



For Immediate Release

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“Captivating to see how dance, mime, the spoken word, and American Sign Language were beautifully woven” – *Maryland School for the Deaf*

“Sophistication to slapstick, and humour to Japanese high art...beautifully played.”
- *The Stage, Edinburgh Festival Fringe*

(Washington) – What does a wife do when her husband goes to war? In Quest's tragicomedy *White Frost Falls*, the war bride, played by Quest Affiliate Shizumi Shigeto Manale, carries on a passionate correspondence with her absent spouse, but not by e-mail as is commonly done in today's conflicts. Manale's heroine is the first Empress of Japan, and her correspondence is with her Emperor husband. Set against a background of ancient Japan, *White Frost Falls* utilizes deaf and hearing actors in an exquisite piece of theatre that has captured the attention of audiences and critics around the world.

“I first developed elements of *White Frost Falls* as a solo dance piece,” says Manale about Quest's production that has appeared at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and Deaf Way II International Arts Festival. Acclaimed deaf performer Willy Conley, also an accomplished playwright, and world-class physical theatre actor Mark Jaster join Manale, who plays the role of the Empress in the QuestFest production. *White Frost Falls* has as its origin the ancient Japanese art form of Wakka, a predecessor of Haiku.

“This show blends the unique and fascinating styles of three premiere Quest Affiliate Artists in a way that will mesmerize audiences,” proclaims Quest founder Tim McCarty. “Mark Jaster and Willy Conley are not trained in Japanese theater, but this production affords them an opportunity to explore new aspects of their talent. It is a marvelous production that draws audiences in from the opening curtain right through to the end.”

Women whose Samurai husbands were away in battle often wrote Wakka. Manale has worked from this premise to develop a series of letters from her Empress to her absent husband, played by Jaster. Conley plays the messenger entrusted with this correspondence.

White Frost Falls will appear June 18 at 8:00 PM and June 19 at 2:00 and 8:00 at the SummerStage at the Mattin Center. The performances are sponsored by the Johns Hopkins University's Homewood Arts Programs. All performances are at the Swirnow Theater in the Mattin Center. For reservations, please call the Swirnow Theater Box Office recording at 410-516-4695. Deaf and hard of hearing patrons may reserve tickets through email at ebeatty@jhu.edu. Tickets are \$10 general admission and \$8 for students and seniors. Payment is cash or check only. No credit cards are accepted.

The Mattin Center is located at the corner of Charles & 33rd streets in Charles Village, Baltimore. Parking is either on the street or in the JHU visitors lot off Wyman Park Drive. From the visitors' lot, the Mattin Center is a short walk along the JHU service road behind the Baltimore Museum of Art.

Quest: arts for everyone

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