

August 28, 2013

For Immediate Release

Press Contact:

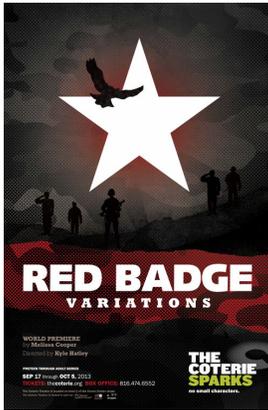
David Golston

Director of Marketing & Public Relations

Office: (816) 474-6785 ext. 230 Cell: (785) 217-8222

Email: [dgolston@coterietheatre.org](mailto:dgolston@coterietheatre.org)

**THE  
COTERIE  
SPARKS**



## PRESS RELEASE

### Audacious Young Audiences Theatre Stages First of Three World Premieres for 35<sup>th</sup> Season

#### **OVERVIEW:**

WHAT: ***Red Badge Variations***

A National Endowment for the Arts award-winning World Premiere

Written by Melissa Cooper

Directed by Kyle Hatley

WHEN: **September 17 – October 5, 2013**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, September 20, at 7:00 p.m.**

WHERE: The Coterie, Level one of Crown Center Shops, Kansas City, Missouri

PRICE: \$10.00 for youth under 18, full-time students, and seniors age 60 and older;  
\$15.00 for adults; Discounts available for groups of 10 or more.

INFO / RESERVATIONS: The Coterie Box Office

Phone: (816) 474-6552 Online: [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org)

**Kansas City, MO** – The Coterie opens its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with the World Premiere of ***Red Badge Variations***, an emotional and thought-provoking new play that takes the classic soldier archetypes established in Stephen Crane's classic Civil War novel, *The Red Badge of Courage*, and sets them in Afghanistan today. Written by Melissa Cooper and directed by Kyle Hatley, ***Red Badge Variations*** runs September 17 – October 5, 2013.

-more-

## **ABOUT THE PLAY**

A young recruit, Henry Fleming, arrives at a remote military outpost in Afghanistan. There's been a recent death in the tight-knit group of soldiers there, so the new recruit feels like the odd-man-out. As we drop in on these soldiers at various points during their year in deployment, we begin to understand their unique personalities until, as it turns out, they must confront the defining experience of their lives.

Coinciding with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War, ***Red Badge Variations*** offers a contemporary response to Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* by taking the archetypal soldier characters from the novel and resetting them in today's war in Afghanistan. The play does not attempt to establish a pro- or anti- position on the nature of war, but instead focuses on the experiences of the young combat soldiers and how life-and-death situations can reveal truths about a person's character. "***Red Badge Variations*** is the story of five young men who go to war," explains playwright Melissa Cooper. "*Full of energy, humor, and zest for life, they find themselves changed in profound ways by their deployment. I'm grateful to the veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who gave me feedback as I worked on the play. American soldiers continue to fight and come home to a country that sometimes forgets it is at war, so I hope the play serves to foster dialogue between civilians and soldiers.*"

When asked why ***Red Badge Variations*** was selected to open The Coterie's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, Producing Artistic Director Jeff Church explained, "*I think we may be the only theatre for young audiences in this country to produce a play depicting our soldiers in today's war. Giving young people a chance to see young soldiers in The Coterie's intimate performance space will give them insight into a world far away from us. We've been validated in our effort to bring this humane play to young audiences by a lovely award from the National Endowment for the Arts we recently received.*" In response to The Coterie's selection of this world premiere as its season kick-off, Melissa Cooper stated, "*I'm proud to be part of The Coterie's vision of producing new American plays for an intergenerational audience.*"

Produced as part of The Coterie Sparks series, ***Red Badge Variations*** will be best appreciated by pre-teen age through adult. The production is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Missouri Arts Council, the ArtsKC Fund, and Theater League.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

The cast of ***Red Badge Variations*** features Jacob Aaron Cullum (as Henry), Matt Leonard (as Wilson), Matthew Joseph (as JC), Francisco Javier Villegas (as Tat), and Jake Walker (as Doc). The artistic and

-more-

production company includes Melissa Cooper (playwright), Kyle Hatley (director), Eryn Bates (composer), Scott Hobart (technical director & co-set designer), Paul Joseph Barnet (co-set designer), Georgianna Londré Buchanan (costume designer), Art Kent (lighting designer), Ron Megee (properties), Joe Concha (sound designer), Amy M. Abels Owen (production stage manager), Luci Kersting (production assistant), and Logan Black (military consultant).

## **SHOW DATES, TIMES & TICKETS**

The Coterie, now in its 35th Season and named "One of the Five Best Theaters for Young Audiences in the U.S." by *TIME* magazine, will perform **Red Badge Variations** September 17 – October 5, 2013, in The Coterie Theatre located on level one of Crown Center Shops in Kansas City, MO. Press Night will be held on Friday, September 20, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.

**Subscriptions:** *New this season!* The Coterie introduces the Spotlight Club Pass. A great option for busy families, a Spotlight Club membership is like purchasing season tickets without committing to a set schedule. Spotlight Club members pay \$90.00 for a flexible pass that includes 10 tickets - a savings of 40% off individual ticket prices - that can be used for any show or combination of shows in the 2013/2014 Season.

**Individual Tickets:** Tickets are \$10.00 for youth under 18, students, and seniors age 60 and older, and \$15.00 for adults.

**Group Pricing:** *New this season!* The Coterie now offers groups of 20 or more a special preview rate of \$5.00 per person the first week of each run (holiday production excluded). After preview week, groups pay only \$5.50 per person on weekdays and \$6.50 per person on weekends (Friday nights, Saturdays and Sundays).

**Target Saturdays:** To help encourage a love for the arts in young adults and children, Target generously sponsors The Coterie's Saturday matinees. Patrons who purchase a full price admission to any Saturday matinee will receive one free ticket per order. Some restrictions apply (see website for details). Often, Target will also include a free copy of the book on which a play is based.

All tickets and the new Spotlight Club Passes are on sale now and may be purchased by calling The Coterie's box office at (816) 474-6552, dropping by the box office on level one of the Crown Center Shops, or by visiting [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org).

-more-

## PERFORMANCE CALENDAR

SEPT 17 - OCT 5, 2013

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		17 10 am	18 10 am	19 10 am	20 10 am 12 pm 7 pm	21 2 pm
22 2 pm		24 10 am	25 10 am 12 pm	26 10 am 12 pm	27 10 am 12 pm 7 pm	28 2 pm
29 2 pm		1 10 am 12 pm	2 10 am 12 pm	3 10 am 12 pm	4 10 am 12 pm 7 pm	5 2 pm

### Calendar Legend

-  Opening Nights
-  Interpreted performances  
in American Sign Language
-  Post-performance  
Question and Answer session with the Company
-  Post-performance  
Improv Aftergame by the Culture Hacks

## THE REMAINING 2013/2014 SEASON

Following *Red Badge Variations*, The Coterie's 2013/2014 Season continues with ***Dracula: The Journal of Jonathan Harker***, a one actor *tour-de-force* performance based on Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, on stage October 9 – 27, 2013; ***The Wiz***, a return to Oz in the Tony Award-winning musical, November 12, 2013 – January 5, 2014; ***Afflicted: Daughters of Salem***, a World Premiere inspired by the Salem Witch Trials, January 28 – February 23, 2014; ***I Was a Teenage Immortal: Geek Mythology***, a World Premiere musical inspired by Greek mythology, February 25 – March 9, 2014; ***Schoolhouse Rock Live!***, a musical review of the hit animated T.V. series, April 8 - May 18, 2014; and the premiere youth and family theatre version of the Broadway musical based on the popular film, ***Chitty Chitty Bang Bang***, June 17 - August 3, 2014.

.....  
Due to the nature of live theatre, play selection, performance schedule and casting are subject to change.  
.....

###