

PIAST INSTITUTE AND UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT – MERCY PRESENT PLAY “FIRST OF ALL I AM A HUMAN BEING”

Hamtramck, MI – The Piast Institute and the University of Detroit – Mercy drama department announce a matinee performance of the play “I Am First A Human Being” based on the prison letters of Krystyna Wituska adapted for the stage by Irene Tomaszewski. The play will be presented at 2:00 pm on Saturday February 16 at the Marygrove College Theater located in the Liberal Arts Building on the Marygrove campus at 8425 West McNichols. There will be no charge for the play. Tickets are available on a first come – first serve basis. For reservations call the Piast Institute at 313-664-0321.

The play is sponsored by a consortium of Polish organizations, businesses and individuals. The sponsoring organizations are The Piast Institute, The Polish American Priests Assn, The Polish American Congress, The Polish National Alliance, The Friends of Polish Art, The Polish Studies Program of the Orchard Lake Schools, The Central Citizens Committee, and the Polish Roman Catholic Union. Business sponsors are Polish Varieties Radio Program, Banka Collision, The Polish Weekly and The Polish Times. Individual sponsors are Msgr. Stanley Milewski, Annette and Waldek Raczkowski, Zofia and Andrew Ladak, Richard Mazur, Virginia Skrzyniarz and Dr Thaddeus Radzilowski.

The play tells the brave and poignant story of a young Polish woman sentenced to death by the Nazis for underground activities during World War II. While she awaits her sentencing and fate she carries on a secret uncensored correspondence with a German girl that is by turns funny and profound. It is a moving human story of courage and defiance in the face of evil. A lighthearted, even frivolous, young woman matures into a serious and determined woman ready to sacrifice her life for her country and for her ideals of human brotherhood. Krystyna Wituska emerges as a heroine not only for her time but for ours. The play is suitable for middle school and high school students.

The play will be produced by Yolanda Fleischer and directed by Courtney Burkett. Krystyna Wituska will be played by Marissa Thorndyke. All facilities and production costs will be provided by the drama department of the University of Detroit – Mercy.

The original letters and drawings of Krystyna Wituska have been published by Wayne State University Press as Inside a Gestapo Prison: The Letters of Krystyna Wituska, 1942-1944 edited and translated by Irene Tomaszewski.

For more information contact Virginia Skrzyniarz at 313-664-0321 or director@piastinstitute.org.

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