

# META.for theatre company

Meta.for Theatre presents

## KINDERTRANSPORT

By Diane Samuels

Directed by Michael Fera

Jericho Arts Centre, Vancouver - February 28 - March 15, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### What determines our identity - who we were, who we have become , or what has come before us?

The award-winning drama, **Kindertransport** by Diane Samuels is the second production of Meta.for Theatre's 2007/2008 season, following *Bent* by Martin Sherman at Performance Works in November. The play, where past and present are intertwined explores such universal themes as mother-daughter relationships, survivor guilt, and loss of identity is a moving evening of theatre that will be presented at the Jericho Arts Centre, February 28<sup>th</sup> to March 15<sup>th</sup>. **Kindertransport** is being produced by Sean Allan. The cast, under the direction of Michael Fera, includes Nancy Bell, Anastasia Capt, Tanya Dixon-Warren, Miranda Duffy, Raphael Kepinski and Fiona Martinelli

Most of the play is set in an attic storeroom of a suburban London home in 1979 with a few scenes set in Germany in 1939. The play opens in Berlin where Eva, a young German Jewish girl and her mother are packing for the girl's escape to England. The action then moves to 1979 where a young Englishwoman, Faith, who has decided to leave home, and her stiff reserved mother, Evelyn, and grandmother are helping her pack. As the play shifts subtly between past and present, we see the young girl grow up and assimilate into British culture, and we see Faith discover family secrets, and then confront her mother and grandmother.

An ominous presence in the drama is a children's fairy tale character, "The Ratcatcher," which is a German variation of the Pied Piper. The mythical Ratcatcher haunts the play and becomes various authority figures, such as a Nazi border official, a train station guard, an immigration officer, and an English postman.

In 1938, thousands of Jewish businesses and homes in Nazi Germany were destroyed in the maelstrom of Kristallnacht. When the first 30,000 Jews were detained and placed in concentration camps, the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany was formed in England. The rescue operation known as "Kindertransport," would see nearly ten thousand unaccompanied Jewish children travel from Germany to England where they would settle into English families that wanted to help.

For the thousands of Jewish children who came as refugees to England in 1938 and 1939, their escape from Nazi persecution was also the cause of another traumatic experience. Arriving just before the outbreak of the Second World War, the children left behind families who were in increasing danger at home. Separated from their parents and dislocated from their homes, the children were exiled from their way of life, language and religion. Of course, most never saw their homeland or their parents again. It is this side of the humanitarian act that **Kindertransport** explores: a rescue which seems almost as cruel as it was lifesaving.

Past productions by Meta.for Theatre include *Crossing (2004)*, *Never Swim Alone / Warriors (2005)*, *Broken (2006)* and *Bent (2007)*. Meta's mission is to challenge our audience and existing theatrical boundaries by employing innovative staging techniques, intelligent and thought provoking material, and brave artists and artisans, and to provide opportunity for emerging artists within all aspects of theatre production.

**Kindertransport** previews February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, opens February 28<sup>th</sup> and runs till March 15 Tuesday through Sunday evenings at 8pm, at the Jericho Arts Centre, 1675 Discovery Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4K5. For tickets & information phone 604-224-8007, or email: [info@jerichoartscentre.com](mailto:info@jerichoartscentre.com). For information on Meta.for Theatre go to [www.metafortheatre.ca](http://www.metafortheatre.ca)

Media contact: Sean Allan, Bernced Consultants Inc. 604-551-5271, email: [sallan@telus.net](mailto:sallan@telus.net)