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Rivendell Theatre Ensemble Makes History When *These Shining Lives* Appears in Ottawa, Illinois

December 3-5 Limited Engagement Benefits “Radium Girls” Memorial

(Chicago and Ottawa, IL) Chicago’s Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (RTE)’s critically-acclaimed production of *These Shining Lives* by Melanie Marnich makes an historic, ground-breaking appearance December 3-5 in Ottawa, Illinois—the home of the real-life “Radium Girls.” Directed by **Rachel Walshe**, *These Shining Lives* tells the story of the young women employed at Ottawa’s Radium Dial and Luminous Processes watch and clock factories in the 1920s and 30s. While employers assured the women’s safety, their exposure to and ingestion of radium-based paint proved deadly. *These Shining Lives* takes the stage at Ottawa High School Auditorium (203 East Main Street) on December 3 and 4 at 7:30pm and December 5, at 2:30pm. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door; \$5 with student I.D. Call (815) 434-2737 or visit www.experienceottawa.com In addition, two performances which include local history lessons are planned for students.

"It's an important chapter in the history of Ottawa that is finally being told," said Mayor Robert M. Eschbach of *These Shining Lives* in Ottawa, where a “Radium Girls” memorial statue is planned for the site of the demolished and decontaminated factories. Proceeds from this limited engagement benefit the memorial’s construction.

“To bring this poignant, heroic story to its Ottawa community and honor the real women who changed the world is perhaps the most meaningful way RTE can celebrate our 15th year as a company dedicated to women’s voices,” said Artistic Director Tara Mallen.

A smash hit for RTE, *These Shining Lives* “hits us in the gut with its sense of immediacy, outrage and ultimate hopefulness” (*Chicago Tribune*) “so poignantly rendered that you can almost hear the clocks of the characters’ lives ticking away” (*Chicago Sun-Times*). The production in Ottawa—Walshe’s third remount, following two sold-out engagements in Chicago—features a cast of **Kathy Logelin, Ashley Neal, Marika Engelhardt, Hilary Williams, Guy Massey and Mark Ulrich**.

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Founded by Walt Willey (*All My Children*) and Kim "Howard" Johnson to revive community theater in the Ottawa area, Willeyworld Community Productions selected *These Shining Lives* as its first imported production due to its local historical significance. This production is sponsored by the City of Ottawa, Ottawa Visitors Center, IVCC Ottawa Center and Willeyworld Community Productions.

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble is a professional theatre company committed to cultivating the talents of women theatre artists and to seeking out innovative plays that explore the unique female experience in an intimate, salon environment. Over the past fifteen years, Rivendell has grown to fill an important role in the Chicago theatre community as the only Equity Theatre in Chicago committed to producing works about women.