



Shedding light on
mental health issues through theatre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Erasing the Distance presents the world premiere of *Tell Me What You Remember*,
a devised play about the true story of one family's struggle with depression.**

Mondays and Tuesdays at 7:30pm, Dec. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15 & 16, 2014.

At Filament Theatre, 4041 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL.

Tickets are \$20-\$25. For tickets, visit whatyouremember@brownpapertickets.com.

**Press are invited to the opening of *Tell Me What You Remember* on Monday, Dec. 1 at 7:30pm.
To reserve your complimentary tickets, please email jen@erasingthedistance.org.**

CHICAGO – Erasing the Distance (ETD), a Chicago-based arts organization that sheds light on mental health issues through theatre, is proud to present the world premiere of *Tell Me What You Remember*, a devised play about depression in families that opens Dec. 1, 2014. *Tell me What You Remember* is adapted by Gedalya Chinn, directed by Nikki Zaleski, and co-produced by Rebecca's Dream.

Tell Me What You Remember depicts the true story of one family's life-altering battle with depression, using their distinct journey to illustrate the universal truth of how deeply depression can impact both those who suffer, and those who love them.

ETD collects true stories from people whose lives have been impacted by mental health issues. *Tell Me What You Remember* is told in ETD's signature docu-drama form, using the real words of the storytellers. However, in a departure from ETD's standard monologue format, the stories in *Tell Me What You Remember* are shaped into a more interwoven narrative.

Tell Me What You Remember is the culmination of ETD's year-long Depression in Families Project, which was commissioned by Rebecca's Dream and led by the creative team of producer Brigid O'Shaughnessy, director Nikki Zaleski, and adapter Gedalya Chinn. The project began in late 2013 with a series of workshops training students and volunteers on story collecting and shaping. After the initial stories were collected and transcribed, script devising and development workshops continued throughout the first half of 2014. A public reading of the piece was held in July 2014, and feedback from that reading helped shape the final script.

"We are thrilled to be bringing this family's story to life through theatre," says ETD Founder Executive Artistic Director, Brigid O'Shaughnessy. **"It beautifully illustrates the extraordinary ripple effects that occur when someone deals with a mental illness, both in his/her present day relationships as well as across generations. It serves as a visceral reminder that while our past stories in many ways have already been written, we can choose what we want our future story to be."**

Tell Me What You Remember

Mondays and Tuesdays at 7:30pm - Dec. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15 & 16, 2014
 At Filament Theatre, 4041 N. Milwaukee, Chicago

Cast: Graham Brown, Jennifer Mathews*, Stephanie Stroud, Eileen Vorbach+ & Fred A. Wellisch

Production Crew: Gedalya Chinn (adapter), Nikki Zaleski (director), Brigid O'Shaughnessy* (producer), Rachel Staelens (stage manager), Jacob Watson (set design), Will Dean (lighting design), Matthew Chapman (sound design) & Liviu Pasare (video design)

Story Collectors: Tom Barrett, Reena Benson, Jared Fernley*, Stephanie Grady & Brigid O'Shaughnessy*

Tickets: \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, \$15 for students and seniors. Group rates also available.
 For tickets, visit **whatyouremember@brownpapertickets.com**.

*ETD Company Member +Actors Equity Member

ETD's clinical partner for this production is Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center in Skokie, IL. Every performance will be followed by a talkback moderated by ETD Founder/Executive Artistic Director Brigid O'Shaughnessy and Turning Point CEO Ann Fisher Raney, LCSW, BCD. In addition, Turning Point is providing clinical support and guidance to the artistic team throughout the rehearsal process, as well as on-site clinicians at every performance for those audience members who need an immediate opportunity to talk. For more information on Turning Point, visit www.tpoint.org.

Tell Me What You Remember is co-commissioned and co-produced by Rebecca's Dream, an organization dedicated to changing the face of depression and bipolar disorder. For more information about Rebecca's dream, visit www.rebeccasdream.org.

Gedalya Chinn (adapter) began his performance training at Montgomery College in Rockville, MD, before transferring to the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). While still an undergraduate, he co-founded The Unmentionable Theatre, a non-profit company focusing on theatre's responsibility to broader social justice issues and its immediate community. His work in the DC-area theatre and poetry communities continued after his graduation from UMBC with a BFA in Acting. Relocating to Chicago in 2008, he went on to earn an MFA in Writing for Screen & Stage from Northwestern University, also serving as literary management intern at Victory Gardens Theatre. He spent 2013-2014 in Washington, DC as a Resident Teaching Artist with Young Playwrights' Theater, a company that "seeks to create social justice by providing all young people with the opportunity to realize the power and value of their own voices." His work as a playwright, director, poet and devised theatre collaborator has been heard/seen in Chicago at The Goodman Theatre, Northwestern University, No Exit Cafe and at Heartland Cafe, as well as performance spaces in Baltimore, DC and New York.

Nikki Zaleski (director) holds her Bachelor of Science in Gender Studies and Performance Studies from Northwestern University, where she concentrated on community-based devised theater as well as gender-focused performance. She also holds a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies from DePaul University, where she combined Public Health and Theater Directing coursework. Currently, Nikki is the Education and Arts Justice Manager for the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health (ICAH), where she supports the sexual health, rights and identities of young people. She came to ICAH through her work with Sisters Empowering Sisters, a reproductive justice and leadership group for young women

previously sponsored by the Chicago Girls' Coalition. Nikki is the Founding Artistic Director for FYI Performing Health Collective (now a program of ICAH), which designs participatory theater experiences surrounding sexual health and sexual violence for schools and programs. She is an Artistic Associate for Sojourn Theater as well as a founding member of Ag47, an arts mentorship collective that serves girls in the Logan Square neighborhood. Nikki has worked in public schools as a teaching artist through Urban Gateways, Communities in Schools of Chicago, and Redmoon Theater. She also works with Northwestern University, recently as visiting faculty for a class that developed a freshmen orientation performance program on sexual violence.

Brigid O'Shaughnessy (producer) is the Founder and Executive Artistic Director of Erasing the Distance. Since 2005, Brigid has reached over 50,000 people with theatrical performances about mental health issues that she has acted in, directed, devised and/or produced. A nationally sought after speaker and instructor, she has taught the ETD methodology at locations across the country, including the Chicago School of Professional Psychology for the last several years as well as at University of Illinois at Chicago through the Asian American Studies Program. Brigid was granted DePaul University's prestigious David O. Justice Award for her use of theatre to educate communities about mental illness in non-traditional and creative ways. She was also chosen by Extra Mile America as one of 200 heroic leaders in the United States making a difference in their communities and received a 3Arts Vision Award to support her artistic work at ETD. Her experience as a director, actor and teacher committed to social change has spanned over 15 years, including time co-directing the Thresholds Theatre Arts Project and Redmoon's Dramagirls, and devising original productions with teens in Chicago Public Schools. Brigid taught acting at Chicago's Acting Studio (formerly known as the Audition Studio) for 5 years and has acted at such places as Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens, and Profiles Theatre. She graduated with a M.A. from DePaul University and a B.A. in Theatre from Santa Clara University, studied extensively with The American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco and artist Michael Rohd, and has done her share of voiceover work and corporate training using theatre.

Founded in 2005, Erasing the Distance (ETD) uses the power of performance to disarm stigma, spark dialogue, educate, and promote healing surrounding issues of mental health. ETD collects true stories from people whose lives have been impacted by mental health issues. We sculpt the stories into theatrical pieces for the stage, which are then performed by our company of professional actors. Every performance is followed by a moderated, interactive dialogue with the audience that addresses the themes they have just seen. So far, ETD has reached over 50,000 audience members through public performances and our touring program. Past ETD world premieres include *Veterans' Voices*, *Good Enough*, and *The Small, Dark Room*. For more information about ETD, please visit www.erasingthedistance.org.

Please include this event in your listings. For photos or interview requests, please contact Communications Director Jennifer Mathews at 773-209-3889 or jen@erasingthedistance.org. Thank you!

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Tell Me What You Remember is supported in part by Rebecca's Dream, Walgreens, The MacArthur Fund for Arts & Culture at the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs Special Events, the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and ETD's Crowdrise Campaign Supporters.