

The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

# Warriors Don't Cry

**Based on the Little Rock Nine memoir by  
Dr. Melba Pattillo Beals**

**Adapted by**  
Zita Christian & Scott Galbraith

**Directed by**  
Richard C. Aven

**Performed by**  
Jessica Maria Kight

**Moderated by**  
Brian Richardson

**Produced by**



**Run Time:** 90 minutes, no intermission

**Background:**

In 1957, the Little Rock Nine risked their lives and ended segregation at Central High School. Their struggle changed America. Melba Pattillo Beals was one of those nine. This is her story in her own words. *WARRIORS DON'T CRY* is a one-woman play adapted for the stage by Zita Christian and Scott Galbraith at The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts in Hartford, CT. *Warriors* recounts the story of fifteen-year-old Melba Pattillo who endures violence and discrimination as she and eight other African-American students integrate Central High School in 1957. The memoir by Dr. Beals received the American Library Association Award, 1995 Nonfiction Book of the Year; and the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award.

*Warriors* doesn't shy away from the "n word." On the contrary, out of respect for history and with the hope that modern audiences will better understand the impact of hate speak, the word is conveyed with all the power it carried in 1957. During the development of the production, community members were asked to participate in focus groups. Inspired by the honesty of *Warriors*, members of the community forums recounted their own stories of "whites only" lunch counters, ladies' rooms, and public water fountains. Those intimate and often tearful revelations convinced The Bushnell that *Warriors* should be offered to a wider audience. As a result, they held multiple performances for both adults and students throughout the country.

**About The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts**

The Bushnell is Connecticut's premier performing arts center, hosting more than 350 events yearly, including major Broadway tours, symphony orchestras, family presentations, local arts and community events. The Bushnell is home to two theaters- the historic 2,800-seat Mortensen Hall, and the 907-seat Belding Theater, a state-of-the-art performance hall that opened in 2001. The Bushnell's nationally recognized, award-winning, arts-in-education program, PARTNERS® (Partners in Arts and Education Revitalizing Schools), now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, continues to provide quality arts-in-education programs for schools and communities across Connecticut. The Bushnell opened in January 1930 and is a not-for-profit organization that is proud to serve Connecticut and its citizens. For more information, call The Bushnell at 860-987-6000, The Bushnell box office at 860-987-5900 or visit our website at [www.bushnell.org](http://www.bushnell.org).

**Bios:**

**Jessica Maria Kight** was born and raised in Toledo, Ohio. She moved to New York City in 2010 to study Acting at The New School for Drama where she received her MFA. Jessica recently participated in the NYC Fringe Festival in the production of "No One Asked Me" by Kate Ballen directed by Matt Newton. The show was selected to move to the Encore Series and won the Fringe Award for Best Ensemble, and Jessica's outstanding work in the show was acknowledged by the New York Times. What's next for Jessica? She will continue her tour for her One-Woman show "Warriors the Don't Cry", a civil rights piece with the Bushnell Theatre in Hartford, CT. She will also appear in a few pilots this year for tv and hopes the shows are picked up in the future for all of your eyes to see. She would like to thank everyone for coming out and hopes you enjoy the show.

**Brian Richardson:** Trained with Trinidad Tent Theatre. Pulse Ensemble Theatre: NIGHT MUST FALL, THE LOWER DEPTHS. Harlem Summer Shakespeare: MACBETH, THE TEMPEST, TWELFTH NIGHT, AS YOU LIKE IT. Bristol Riverside Theatre, Barter Theatre, Metropolitan Playhouse, J City Theatre. TV: LAW AND ORDER: SVU, GOTHAM. Movie credits: HUNGER, SID'S NEW GLASSES. Tours his solo show, W. E. B. Du BOIS: A MAN FOR ALL TIMES. Brian trained as a teaching artist with American Place Theater's Literature to Life program and is currently company manager of Pulse Ensemble Theatre.