

For Immediate Release

Contact:

John Fries

412-760-2299

johnfries@comcast.net

13-year-old Canonsburg actress Madeline Dalesio snags lead role in Prime Stage Theatre's *The Diary of Anne Frank*, running May 4-13 at the New Hazlett Theater

(PITTSBURGH, PA - April 17, 2018) on a recent Sunday, Madeline Dalesio—hair pulled back, dressed in a long skirt and a red sweater emblazoned with the Star of David—was sitting on the floor in a dark attic-like room in a West End building, writing notes in a diary by the light of a candle as a video crew captured the scene from two different angles.

Dalesio was one of several actors on the set that day shooting a trailer that would be used to create awareness of Prime Stage Theatre's Stage spring production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, running May 4-13 at the New Hazlett Theater Center for the Performing Arts at Allegheny Square on the North Side.

An experienced professional actress already at the age of 13, Dalesio not only looks the part but brings a world of truth and authenticity to her portrayal of the Jewish adolescent who, along with her family, takes refuge in an attic in the Netherlands during the occupation of that country by the Nazis during World War II.

Dalesio is, literally, critically acclaimed. Four years ago when she was just nine, her performance as Helen Keller in Little Lake Theatre's production of *The Miracle Worker* was singled out by a local critic who noted that she was "playing a role that's beyond the range of most seasoned actors." In addition to her work in local theater, her resume also includes four films and gigs as a singer, including performing the National Anthem before a Wild Things game in her native Washington County.

Because Prime Stage, a professional theater company now in its 21st year, has a policy of casting age-appropriate actors for all roles, Dalesio seemed tailor-made for the role of Anne Frank. Director Wayne Brinda, who is also Prime Stage Theatre's co-founder and artistic producing director, praises Dalesio's ability to completely inhabit the role. "She's an amazingly talented young lady," says Brinda. Her acting skills are second to none and the truth she conveys on stage is powerful and impressive."

Prime Stage's production of *Diary* uses the 1955 Pulitzer Prize- and Tony Award-winning stage adaptation by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett. The original 1959 Broadway production starred a then-21-year-old Susan Strasberg, who received a Tony nomination for her role as Anne Frank. A revised version of the play returned to Broadway in 1997 with a 16-year-old Natalie Portman in the Anne Frank role.

"Madeline is absolutely brilliant in this role," says Brinda, whose cast also includes Pittsburgh actors Mike Perry (father Otto Frank), April Daras (mother Edith Frank) and Gaby Kogut (sister Margot Frank). Other cast members include Brian Ceponis and Chelsea Bartel, who have appeared in recent Prime Stage productions.

Performance Details

Performances of *The Diary of Anne Frank* are scheduled at 8:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. on Sundays. An opening night celebration is planned for Saturday, May 5 following the performance.

Audio description via headphones will be available for the Friday May 11th performance, a sensory-friendly performance will be provided on May 12th at 1:00 p.m., and a sign language-interpreted performance will be offered on May 12 at 8:00 p.m.

Tickets for all performances are available at www.PrimeStage.com.