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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Stories of Russian-Jewish Immigration to Premiere at JWT in November

Santa Monica, CA (November 1, 2015) – At a time when immigration policy dominates the news, the Jewish Women's Theatre (JWT) will premiere "Past & Present: Russian Jewish American Stories," an original retrospective of personal immigration heartbreaks and triumphs on November 15 at 2 p.m. at the National Council of Jewish Women in Fairfax and in Santa Monica at The Braid on November 16 at 8 p.m.

Based on the intimate recollections of seven Jewish men and women, "Past & Present" tells stories of loss and discovery, joy and tears, shame and pride through the eyes of those who have struggled to survive in two very different worlds.

"These stories will make our audiences laugh and tear up as they witness a group of talented actors recount the challenges of learning to live in a new country where their appearance, professions, love affairs, relatives, and even noses all take new shape," said Ronda Spinak, JWT's artistic director.

Two of the stories' writers are Ukrainian natives, novelist Nadia Kalman and comic Kira Soltanovich, both of whom explore what it means to be a Russian-speaking Jew in America today. Soltanovich has appeared on such shows as *Jimmy Kimmel Live* and *Last Comic Standing* and has written for celebrities cross all ages, from Joan Rivers to Justin Bieber. Kalman's first novel *The Cosmopolitans* won the Emerging Writer award from *Monum*ent Magazine.

Also throughout November, Monica Piper's record-breaking run of "Not That Jewish," the hilarious, yet poignant one-woman show by the Emmy-award winning writer and comedienne, continues at The Braid every Thursday, Saturday and Sunday of the month.

In accordance with its mission to interweave Jewish themes throughout the visual and performing arts, this month The Braid lobby hosts a gallery exhibition entitled "Things We Pass Down: Art for the Generations". Through original paintings and Judaic memorabilia on loan from JWT supporters, the exhibit explores the theme of inheritance.

Moving off-site as it brings Jewish performance art to local communities, this month JWT will premier "My Bad, My Good," an original piece featuring revealing confessions by Jewish Gen X'ers. These salon-style presentations are staged in homes and other unique venues throughout the city, ensuring audiences an intimate and memorable theatre experience reminiscent of the early 20th century salons of Paris and New York.

Tickets and additional information on "Past & Present: Russian Jewish American Stories," "Not That Jewish" and "My Bad, My Good" are $35 and are available at www.jewishwomenstheatre.org.

The Jewish Women's Theatre provides a voice to the diverse and eclectic community of artists, and creators who comprise L.A.'s Jewish women's community. Whether at its new home at The Braid theatre in Santa Monica's Bergamon Arts District, or in intimate salons throughout the city, or on tour throughout the state, JWT stages traditional and contemporary works that provide a forum for the development, performance and showcasing of Jewish talent.

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