

For Immediate Release

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***Emerson Theater Collaborative & Otis Library Announce
A Staged Reading of the New Play,
PRUDENCE***

March, 2017, Norwich, CT... The Emerson Theatre Collaborative (ETC) and Otis Library announce *a staged reading of Stefan Lanfer's new play, Prudence* on Saturday, April 8, 2017 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Otis Library, 261 Main Street, Norwich, CT. The play is directed by Theresa Broach, produced by Lisa Giordano and sponsored by Otis Library and The Elsie Brown Fund. The cast includes: Jennifer Briere, Theresa Broach, Barbara Fontanella, Ciara Rollins and James Kenney.

The play is set in 1833, when to further their education, two-dozen African American girls arrive in a small New England town from across the free states. In the town, they were insulted, assaulted, and risked fines as well as public whippings if they refused to leave the school. Their teacher, Prudence Crandall, a white Quaker woman, was jailed, and the ensuing trials nearly forced the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on whether nonwhites were citizens. Weaving together past and present, *Prudence* traces these events through the eyes of present day African American young women who visit today's Prudence Crandall Museum, as they, like their 19th century counterparts, grapple with how to claim America's promise.

The play reading is being held in conjunction with the anniversary on April 16th of the birth of Prudence Crandall's first student - Sarah Harris who was born and raised in Norwich, and in honor of the anniversary of the official opening of Prudence Crandall's Academy on April 1, 1833.

This event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. For more information call (860) 861-3743 or go to www.emersontheatercollaborative.org. Sign language interpretation will be available for the event. Advance registration is required. Please contact Julie Menders at Otis Library at least two weeks before the program date at [\(860\) 889-2365, ext. 128](tel:(860)889-2365) or jmenders@otislibrarynorwich.org.

Stefan Lanfer's plays include *Hadron Collision Therapy* (Boston Theatre Marathon, FRESH PRODUCE'd), *Helicopter Parents for Hire* (Vermont Playwrights Circle, Artists' Exchange), *Cry, The Beloved Country* (Book-It Repertory), *Gary Grinkle's Battles with Wrinkles* (Long Wharf, Open Eye, published by Dramatic Publishing), and *Christmas in the Valley* (Playhouse Merced). Lanfer has worked in artistic management at Long Wharf Theatre and Seattle

Repertory Theatre. In his current day job, he leads communications at the Barr Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in New England. A member of the Dramatists Guild, Lanfer is a Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellow in Dramatic Writing.

Theresa Broach has directed ETC productions *King Arthur in Contemporary Connecticut*, *Zora Neale Hurston-In Her Own Words*, *Snowbound*, *Living in the Wind*, *The Big Bank* and *Pharaoh's Daughter*. She has produced, directed and/or stage-managed over 30 theatrical productions for children and adult audiences including *Electile Dysfunction Can Be Fatal*, *Mayfly VII-IX*, *Camelot*, *Mame*, *Can-Can*, *Come Blow Your Horn*, *Oklahoma*, *South Pacific*, *Oliver*, *Cavern of the Jewels*, *Brigadoon*, *The Errols*, *Never Too Late*, *Hello Dolly!*, *Lend Me A Tenor*, *Annie*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *Music Man*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Breaking Legs*, *Plain & Fancy*, *Road to Home*, *Carousel*, *Skips in the Record*, *Godspell*, *Sweet Charity*, *Marco Polo*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Murder at the Crazy Whores Saloon*, *Always Patsy Cline*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, *Road to Home*, *Finian's Rainbow*, *Fashionista: Miss Connecticut & CT Teen Pageant*, and *Hocus Pocus*. Her acting credits include creating the role of Freida in Eugene Celico's hilarious play *Sardines and Stripped Dresses*. Also, Theresa serves on the boards of ETC, Writers Block, the Community Foundation of Eastern CT, and the SECT Cultural Coalition.

Emerson Theater Collaborative's mission is to serve youth, under-represented communities and artists with an emphasis on diversity, by producing innovative and exhilarating theater in Southeastern Connecticut. ETC explores timely themes and issues through new, original works and modern theatrical classics. ETC's goals include reaching inner city youth through educational theatrical programming, to support local communities by providing free admission to low-income families, and donating profits to humanitarian causes. For more information go to EmersonTheaterCollaborative.org.

Key Dates and Information

What: *Prudence – A Staged Reading*

When: April 8, 2017 from 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Where: The Community Room of Otis Library, 261 Main St., Norwich, CT 06360

How: Free and Open to the Public. For more information please visit our website emersontheatercollaborative.org and by calling (860) 861-3743

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The artistic team is available for interviews, and photos are available upon request.

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