THE OLD SHIP OF ZION // ESSENTIAL THEATRE PLAY FESTIVAL

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE- ATLANTA, GA**

**THE OLD SHIP OF ZION,**written by Natalia Naman:

PROFESSIONAL WORLD PREMIERE

Join us for the professional world premiere of *The Old Ship of Zion,* by Columbus, GA playwright Natalia Naman, opening July 24.  
  
A warm, touching play about the members of a small African-American church, struggling to keep its doors open and adapt to changing times. Mama Gwen is a beloved elder who feels the burden of others who depend on the strength of her faith, and Quincy is a young man who loves his church but is beginning to realize that he's gay. About people trying to search for a spiritual life in trying times. With lots of music!   
  
**Featuring the acting talents of:** James G. Smith, Jimmica Collins, Sharan Mansfield, Lydia Frempong, Cheryl Booker, Sundiata Rush and Lemond Hayes

*Since the beginning of the festival in 1999,****The Essential Theatre****has committed to producing at least one new play a year by a Georgia playwright. Essential began its annual****Essential Theatre Playwriting Competition****in 2001, strengthening its ties to local writers by establishing the only competition exclusively dedicated to playwrights in the state of Georgia. This summer marks the 17th annual* ***Essential Theatre Festival*** *and the 4th consecutive all-Georgia Festival, featuring exclusively works by Georgia writers.*

**WHO:**The Essential Theatre

**WHAT:**THE OLD SHIP OF ZION | The Essential Theatre Festival

**WHERE:**West End Performing Arts Center, 945 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd, Atlanta GA

**WHEN:** 7/24 (opening), 7/25, 8/1, 8/2 (Neighborhood Night), 8/6, 8/7, 8/9, 8/11 ($10 Industry Nt), 8/13, 8/15, 8/16, 8/17 ($10 Industry Nt), 8/21

**VITALS:**

Website: [http://www.EssentialTheatre.com](http://www.essentialtheatre.com/)

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/NewPlays](https://www.facebook.com/NewPlays/timeline)

Twitter:<https://twitter.com/ATL_Essential>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/EssentialTheatre>

Venue: <http://fultonarts.org/index.php/events-and-exhibitions/performance-venues/west-end-performing-arts-center-black-box-theatre>

Press contact:

Jennifer Kimball

[jennifer@essentialtheatre.com](mailto:jennifer@essentialtheatre.com)