

October 8, 2021

For More Information:

Teri Ball 805-963-8198



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***THE SHOT*, STARRING SHARON LAWRENCE, WILL HAVE WORKSHOP PRODUCTION AT CENTER STAGE THEATER IN SANTA BARBARA**

Center Stage Theater of Santa Barbara presents a workshop production of *THE SHOT* starring SHARON LAWRENCE, October 22 & 23 at 7:30 PM and October 24 at 2:00 PM. This new play by Robin Gerber explores the complex life of iconic *Washington Post* publisher Katherine Graham.

For more than 20 years, Graham was a self-described "doormat wife," secretly enduring years of domestic abuse from her husband. After his suicide, she took over as publisher and CEO of the *Washington Post*, where she defied the government by publishing the Pentagon Papers, took on Nixon in Watergate and stunned her male executives who had bet against her success.

THE SHOT is a work of fiction based on Robin Gerber's book *Katharine Graham, The Leadership Journey of an American Icon* and inspired by the women who generously shared their stories with her.

NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

The Shot grew from writing my book about Katharine Graham and trying to understand the intimate partner violence she endured. Abuse of any kind against women is deeply connected to the cultural failure to embrace women's full equality. I hope the play will help women who are abused to feel less alone in their suffering and struggle. I hope it will help everyone understand that violence against women must end. While *The Shot* is based on Katharine Graham's life, the intimate details grew from many interviews with women who had the courage to share their stories with me, and I'm sincerely grateful.

WHAT AUDIENCES ARE SAYING

Comments from viewers of *The Shot* video performances:

"A luminescent performance by Sharon Lawrence informing us that sexual and psychological abuse knows no boundaries of economy or class or fame."

"This was incredible – it is not to be missed. I was truly spellbound."

"Wow! Spectacularly powerful and captivating play. So dazzled, so impressed, so thrilled for you and the women you are helping with this work."

"Sharon Lawrence is an amazing Katharine Graham!"

"This play captures every emotion of domestic abuse"

“Sharon, you were so dynamic and impactful in this role of Katharine Graham, bringing such gripping realism to the face of Domestic Violence!”

“Fantastic play, beautifully done, moving evening. Thank you.”

“Your play shows such insight into Graham's story and a woman's complex emotions about marriage.”

“A wonderful and thought-provoking performance.”

“What an amazing play!”

“Wonderful piece! So engaging. Well Written. Beautifully performed. Heart wrenching.”

“Wow, that was wonderful. Such an important story particularly for women who think someone like her could never have the same problems as a woman who has none of her privilege. It happens to all women.”

WORKSHOP PRODUCTION IS A FUNDRAISER FOR CENTER STAGE

THE SHOT was originally developed at The Ojai Playwrights Conference. Following that original reading the playwright continue to develop the script working with actress Sharon Lawrence and director Michelle Joyner. In the spring of 2020 the creative team was looking forward to a sold-out reading at the historic Ebell Club in Los Angeles when Covid-19 struck and the reading was canceled. During the ensuing months, the team continued working on the script and produced a video reading of *The Shot*. The video was offered during the pandemic to theaters and domestic violence organizations to use as a fundraiser. The first of these video events was here in Santa Barbara benefiting Center Stage and Domestic Violence Solutions in February of 2021, additional events then took place across the country ultimately raising more than \$25,000 for the participating non-profits.

With the return of live performance, the creative team is gathering for a week of developmental work on the play, at Center Stage which will culminate in three performances October 22-24. The proceeds from the performances will again benefit Center Stage Theater and Domestic Violence Solutions. A generous donor is offering a \$10,000 match for all donations made with ticket sales. This includes ticket purchases at the sponsor or patron level, and donations added to ticket sales.

ABOUT THE TEAM

ROBIN GERBER - PLAYWRIGHT

THE SHOT, Robin's first play, was selected for the 2017 Ojai Playwrights Conference. After a well-spent youth involving drugs, sex, and feminist activism, Robin took the next logical step and became a Washington, D.C. lawyer. She worked on Capitol Hill for a legendary leader of the House of Representatives, before leaving to be a labor lobbyist during the Clinton years. Robin's post-politics writing life includes: The bestselling advice book, *Leadership the Eleanor Roosevelt Way* (Penguin),

Katharine Graham (Penguin), *Barbie and Ruth*, about the founder of Mattel (HarperCollins), and the novel *Eleanor vs. Ike*, which imagines Eleanor Roosevelt running for President in 1952 (HarperAvon). Robin has toured the professional speaking circuit, motivating audiences at many Fortune 500 companies with stories from the lives of great women leaders. She has also appeared as a guest historian for the Biography and History channels and was a featured speaker in a recent CNN documentary on Eleanor Roosevelt.

SHARON LAWRENCE -ACTRESS

After earning a degree in journalism from UNC-Chapel Hill, Sharon has gone on to be prominently featured on stage and screen over the last 25 years. Her television work includes her multiple EMMY nominated and SAG award-winning run on *NYPD Blue*, as well as notable stints on hit shows such as *QUEEN SUGAR*, *SHAMELESS*, *DYNASTY*, *ON BECOMING A GOD IN CENTRAL FLORIDA*, *DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES*, *RIZZOLI & ILES* and *GREY'S ANATOMY* earning her another EMMY nomination. Film work includes the indie hits *MIDDLE OF NOWHERE* from Ava DuVernay and *THE LOST HUSBAND*, both on Netflix. Sharon spent 10 years on Broadway in *Cabaret*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and as Velma in *Chicago* and since in LA at The Mark Taper Forum, in *Poor Behavior* and *The Mystery Of Love and Sex*, the cabaret, *Love, Noel*, at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, in several roles at the Geffen Playhouse and at the Pasadena Playhouse in *A Song At Twilight*, *A Kid Like Jake* and *Orson's Shadow*, for which she was nominated for an Ovation Award and won the LA Drama Critics Circle Award. Recently, Sharon appeared on CTGLA's DigitalStage in *The Gaze*, *No Homo* and *REBEL* for ABC. Non-profit service has played a major role in Sharon's life as former Chair of the Women in Film Foundation, current Chair of the Board of Directors of Heal The Bay, and as a Trustee of the Screen Actors Guild Foundation. IG @sharonelawrence

MICHELLE JOYNER – DIRECTOR AND DRAMATURG

Michelle has helmed plays with Shakespeare and Co., Berkshire Playwrights Lab, Santa Monica Rep, Greenlight Productions, The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, LA Women's Shakespeare, Ojai Playwrights Conference, and others. She has directed a film based on the play she directed, *Sweet Nothings*, which is currently hitting the festival circuit. Michelle leads *The Long Table*, a women's writing group. She is also an accomplished stage and screen actor and has written ten studio screenplays. michellejoyner.com

LAURIE BERNHARD – PRODUCER

SPARK THEATRICAL develops and produces daring plays that provide a lens into the human condition. Currently, SPARK Theatrical has multiple projects under development in Los Angeles and New York. SPARK Theatrical connects plays with non-profits that share a common vision, providing audiences the opportunity for education and action. Laurie is on the Boards of the NewYorkRep where she is Producing Director NewYorkRepWest, Ojai Playwrights Conference, and Thunder River Theatre Company. SPARKtheatrical.com

VICKIE J. SCOTT – PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Vickie J. Scott is a Lighting and Scenic Designer for Dance, Theatre, and Themed Entertainment, and is the Executive Producer for Dramatic Women, founded in 1993 to explore and promote the participation of women in all areas of theatre and to produce original scripts for the theater by Santa Barbara, California based writers. She is also the Resident Lighting Designer and the Production Coordinator for the Ojai Playwright’s Conference in beautiful Ojai, California and a faculty member in the Department of Theater and Dance at the University of California Santa Barbara, where she teaches lighting design for theater and dance, designs lights and mentors students. Vickie is proud to be the founding producer for the UCSB Initiative for New and Reimagined Work.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AND CALENDAR LISTING

The Shot, a workshop production of a new play by Robin Gerber, starring Sharon Lawrence.
Performances at Center Stage Theater. October 22 & 23 at 7:30 PM and October 24 at 2:00 PM. Center Stage Theater is located on the top floor of Paseo Nuevo Mall, 751 Paseo Nuevo, Santa Barbara, CA 93101. For ticket information call the Box Office at 805-963-0408 or visit www.centerstagetheater.org

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