

----- **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** -----

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or Karee Wardrop, playwright & performer 647-0741

***Found Peace: A Mother's Day Collection***

Five short pieces exploring war, peace and motherhood

*Found Peace* is a theatrical collaboration inspired by Julia Ward Howe's "Mother's Day Proclamation." Created by Bellingham writers and actors Carolyn McCarthy and Karee Wardrop, the show portrays mothers navigating the difficult terrain of war and peace with their children. By turns poignant, comic and provocative, *Found Peace* asks: How do we live in a time of war? How do we move toward peace?

*Found Peace* explores these themes with a charming and varied cast of characters including a little girl struggling to understand current events, grandmothers wrestling with the loss of their sons, and a high school student energized by her year abroad in Hungary. In "Letters Home," excerpts from actual letters between a young soldier and his mother provide the material for a potent and deeply personal monologue. Bellingham actors Rich Brown and Rachel Thomas will join McCarthy and Wardrop on stage.

In 1870, Julia Ward Howe issued her Mother's Day Proclamation, creating the first American Mother's Day and exhorting women to work together to prevent war. "This collection is our answer to Howe's call to speak up for peace," explains Wardrop, who hatched with the idea of a Mother's Day show to reclaim the holiday as a time for inspired action. Although the underlying focus is on peace, the show explores a range of issues, and many questions are left unanswered. "Our goal is to get people talking. We want audiences to leave feeling thoughtful, hopeful and energized," McCarthy says.

***Found Peace: A Mother's Day Collection***

Thursday – Saturday, May 8 – 10

8pm

Firehouse Performing Arts Center

1314 Harris Avenue

Tickets \$10 in advance/\$15 at the door

Tickets available at the Community Food Coop and Village Books

Saturday's show will be ASL interpreted by Lori Abrams & Kathleen Morris

Questions? Call 647-0741 or visit [www.carolynmcc.com](http://www.carolynmcc.com)

### **Found Peace Participant Bios:**

**Rich Brown** (actor) is an Assistant Professor of Acting and Movement at Western Washington University. In *Found Peace*, Brown plays a soldier stationed in Iraq. Writer Carolyn McCarthy composed the monologue by editing actual letters from a young soldier to his mother. Brown was most recently seen onstage in *The Pillowman* at iDiOM Theater.

**Jim Lortz** (director) teaches Acting in WWU's Theatre Arts Department, where he has been on the faculty for 17 years.

**Carolyn McCarthy** (writer, actor, director) has just returned from touring her original one-woman show, *Too Beautiful*, which played to sold out crowds at iDiOM Theater last year.

**Rachel Thomas** (actor) performs the role of Devan, a young woman studying abroad in Hungary. A student at Bellingham High School, Thomas portrayed Young Cosette in the inter-school production of *Les Miserables* earlier this year.

**Karee Wardrop** (writer, actor, director) holds an MA in directing from WWU's Theatre Arts Department. For her direction of *Keely and Du*, Wardrop won an award for Meritorious Achievement from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

### **Mother's Day Proclamation - 1870**

By Julia Ward Howe (excerpt)

Arise then...women of this day!  
Arise, all women who have hearts!  
Whether your baptism be of water or of tears!  
Say firmly:  
"We will not have questions answered by irrelevant agencies,  
Our husbands will not come to us, reeking with carnage,  
For caresses and applause.  
Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn  
All that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.  
We, the women of one country,  
Will be too tender of those of another country  
To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs.

. . . In the name of womanhood and humanity, I earnestly ask  
That a general congress of women without limit of nationality,  
May be appointed and held at someplace deemed most convenient  
And the earliest period consistent with its objects,  
To promote the alliance of the different nationalities,  
The amicable settlement of international questions,  
The great and general interests of peace.