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Thomas Jefferson University and Theater of Witness present *Tangles in Time*

A performance exploring living with dementia and providing care through real-life stories, supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage

PHILADELPHIA – [Thomas Jefferson University](#) and [Theater of Witness](#) are pleased to present *Tangles in Time*, an original Theater of Witness production created and performed by people living with dementia, care partners and health professionals and trainees. Based on the performers’ own true stories of love, loss, illness and caring, the project weaves together live performance with original music, film and other imagery. *Tangles in Time* invites all people to connect and build empathy—even through changes in memory and time.

Performances will take place September 13-14, 2019, at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral.

“At Jefferson, our health professionals and students are always striving to be the most compassionate providers they can be. *Tangles in Time* offers them an opportunity to walk in the shoes of care partners and people living with dementia, deepening their understanding of the experience of dementia and how it resonates in their own lives,” says Megan Voeller, Director of Humanities, Office of Student Life & Engagement, Thomas Jefferson University.

The program is led by founder and artistic director of Theater of Witness, Teya Sepinuck. Since 1986, Sepinuck has directed more than thirty-five original productions with people living through traumatic circumstances in Philadelphia, Poland and Northern Ireland. Her unique method of performance works to amplify the voices of people who have been marginalized in society and often brings together participants across divides of difference. She has created performances with prisoners and their families; survivors and perpetrators of abuse and violence; refugees, immigrants, survivors of war; and police and people in communities of color. Performed by the people themselves, Theater of Witness productions invite audiences to bear witness to real stories of suffering, transformation and peace.

“The performers in *Tangles in Time* have created a community of connection and brought joy to the subject of dementia, which is often laden with grief, stress and loss. Without shying away

from the pain and difficulty of losing a loved one or caring for someone with dementia, their stories celebrate empathy, compassion, love and creativity,” says Sepinuck.

To create *Tangles in Time*, Sepinuck and participant-performers collaborated with composer and cast member Jay Fluellen, videographer Dax Roggio, percussionist Josh Robinson and photographer Raymond Holman, Jr. An exhibition of cast portraits will accompany the performances. For more information about the full project, go to tanglesintime.org.

Tangles in Time is the culmination of Building Empathy Through the Arts, a two-year collaborative project between [Jefferson](#), [ARTZ Philadelphia](#) and [Theater of Witness](#). Support for Building Empathy Through the Arts has been provided to Thomas Jefferson University by [The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage](#).

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About Jefferson (Philadelphia University + Thomas Jefferson University)

Jefferson (Philadelphia University + Thomas Jefferson University) is a leader in interdisciplinary, professional education. Jefferson, home of the Sidney Kimmel Medical College and the Kanbar College of Design, Engineering and Commerce, is a preeminent university delivering high-impact education in 160 undergraduate and graduate programs to 8,400 students in architecture, business, design, engineering, fashion and textiles, health, science and social science. The new Jefferson is re-defining the higher education value proposition with an approach that is collaborative and active; increasingly global; integrated with industry; focused on research across disciplines to foster innovation and discovery; and technology-enhanced. Student-athletes compete as the Jefferson Rams in the NCAA Division II Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference.

About Theater of Witness

[Theater of Witness](#) is a form of testimonial performance performed by people sharing their personal and collective stories of suffering, transformation and peace. Developed more than thirty years ago by artistic director Teya Sepinuck, the work brings people together across divides of difference to bear witness to each other’s life experiences. Performers who have survived trauma, marginalization, oppression and the complexity of the human experience address some of society’s most challenging issues from a multiplicity of perspectives. Performances weave together the performers’ stories with music, video and visual imagery into dynamic theater that humanizes “the other” and cultivates compassion and empathy. Theater of Witness is a project of CultureTrust Greater Philadelphia.