ONE NIGHT ONLY: ‘STRONGER THAN SILENCE: SURVIVING OUR SECRETS’

Erasing the Distance theatre company presents Stronger Than Silence: surviving our secrets, commemorating Sexual Assault Awareness Month and featuring veteran Chicago actor Cedric Young. In this one-night theatrical event Thursday, April 28, four professional actors will give voice to true stories of survivors of sexual violence, sharing perspectives on hope, healing, and forgiveness. April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and according to the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 1 in 3 girls, and 1 in 6 boys, are sexually assaulted before the age of 18.

“Men, women, youth, and people of all ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds have their innocence shattered and then must use every fiber of their being to recover and heal,” said Brighid O’Shaughnessy, executive artistic director of Erasing the Distance, a not-for-profit organization that sheds light on mental illness through theatre. “This is not just a personal issue. It is a community issue and we must face it.”

O’Shaughnessy was recently granted DePaul University’s David O. Justice Award for her use of theatre to educate communities about mental health in non-traditional and creative ways. Young has performed on Broadway and at Chicago’s Goodman, Steppenwolf, Lookingglass and Court Theatres along with television’s The Chicago Code. Stronger Than Silence: surviving our secrets is brought to you by Community Counseling Centers of Chicago (C4) Quetzal Center. C4 was founded in 1972 to help people released from psychiatric hospitals into the Uptown and Edgewater communities. Its clients are survivors of rape, childhood incest and other forms of sexual violence.

The performance will be 7 p.m. in the third floor Hoover-Leppen Theater at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted. Refreshments will be at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are FREE, although a $10 donation is suggested at the door. Reservations are recommended. RSVP at BrownPaperTickets.com.

APRIL 25
Chicago Improv Festival opening night The 14th annual showcase kicks off with performances by local ensembles Chicagoland and Four Horsemen. The Annoyance Theatre, 4830 N. Broadway, 8 p.m. $10. www.chicag improvfestival.org/web/

APRIL 26
Face the Strange: New music from the bleeding edge Musicians perform hour-long sets of original compositions. It’s new music like you’ve never heard before. In a good way. Performing this month is Joan of Arc, whose recorded output has elicited critical praise by challenging the norms of traditional songwriting by deconstructing and reinterpreting both traditional rock and avant garde structuring techniques. Joan of Arc’s Face the Strange performance will be the record release show for their upcoming album Life Like, to be released on Polyvinyl Record Co. on May 10. Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave., 6 p.m. Free.