“Letters Home” is a powerful, important piece—a truly, fair-minded, thoughtful piece.  

Angela Murray Boyer, Director of Education and Community Programs Coordinator, Westport Country Playhouse

“It is always challenging to find high quality, relevant theatre to present to Middle and High school audiences. We were so pleased to offer Letters Home this season. A gripping performance that engaged the students and provided many opportunities for pre-show and post-show discussion, both in the classroom and at home.”

- Joanna Ferraro-Levy, Arts Education Program Director, West Hampton Beach Performing Arts Center, New York

Letters Home was one of the most memorable plays that we presented as part of our Advanced Performance program. Students, teachers, members of our Board of Directors, City of Cerritos Council Members, as well as our military guests, appreciated the accurate portrayal of the human condition that results from war. Griffin Theatre Company provided hundreds of young people the opportunity to discover their understanding of the world's experiences. Following the performance many students became involved in the effort to support our troops by collecting needed supplies that they sent to Iraq. Others wrote letters and cards.

- Helene Trudol, Director of Education, Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, Cerritos, California

MISSION

The mission of the Griffin Theatre Company is to commission, commission and mount meaningful theatrical experiences for both children and adults by bringing to life a wide range of plays and musicals—produced by literary adaptations, original works and classics plays that challenge and inspire, with wit, style and compassion for the audience. The company is supported by an ensemble of artists in residence with a range of disciplines include acting, designing, directing and production.

HISTORY

The Griffin Theatre Company originated in Cerritos' Legato Square neighborhood in a factory loft in 1992. In 1994, the Griffin relocated to the Logan Square neighborhood of Chicago and renovated the historic Calo Theatre. In 2011 the Griffin purchased an abandoned police station from the city of Chicago to renovate into a permanent home. The Griffin Arts Center into theatre arts complex will open in the summer of 2015.

Over the last twenty years the Griffin has provided a wide range of work including adaptations, original works and promotions of selected scripts. Notably, televised productions of Shakespeare and original adaptations of novel-like theatre of the Griffin’s play productions have appeared on Chicago one-studio. “Best of the New” seasons. These productions included, Zion and the Canyon Angel, Spring and Fall, Popular Singing, oh, Come Play. (independently), Sight See the show, Standing, The Act of Iron, Women and Hitler, The comparatively, Be More Chill, Living with Epic, Independence, letters Home and next year, Paul Reed and the Tony Award-winning musical, Spring Awakening. The Griffin is the recipient of 40 Joseph Jefferson Award nominations for theatre excellence in Chicago and numerous other awards and citations for its work.

Children’s programming at the Griffin brings young people original productions of award-winning children's literature. Productions have included the world premieres of The Whipping Boy, Grumpy Old Friends, Catherine Called Birdy, Bones and Jules are alive and Will and Living in Maple Bend. There are over the Grill’s Batumse and the North—Theater and on the First—amped Blues. The Griffin’s national touring company brings its two most popular productions—The Oddly Chosen Alice & Other Other Popular Tales and Freaks to young people throughout the United States. Schools and theaters have included the prestigious venues at Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, State Theatre, the Griffin Theatre Company in West Palm Beach, Florida, Tennessee Performing Arts Center in Nashville, and the Video Performing Arts Center in Miami. Be More Chill, Letters Home and the Griffin Theatre have had the pleasure to perform in touring productions for over 100,000 young people and adult nationals.

TOURING PRODUCTION

The Griffin Theatre had the pleasure to perform its touring productions—The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales, Frindle, Catherine Called Birdy, Romeo and Juliet are Alive and Well and Living in Maple Bend, There’s a Boy in the Girls’ Bathroom, Ugly, Frindle, Catherine Called Birdy, Romeo and Juliet are Alive and Well and Living in Maple Bend, There is a Boy in the Girls’ Bathroom, Ugly, Frindle, Catherine Called Birdy, Romeo and Juliet are Alive and Well and Living in Maple Bend, There’s a Boy in the Girls’ Bathroom. (773) 769-2228 griffintheatre.com

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“Extraordinary. Deeply Moving. The emotional impact of this 90-minute journey is profound”

- Chicago Sun Times

LETTERS HOME

Inspired by the New York Times article, “The Things They Wrote” and the HBO Documentary Letters Home

Adapted by William Maul sia
“Letters Home was the most compelling, patriotic and moving production we have ever presented. As a proud American, I would say that Letters Home is a tribute to our nation, our military, our soldiers and their families that every American should see. Letters Home is a small, intimate and sad look at life for the brave men and women who are risking everything to defend our freedoms.”

- Alan Jenkins, Founder, Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center, Huntsville, Alabama

“A piece of theater that illuminates the humanity behind the Iraq & Afghanistan wars. Letters Home eloquently presents a powerful and continuing look at the people we care about. It is important regardless to where your position is about the war to understand the experience of those serving and the love they risk. It’s all too easy to take a position to say that the war is good or bad. Letters Home is written with and performed with such honesty and emotion it makes taking sides irrelevant. Our audiences were captivated and emotionally moved, leaving the theater with a better understanding and compassion on this complex situation.”

- Tim Sauro, Director of Education and Community Engagement, Quantum Center for the Performing Arts, Madison, Wisconsin

“With our proximity to Fort Drum, more than half of our students have a parent who has been deployed. As the audience at Letters Home witnessed our students who are the beneficiaries, relatives, and complex emotions inherent with military deployment it was important to us seeing. Servicemen and women of one of the most noble of undertakings, and we are proud to support our families for which these students that the celebrations, sacrifices, and complex emotions inherent with parent who has been deployed. Experiences such as moved, leaving the theater with a better understanding and compassion on this complex situation.”

- Letters Home

Letters Home puts the wars in Afghanistan & Iraq front and center by bringing to life the actual letters written by soldiers serving in the Mideast. The production is inspired by the New York Times Op-Ed Article “The Things They Write” and the subsequent HBO documentary and Letters Home, and additionally was inspired by the interviews, monologues, and correspondences from Frank Schaeffer’s books, Stories From the Front, Letters Home from American Military Family Earth of One, Sen, and Keeping Faith. The play without polemics gives audience a powerful portrait of the soldier’s experience in our current war. The initial production was critically acclaimed and was nominated for a Joseph Jefferson Award for “Outstanding New Play.”

Although the role of the play implies that all the letters are from soldiers, the piece includes a small number of correspondences from parents – their words, being no less important. These letters were written under the most difficult of circumstances, the disorientation of training, deployment, separation from family and loved ones and combat, and occupation duties in Afghanistan and Iraq. One theme seems to units their driven writers: the belief that the person reading beside you is more important than you are. They also help define for the audience—patriotism and what it means to serve our country today, through acts of bravery, compassion, sacrifice, empathy and brotherhood. Collectively the production gives voice to the brave men and women who are risking everything to defend our freedom.”

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- George G. Sheldon

To book LETTERS HOME, or for more information, contact Bill Massolia at (775) 905-6942 or bill.massolia@rcn.com.

“MOVING INTIMATE INSPIRING HONEST PATRIOTIC”

SYNOPSIS

SOURCE MATERIALS

“Letters Home” is based on letters written by American military families in the ongoing wars. The initial production was critically acclaimed and was nominated for a Joseph Jefferson Award for “Outstanding New Play.”

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