



Multiple Emmy® and Golden Globe winner Ed Asner and Emmy and Golden Globe Nominee Marion Ross (*Happy Days, Brothers & Sisters, Gilmore Girls*), join an award-winning cast for a limited-time performance of a new sitcom, *I've Got a Life in Kalamazoo*, produced by the Emmyaward-winning team of Teresa L. Thome and Patrick W. Ziegler of fubble entertainment, LLC. The performances take place at the Museum of Broadcast Communications (MBC) April 13 and 14, and will be filmed in front of a live audience, which will be used to pitch the show to network executives. Audience members will be given the opportunity to provide feedback.

This entertaining, one-of-a-kind event, in partnership with Chicago's MBC, also features an award-winning cast led by triple-threat performer Vicki Lewis (*News Radio, Broadway/Chicago, Finding Nemo*), Tony Award® winner Gregory Jbara (*Billy Elliot, Blue Bloods*) and two-time Emmy winner Patrick W. Ziegler. Danny Salles (*Joan & Melissa: Joan Knows Best?, Kathy Griffin's My Life on the D-List*) will direct. Two-time Emmy winner Teresa L. Thome will narrate.

Described as *Everybody Loves Raymond* meets *Will & Grace*, *I've Got A Life in Kalamazoo* is based on stories from Thome's autobiographical one-woman show, *Warm Cheese*. It features Nilah Hoyer (Lewis), a small town singer/performer who, in the midst of a mid-life crisis, attempts to move her career to the next level. With her best friend, Clayton Croft, living the fabulous life in Chicago urging her to move to the Windy City, and a husband who merrily rolls along with all the punches, this is finally her moment. With one phone call, a turn of events occurs and Nilah must stay in Kalamazoo – reluctantly – to care for her aging parents, Bob (Asner), her lovable, humorous and politically incorrect father, and Imelda (Ross), her domineering, hypochondriac mother.

The show is loosely based on Thome's family and her friendship with Ziegler (who also appears in the cast as Clayton Croft). The two met as theater students at a community college in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Ziegler went on to attend the theatre school at Western Michigan University. Thome stayed in Grand Rapids and eventually would run the local children's museum. Married and living in Grand Rapids, she served as primary caregiver to her aging parents for more than 15 years, while Ziegler spent his time living in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. The two started playing with the idea for the sitcom years ago, following the passing of her mother. Thome went on to develop a one-woman show about her relationship with her mother and the two continued to nurture the sitcom. They hosted a couple of workshops and shared the script with industry professionals – who provided positive feedback and encouragement to continue developing the show. After producing two children's shows and a web series (winning Emmys for their work) the duo decided to focus on completing and pitching their sitcom.

"It seems the more specific we get in pulling stories from everyday life, the more universal the show feels," Thome shares. "I never thought anyone would believe the parent characters. I always thought my parents were pretty crazy. Turns out people actually resonate with them." The reaction to the show has been consistently, "Do you know my parents?" or "Did you grow up in my house?" While the story line should appeal universally to most everyone, Thome and Ziegler believe it will play especially well to 30-50 somethings taking care of their parents and to parents who aren't ready to be taken care of. The co-creators want the story to bring humor to what can be an overwhelming process for some.

Inspired by their work with LaughFest (a national Festival of Laughter), Thome and Ziegler decided it would be good to put their work in front of a live, studio audience to 1) invite feedback, 2) and tape the presentation for a pitch package. With early support from Sol Design and Bryan Cave, the team identified and approached their dream cast. Lewis and Jbara came on board early, Asner agreed shortly after reading the pilot episode and Marion Ross was secured shortly thereafter. With the award-winning cast secured, Fubble approached the MBC to suggest that proceeds from the event might support the Museum. Instead, the museum suggested they present the show in their newly renovated facility.

Within weeks, Fubble was busy planning for the event this weekend. The intention is for the sitcom to be filmed in Chicago, Grand Rapids and Hollywood so it will have a mix of talent from all three areas. The crew is a mix of Michigan and Illinois professionals and Director/Producer/Showrunner Danny Salles is at the helm.