



# CENTRAL YORK PERFORMING ARTS

These Shining Lives, by Melanie March

November 9, 10, 16, & 17, 2023

CYHS Black Box Theater

## Parent Guide

**Synopsis:** taken from dramatists.com

These Shining Lives chronicles the strength and determination of women considered expendable in their day, exploring their true story and its continue resonance. Catherine and her friends are dying, it's true; but theirs is a story of survival in its most transcendent sense, as they refuse to allow the company that stole their health to kill their spirits- or endanger the lives of those who come after them.

## Language:

There is language in this play that some viewers may find offensive. The use of these words are used to expand on the characters or make a point of disagreement such as "harlot" and "sons of bitches."

## Content Warning:

The play consists of dialogue containing themes of war, disease, sexual innuendos, Al Capone, tobacco/nicotine use, sex work, and alcohol consumption.

## From Playbill:

Catherine Donohue was a female employee for Radium Dial Company who painted watch faces alongside Charlotte Purcell, Frances O'Connell, and Pearl Payne.

These young women formed an authentic bond, becoming close friends up until their untimely deaths. they went from watch painting to tirelessly fighting for their rights, and their lives, as workers. They went on to be referenced as the Radium Girls.

These Shiving Lives spotlights the story of the Radium Girls during the roaring 20s into the Great Depression. While the decades were changing, as were the lives of these women as well as several other women across the country working with radium, experiencing their health declining astronomically.

Following the bravery of the New Jersey Radium Girls trials throughout the 1920s, these working women of Illinois teamed up with lawyer Leonard Grossman to testify against Radium Dial Company. The drive for this case was to secure their disability rights within the company. Thanks to Grossman and The Society of the Living Dead (founded by Charlotte Purcell), employees who develop disabilities from their work environment have secured rights under The Occupational Disease Legislation in the United States, 1936.

The play is based on the lives of real human beings and events in history, while simultaneously fictionalized for theatrical value. This production contains topics of death, disease, sexuality, war, and disability discrimination. Viewer discretion is advised.