



M E D I A   R E L E A S E

For immediate release/ Photos & interviews available upon request

October 4, 2011

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**Media Contact**

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***Firehall Arts Centre presents***

***VIMY***

**Dates:** November 2 - 19, 2011

**Previews:** October 28 - 30 & November 1

**Opening Night:** Wednesday, November 2, 2011

**Times:** 8pm evenings, 2pm weekend matinees & 1pm Wednesday matinees

**Venue:** Firehall Arts Centre

**Admission:** \$12 to \$30

**Tickets & Information:** [604.689.0926](tel:604.689.0926) or [www.firehallartscentre.ca](http://www.firehallartscentre.ca)

*"A poetic reality that express(es) a country, a war and individual lives."*

-The Chronicle Herald

Vancouver BC, Oct 4 - There are few moments in history that define nations. For Canada, our moment was the Battle of Vimy Ridge. *VIMY*, produced by the Firehall Arts Centre and written by Governor General's Award-winning playwright Vern Thiessen, opens November 2, 2011 at the Firehall.

Floating from the present into the past, *VIMY* looks at the motivations and stories of eight young people and how they came to be part of the war. Set in a field hospital, the story is revealed through the eyes of a young nurse as she cares for the wounded following the battle of Vimy Ridge.

Drawing on extensive research, Thiessen's characters represent soldiers from each of the four regiments that came together as a united force to take Vimy Ridge. Although set nearly 100 years ago, *VIMY*'s themes of friendship and responsibility are timeless.

Directed by Donna Spencer and starring Sasa Brown, Ryan Cunningham, Mack Gordon, Daryl King, Sebastian Kroon and Sean Harris Oliver, this two act production will feature talkbacks after the performances on November 3, 10 and 17.

The design team for *VIMY* includes James Proudfoot, Lighting; Craig Alfredson, Set; Sabrina Evertt, Costumes; Marc Stewart, Sound and after many years away, Ingrid Turk returns to the Firehall as Stage Manager.

Created in association with the play, and supported by funding from Vancouver 125 and the Hamber Foundation, the Firehall is hosting a series of Community Dialogue Sessions around the subject of war and has commissioned a photography exhibition from local artist, Lori Weidenhammer, which will focus on Vancouver during the First and Second World Wars.

Community Dialogue Sessions:

**Art at War**

October 17, 2011

A look into documenting war through art. Featuring a discussion on the evolution of the practice and the role of the artist in documenting war as well as readings and a slideshow presentation by a Vancouver war artist.

**Women and War**

October 24, 2011

This dialogue will focus on the many roles and contributions of women during war time.

Photo Exhibit:

**Peace at War**

October 20 to November 19, 2011

Featuring images hinting of behind the scenes stories and the lives of Vancouverites during war time.

The Firehall Arts Centre Production of *VIMY* runs November 2 through 19, 2011, with previews the evenings of October 28-30 and November 1 at the Firehall Arts Centre. Tickets are \$12-\$30 and are available through the Firehall Box Office by phone at [604.689.0926](tel:604.689.0926) or online at [www.firehallartscentre.ca](http://www.firehallartscentre.ca).

For more information on the play, the dialogue series or the photo exhibition, call [604.689.0926](tel:604.689.0926) or visit [www.firehallartscentre.ca](http://www.firehallartscentre.ca)

**About the Playwright:**

Vern Thiessen is one of Canada's most produced playwrights. His work has been seen across Canada, the United States and Europe, including *Shakespeare's Will*, *Apple*, *Einstein's Gift*, *Blowfish*, *Vimy* and *The Resurrection of John Frum*. Vern is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Award for Outstanding New Play, the City of Edmonton Arts Achievement Award, the University of Alberta Alumni Award for Excellence, the Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition and the Governor Generals' Literary Award, Canada's highest honour for playwriting. He has also been nominated for several Alberta Literary Awards and the prestigious Siminovitch Prize in Theatre. Vern received his BA from the University of Winnipeg and an MFA from the University of Alberta. He has served as Playwright I Residence at Workshop West Theatre (where he founded the Playwright's Garage program) and the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton. He is past president of both the Playwrights Guild of Canada and the Writer's Guild of Alberta.

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