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Telling Stories of Transformation

Landmark Center celebrates World Storytelling Day, March 21 and 25

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (Feb. 22, 2017)—At some point in life, every person goes through a transformation. Nobody’s experience is exactly the same, but the process of change happens to everyone. This universal truth is the topic celebrated during this year’s World Storytelling Day events, March 21 at 6 p.m., and a children’s event March 25 at 10 a.m. Both events are in Landmark Center’s F.K. Weyerhaeuser Auditorium.

Since 2003, [World Storytelling Day events](#) take place on or around March 20 in more than 25 countries around the world. Each year a global theme complements the principal concept behind WSD, "If I can hear your story, it's harder for me to hate you."

“This year’s global theme is ‘Transformation,’” said Larry Johnson, storyteller, WSD coordinator, and medic during the War in Vietnam. “It’s a wonderful theme, because all people go through transformations, and it is a universal theme in literature, for both children and adults.”

Storytelling is often thought of as fairy-tales, fables, and oral history, but it is also commonly used to foster peace and understanding, community building, healing, and in advocacy work. Cosponsor of the March 21 event is Minnesota Alliance of Peacemakers (MAP), a coalition of over 70 Minnesota Peace and Justice organizations, including Nonviolent PeaceForce, Mn350, Move to Amend, Veterans for Peace, and multiple efforts focused on environment, racial justice, refugee relief, peace-building, and more. MAP groups will have information tables at the 6 p.m. reception. MAP also sponsors the Leslie Reindl Peace Essay Contest for high school juniors and seniors, and this year's winners will be showcased as part of the 7 p.m. storytelling performance.

March 21 – World Storytelling Day “Transformation”:

Beverly Cottman is a long time high school science teacher, is a multidisciplinary performance artist, creating at the intersection of visual, oral, and literary arts. She tells

African and African-American folktales and fables as Auntie Beverly, and in all things celebrates the rich heritage and culture of the African Diaspora.

Maren Hinderlie has worked as a storyteller for the Mn Historical Society, the Guthrie Theater, and other theatrical, educational, religious, or festival communities throughout the U.S. and worldwide. On World Storytelling Day she will have just returned from telling stories in Vietnam and the Philippines.

Larry Johnson has taught storytelling and video since portable video equipment emerged as he ran youth "correction" camps, before serving as a weaponless army medic. As a storyteller, he won the Action for Childrens TV National Award, as well as Grand Prize in the Tokyo Video Festival. He is author of *SIXTY-ONE*, 61 stories calling for less war, more walking, and better Veteran care.

Kubisa S. Muzenende, a respected human rights advocate, is founder and director of Let Africa Live, a non-profit in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, providing job training and psycho-social support to youth victims of war - former child soldiers, victims of sexual abuse, and survivors of violence. Kubisa has funding partners around the world, and currently lives in St. Paul with his family.

There is no charge for this event, but donations to MAP will be gladly accepted and go toward peace essay scholarships for next year. RSVPs are also not required, but encouraged. The reception and information tables open at 6 p.m., and the storytelling program begins at 7 p.m. Seats for RSVPs will be held until 6:30 p.m. Questions and RSVPs can be addressed to Larry at larryjvfp@gmail.com.

March 25 - Children's Activities:

Storytellers will share age appropriate classic tales of transformation. From "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and "The Ugly Duckling," to "Pinocchio" and "Beauty and the Beast," there are lessons to be learned for all ages.

This event is also free, and no reservations are required. After the morning WSD activities at Landmark Center, families are encouraged to go across Rice Park to the George Latimer Central Library for more free World Storytelling Day fun.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: Landmark Center wants to hear and share stories of transformation. From the smallest change that shaped one life, to a global movement, transformation fills our history books and personal stories. Landmark Center will share these stories throughout the month of March on its social media platforms and blog. Select stories may be printed as part of the March 21 event. Submissions will be accepted through March, but to ensure enough time to share all submissions, those wishing to participate are encouraged to send in their stories early. Stories and images can be emailed to kschoenfelder@landmarkcenter.org or submitted via Landmark Center's Facebook or Instagram using @landmarkcenter and #worldstorytellingday.

About Landmark Center

Landmark Center is a dynamic, historic cultural center and central gathering place in downtown Saint Paul. It is owned and sponsored by Ramsey County and managed by Minnesota Landmarks, the nonprofit programming and management agency for the building. Landmark Center is located at 75 West 5th Street, on Rice Park and is accessible to those with impaired mobility. Parking is available on street and in nearby Lawson, Science Museum and RiverCentre Ramps. For more information call 651.292.3063 or visit www.landmarkcenter.org.

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