

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Chicago Playworks for Families and Young Audiences Presents**  
**NUMBER THE STARS**  
*Based on Lois Lowry's Newbery Award-winning Novel*

The Theatre School at DePaul University proudly presents *Number the Stars*, by Dr. Douglas W. Larche with Susan Elliott Larche, based on the novel by Lois Lowry, and directed by Ernie Nolan, as the second production of the 2013-2014 Chicago Playworks for Families and Young Audiences season. This production opens Saturday, January 18, and runs through Saturday, February 22, 2014, at DePaul's historic Merle Reskin Theatre. Performances are Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 10 AM, and Saturdays at 2 PM. A special Sunday performance (2 PM) will be held on February 16. There will be no Saturday performance on February 15. Friday performances are on February 14 and 21 (10 AM).

Annemarie Johansen and Ellen Rosen play carefree games in the streets of Copenhagen, until the Nazi occupation of their city becomes increasingly more evident. As the Nazis attempt to relocate the Jewish residents of Denmark, Annemarie and the Johansens take a stand and help Ellen's family escape to Sweden. Winner of the Newbery Medal, *Number the Stars* uses history to remind us that anyone can be a hero.

**This production is recommended for ages 8 and up.** Educational themes of *Number the Stars* include: Adaptation, Courage, Facing Prejudice, Family, Friendship, History and the Holocaust. For more information about pre-show and post-show educational activities and highlighted curriculum connections, please visit [theatre.depaul.edu](http://theatre.depaul.edu) to download our free Teacher Guide. You can also request a Teacher Guide by calling the Box Office.

Tickets are \$10. Subscriptions and group rates (15 or more people) are available. DePaul employees, alumni, and college students receive a discount (with ID). Tickets are available online or by calling the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre is located at 60 E. Balbo Drive at Michigan Avenue, in Chicago. For information about parking, please contact the Box Office. The theatre is accessible via CTA busses (3-King Drive, 29-State Street, 146-Michigan/ Museums and others), and CTA El stops (Red, Blue, Brown, Green, Orange, Purple and Pink).

A wide range of events will be held in conjunction with this production including Community Partner Days, as well as an Ice Cream Social, Opening Day Autographs, Post Show Discussions, and much more! For details visit the website or call the Box Office.

The cast features **Brenton Abram-Copenhaver** (Funeral Officer/Train Station Soldier/others), **Zachary DeNardi** (Samuel/Search Soldier), **Erinn Fredin** (Kirstie), **Fiona Garretson** (Lise/Mrs. Rosen), **Laura Harrison** (Mrs. Johansen), **Mark MocarSKI** (Mr. Rosen/others), **Jeremy Pfaff** (Mr. Johansen /Man with Beard), **Brian Rife** (Uncle Henrik/ Guitar Player), **Alissa Sherwood** (Annemarie), **Nathan Simpson** (Search Soldier/Dog Soldier), **Frankie Stornaiuolo** (Peter/Soldier), and **Alissa Walker** (Ellen).

The production staff includes **Ernie Nolan** (Director), **Elyse Balogh** (Scenic Design), **Megan Turner** (Costume Design), **Lindsay Rose** (Lighting Design), **Rachel Regan** (Sound Design), **Catherine Miller** (Dramaturgy), and **Meredith Miller** (Stage Management).

**Ernie Nolan** (Director) is a director, choreographer, and playwright dedicated to reimagining stories for young audiences. As Producing Artistic Director of Emerald City Theatre in Chicago, he created the ECT Playground, a process to develop new TYA works. His various Emerald City directing credits include *Pinkalicious* (Broadway in Chicago transfer), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Seussical*, *Jungle Book*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, and *A Nutty Nutcracker Christmas*. He is a resident artist of The Coterie Theatre in Kansas City, MO. For Chicago Playworks he has directed *The BFG*, *The Giver*, *The Witches*, and *A Wrinkle in Time*. In March 2012, Ernie made his Off-Broadway debut as a choreographer with *Lucky Duck* at the New Victory Theatre. As a playwright, he has adapted and directed such story book favorites as *If You Give a Cat a Cupcake*, *If You Take a Mouse to School*, and *The Adventures of Doctor Dolittle*. His adaptation of Mo Willems' *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* was invited to perform in Chicago's Millennium Park. Ernie's plays *A Fairy Tale Life*, *Snow White as Performed by TJ Barker and His Troupe of Theatricals*, and *Beasts* are published and licensed by Dramatic Publishing. He currently serves on the Illinois Theatre Association and as the Vice-President of Theatre for Young Audiences USA. He represented the United States as an official delegate at the 17th ASSITEJ World Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark and Malmoe, Sweden. Ernie has his BFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Michigan Musical Theatre Program and is an alumnus of The Theatre School at DePaul University (MFA Directing). He awarded an Anne Shaw Fellowship and was also selected as one of DePaul University's "14 Alumni Under 40" in 2011.

**Media comps, photographs, and additional biographies are available upon request.**

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*The Theatre School at DePaul University educates, trains, and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined, and culturally diverse. The school and its students strive for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to its mission. As an integral part of the training, The Theatre School produces public programs and performances from a wide repertoire of classic, contemporary, and original plays that challenge, entertain, and stimulate the imagination. The school seeks to enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the university community, the city, and the profession.*