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NCTC 15-16 SEASON LAUNCHES WITH U.S. PREMIERE OF *FOR THE LOVE OF COMRADES*

Hit play from Northern Ireland uncovers the unlikely alliance between striking Welsh miners and LGBT community Thatcher's Britain

San Francisco, CA (July 17, 2015) — In September, New Conservatory Theatre Center opens its 2015-16 Season with the U.S. Premiere of *For the Love of Comrades*, the impassioned, gritty and inspiring new play by **Micheál Kerrigan**, with script development by **Patricia Byrne** and **Mary Connors**. After a rapturous reception upon its Northern Ireland premiere in 2013 and subsequent U.K. tour on the 30th anniversary of the strike, the play uncovers the largely unknown but fascinating alliance between Welsh miners and the lesbian and gay community during the 1984 British Miner's Strike, what would become the Lesbian and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) campaign. (The captivating true events also inspired the 2014 film, *Pride*.) Kerrigan wrote his debut play from his own experiences as an Irish gay activist and a member of the LGSM Group, along with extensive archival research.

For the Love of Comrades runs **September 4 – October 11, 2015. Opening Night is Saturday, September 12, 2015 at 8pm.** Tickets are \$25–45 and available at nctcsf.org or by calling (415) 861-8972.

"This is an untold story", says Kerrigan, "Everyone remembers the strikes but few people knew of the gay community's support for the miners. The play also looks at the parallels of the Northern Ireland situation, the miners' strike and the struggle for gay rights."

For the Love of Comrades was hailed by critics and embraced by central figures of the LGSM movement and those who lived through the historic events.

Mike Jackson, co-founder of LGSM proclaimed *For the Love of Comrades* a "masterpiece," hailing its embrace of "so much important detail, so much historical truth, the pain and the joys."

"A sensitive and gritty dialogue," raves Belfast Telegraph.

Playwright Micheál Kerrigan is a long-standing gay activist who was a member of the LGSM Group in the 1980s. With script development by Patricia Byrne and Mary Connors, Kerrigan was able to translate his life experiences into his first professional play. His extensive work as an activist includes organising the first ever Gay Pride March in Ireland in Dublin in 1973 and in 1993, the first Gay Pride Festival in Derry~Londonderry, where he currently lives.

Script Developer Patricia Byrne is a writer, performer and Artistic Director of Sole Purpose Productions. She has written six plays for Sole Purpose, including *Don't Say A Word* which has been touring extensively throughout Ireland since 2004. It was staged at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2008 and was nominated for an Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award. Other performance work includes *The Peace Process Trilogy* and *The Recruiting Office* by Dave Duggan. She has a BA Hons in Theatre and Media Studies and an MA in Film and Television Management and Policy from the University of Ulster.

Director Jeffrey Hoffman helmed Bay Area productions of *How the Horn Ended You* for Bindlestiff, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* for Boxcar Theatre, *Cat's-Paw* for Dragon Productions, *History of the Devil* for Ragged Wing Ensemble, and *Cloud 9* and *Walking the Dead* for Theatre Q. Hoffman was a participant in Theatre Bay Area's inaugural ATLAS for Directors program. Hoffman's extensive acting experience includes many appearance at NCTC, including last season's *Compleat Female Stage Beauty*.

The cast of features **Miles Duffield, Stephen McFarland, Shane Fahy, Paul Rodriques, Alyssa Stone** and **Adam Odsess-Rubin**.

The creative team of *For the Love of Comrades* includes scenic design by **Devin Kasper**, costume design by **Corrida Carr**, lighting & projection design by **Christian Mejia**, prop design by **Adeline Smith**, dialect coaching by **Particia Reynoso**.

New Conservatory Theatre Center is San Francisco's premier LGBTQIA and allied performing arts institution and progressive arts education conservatory since 1981. NCTC is renowned for its diverse range of **innovative, high quality productions**, touring productions and shows for young audiences; its foundational **anti-bullying** work with youth and educators through **YouthAware**; and its commitment to nurturing **emerging artists** and playwrights to expand the canon of queer and allied dramatic work.

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For the Love of Comrades

FACT SHEET

WHO: by Micheál Kerrigan

Script development by **Patricia Byrne & Mary Connors**

Directed by **Jeffrey Hoffman**

Scenic Design by **Devin Kasper**

Costume Design by **Corrida Carr**

Lighting & Projection Design by **Christian V. Mejia**

Featuring **Miles Duffield, Stephen McFarland, Shane Fahy, Paul Rodrigues, Alyssa Stone, and Adam Odsess-Rubin.**

WHAT: The U.S. premiere of *For the Love of Comrades*

WHERE: New Conservatory Theatre Center

Walker Theater, 25 Van Ness Ave @Market, San Francisco, CA 94102

WHEN: September 4 – October 11

Wednesday – Saturdays at 8pm, Sundays at 2pm

Opening Night: Saturday, September 12

COST: \$25-45

TICKETS AND BOX OFFICE: [415-861-8972](tel:415-861-8972), boxoffice@nctcsf.org

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