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Country Women Lift
Each Other Up at CMT
Artists of the Year

This one's for the girls, as CMT honored all female stars, from Loretta Lynn to Carrie Underwood and Kelsea Ballerini, during their annual Artists of the Year show in an empowering night of lifting up each other. The women saluted each other for breaking through the barriers in the industry on Wednesday night in Nashville, Tennessee. Underwood ended the show with a medley of iconic female songs. — *The Associated Press*

Backstage Pass

INSIGHTS ON STAGE, SCREEN AND BEYOND

Next Play at
Studio Theatre
Explores Risks
In Relationships

By KRISTEN FIORE | Daily Sun Senior Staff Writer

Sara is new to New York City, while Callie has been there for a while and is feeling stuck in her life. The two meet through a mutual friend and hit it off, ultimately connecting so much that their relationship crosses the line from platonic to romantic. Diana Son's "Stop Kiss" explores the risk that people in queer relationships face through a nonlinear story of romance and humanity.

"Stop Kiss," which is the second installment in Season 3 at The Studio Theatre at Tierra Del Sol, opens Nov. 30 and will run until Dec. 30. "I think there's something

very, very human about this story," said Sarah French, who will play Sara in the show. "I'm always surprised reading this play that it was written in '98, because the politics of it feel so

far away. Seeing two humans making a connection and being punished for it is an interesting thing to reflect on, and where you stand as an audience member."

"Stop Kiss" may be different than the kind of theater that people are used to, and for that reason, the cast encourages patrons to experience the show. "I think the most radical

thing we can do as artists is put a bunch of people in a room and tell them a story," said Roberta Emerson, the show's director. "And hopefully that story makes them think, and feel, and be a little, if not more, outside of their comfort zone."

The theme of Studio Theatre's Season 3 is individuality, and while not everyone in the audience can relate to

the particular struggles that Sara and Callie go through, everyone can relate to feeling like an outsider at some point in their lives.

"Stop Kiss" will give audience members a deeper perspective and a space to celebrate differences.

"Thinking and feeling and

Please See NEXT PAGE

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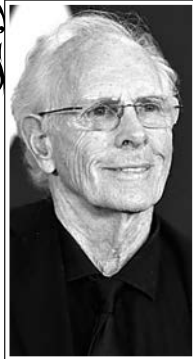
BETTE MIDLER

Midler is among the guest stars dropping in on CBS' "Murphy Brown" revival. The singer-actress was on the original sitcom as Caprice, one of many difficult, short-tenured secretaries to Candice Bergen's Murphy.



BROOKE SHIELDS

Shields also will guest star on "Murphy Brown." The actress will portray a former beauty-pageant pal of series star Faith Ford's Corky who emerges from a long coma during the Nov. 15 episode of the show.



BRUCE DERN

Actor Bruce Dern has been released from the hospital after a fall during his daily jog in Los Angeles. The 82-year-old, Oscar-nominated actor was released Friday evening following his fall earlier in the day.

LOS ANGELES

'Orange Is the New Black' to Wrap After Next Year's Season 7

"Orange Is the New Black" is fading to black after its upcoming seventh season. Cast members posted a video Wednesday announcing the series' 2019 end, which was confirmed by Netflix. The actresses thanked fans for their support and promised a fulfilling wrap-up to the comedy-drama set in a women's prison. The show was inspired by Piper Kerman's memoir about her time in federal prison.

— The Associated Press

Continued from Previous Page

remain comfortable," Emerson said. "We remain stagnant. Only when we are forced to go beyond ourselves, do we continue forward. I think this play does that and I think it's needed now more than ever."

Mary Ellen Moreno, who will play Callie in the show, said that Callie is a complex character who will be interesting to portray on stage.

"Callie has a level of discomfort about what she feels for her new friend," Moreno said. "Some of it is societal and external, but some is internalized discrimination. I hope that we all get to know and love these characters, and then get curious about what we dislike about ourselves, or what we actively reject within ourselves, for whatever reason, and then get to know and honor even those parts of us."

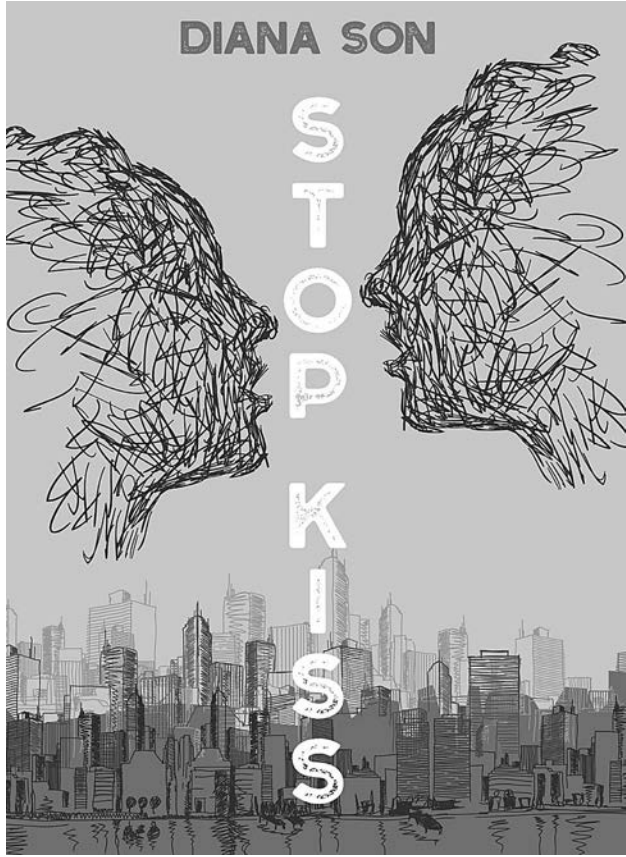
The play is told non-linearly, jumping around in the timeline to strengthen the effect of the conflicts.

"We are so used to linear storytelling that when we get something that goes against that, it forces us to listen more acutely," Emerson said. "By doing this, it allows us to connect with the characters in a deeper way as we watch the events unfold."

Tickets to the show are \$15 for previews and \$35 for all other performances. They can be purchased online at thevillagesentertainment.com or at any Villages Box Office location.

"I hope that everyone walks away with the knowledge, maybe even a realization for some, that no one should ever be afraid to love who they love," Emerson said. "At the end of the day — even with the risk — it's worth it to have loved at all."

Kristen Fiore is a senior staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.



Submitted

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ROBERTA EMERSON, Director of "Stop Kiss"

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