmitz** is the sound designer.

## **ABOUT NATIONAL PLAYERS**

Established in 1949 and based at Olney Theatre Center since 1952, National Players is America's longest-running touring company. Founded on the principle of prioritizing areas with limited access to theatre, National Players company consists of 10 early-career theatre artists who spend 10 months touring the United States with their three-play repertory to a variety of diverse populations and venues from performing arts centers, universities, but also public schools, rural community centers, and penitentiaries. National Players also acts as an educational ambassador, teaching theatre-related courses to students of all ages and backgrounds. Though it travels thousands of miles and serves tens of thousands of people each year, National Players always comes home to Olney, Maryland. Learn more at: [nationalplayers.org](http://nationalplayers.org)

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## **ABOUT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER**

### **Mission**

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts produces, presents and tours extraordinary performances for a diversity of audiences, and educates and inspires the next generation of theater-makers.

### **Vision**

We strive every day to unleash the creative potential of our artists and audiences, and in so doing, become a nationally-prominent destination for the most impactful theater performance and education.

### **History**

Once a summer stock retreat in rural Maryland, Olney Theatre Center is now an award-winning, year-round regional theatre surrounded in a 15-mile radius by 1.6 million people representing three of the most ethnically diverse counties in America. Since our founding in 1938, some of the biggest names in theatre have appeared on our stages: from "Golden Era" stars like Helen Hayes and Tallulah Bankhead to contemporary artists like Sir Ian McKellen, Robin De Jesús, and many others. OTC welcomed Artistic Director Jason Loewith and Managing Director Debbie Ellinghaus in 2013 and 2014, respectively, who established a new artistic strategy to broaden programming with the goal of nurturing a diversity of voices and audiences. Olney Theatre Center now produces musicals and plays under the three rubrics of Classic, Contemporary and Family programming. Since 2013 Olney Theatre Center has twice won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production, the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play and presented six world premieres. Complementing this work, OTC fulfills its mission as a teaching theater with educational programs like the Our Play program in local 5th grade classrooms, a summer camp and a year-round professional apprentice program. National Players, now in its 70th Season, is the hallmark outreach program of OTC, a unique ensemble touring innovative theater to communities large and small across the United States.

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