**Summary of Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba**

Kindness casts a welcomed light against the dark shadow of the Holocaust.

11-year-old Daniel has escaped Nazi Germany and finds himself alone on the shores of Havana, Cuba. He meets a spirited girl with some painful secrets of her own. Through their unlikely bond, she introduces Daniel to the language, music and history of Cuban culture. However, once Cuba enters the war these two young friends are faced with some dangerous choices that will ultimately test their friendship. Part of The Kindness Project.

**The BIG QUESTIONS about the show**

1. What is a refugee? Why do people become refugees? What situations may lead to their circumstances?

2. Daniel struggles at the beginning of the story with language. How might it feel to have to live in a new country where you don’t speak the language? What are some things in daily life that may be difficult if you are unable to communicate or understand what others around you are saying?

3. Music plays a key role in the story. What are some of the times that music is important and how does it help the characters?

**Themes explored**

- the Holocaust
- Cuban history and culture
- immigration
- kindness

**Meet the cast**

- Frank Dominguez
- Adrian Thornburg
- Isabel Gonzalez
- Paula Baldwin
- Margaret Dalton
- Tom Scott
Every play Children’s Theatre of Charlotte produces is created by a talented team of designers, technicians, actors and a director. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you saw the performance.

1. Name three things you noticed about the set. Did the set help tell the story? What sort of set would you have designed?
2. What did you like about the costumes? Did the costumes help tell the story? What sort of costumes would you have designed?
3. What role did lighting play in telling the story? How did the lights enhance what you were seeing?
4. Talk about the actors. Were there moments you were so caught up in the story you forgot you were watching a play?
5. Were there any actors who played more than one character? What are some ways you can be the same person but play different characters?

For more activities and content surrounding this show, click here to access Children’s Theatre of Charlotte’s Pinterest boards.

Want to learn more? Visit the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center here.

Recommended Reading
If you enjoyed the show, check out these books at your local Charlotte Mecklenburg Library branch. Check availability at cmlibrary.org.

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai
Santiago’s Road Home by Alexandra Diaz
Refugee by Alan Gratz
90 Miles to Havana by Enrique Flores-Galbis
Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga
Until I Find Julian by Patricia Reilly Giff

National Theatre Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

*Biographical excerpts from L M Feldman’s website: www.laurenfeldman.com

NCES-TheaArts.4.TA.CU.2.2: Understand the role of the playwright in relation to script construction techniques, such as dialogue, protagonist, and antagonist.

Meet the refugee help centers in Charlotte
Refugee Support Services
refugeesupportservices.org/refugee-info/

Our Bridge for Kids
joinourbridge.org/

Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency
carolinarefugee.org/

National Theatre Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

NCES-TheaArts.4.TA.CU.2.2: Understand the role of the playwright in relation to script construction techniques, such as dialogue, protagonist, and antagonist.

NCES-TheaArts.3-8.TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.6.TA.AE.1.2: Understand how to use technical theatre components of costumes, props, masks, and set pieces to support formal or informal dramatic presentations. National Theatre Anchor Standard 5: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. National Theatre Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

About the playwright*
L M Feldman loves theater that is dynamic, honest, brave, and the smallest bit impossible. Her plays are formally adventurous, physically kinetic, deeply inquisitive, and frequently ensemble-driven. They are as deft in their language as they are in their movement. L has lived in seven cities and is now based in Philly – where she is an InterAct Core Playwright and a proud member of Orbiter 3 (Philly’s producing-playwrights collective).

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National Theatre Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

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Write to Us!
Children’s Theatre of Charlotte
300 E 7th St.
Charlotte, NC 28202