For Educators:

This study guide about *The Night Witches* extends and complements the Utah Core State Standards for 7th-12th grade Social Studies as follows:

UTAH CORE STATE STANDARDS for SOCIAL STUDIES

(Ca. 1930–1950)

World War II transformed American society and redefined the United States’ role in global affairs. The war produced unprecedented levels of violence and human suffering. On the home front, trends both during and after the war would shape American society into the 21st century. The post-war era saw America emerge as one of two superpowers, engaged in a global “cold war” with the Soviet Union. This Cold War had implications for America both at home and abroad.

·       **U.S. II Standard 6.1: Students will assess the causes and consequences of America’s shift from isolationism to interventionism in the years leading up to World War II.**

A discussion of catalytic events as the impetus for combat – Pearl Harbor and Operation Barbarossa. Moments in the play of propaganda or of individual women’s motivations for fighting can be used as companion examples of what can drive individuals or countries to engage in warfare, specifically in the fight against fascism and the Nazis.

·       **U.S. II Standard 6.2: Students will use primary sources to describe the impact of World War II on the home front and the long-term social changes that resulted from the war, such as the baby boom, women in the workplace, and teenage culture.**

The introduction of women to the war effort in the USSR was the result of changing views on women and their place in the workforce and society. After the war, most women returned to being wives and mothers, though several received advanced degrees in math, science, and engineering and continued careers in the air force and academia. Students can make comparisons between the impact on women in the U.S. and the USSR, as well as discuss the cultural significance for future generations of women. Can also be used as the starting point for a conversation about how the Russian Revolution and agrarian society allowed women in the USSR to serve in active combat roles in the war.

·       **U.S. II Standard 6.3: Students will cite and compare historical arguments from multiple perspectives regarding the use of “total war” in World War II, focusing on the changing objectives, weapons, tactics, and rules of war, such as carpet bombing, civilian targets, the Holocaust, and the development and use of the atom bomb.**

The tactical objectives of the 588th Air Bomber Regiment were part of the new forms of warfare used during WWII; Night bombing was used to destroy supplies and keep troops awake and therefore ineffective. Additionally, the use of women was an added layer of frustration and psychological disturbance for German troops. This study guide can begin a conversation about the “total war” strategies of the USSR and how they fit into the fabric of the war as a whole.

Attached are two lesson plans about the Night Witches in addition to our study guide that are free to use.

“The Night Witches” is a STEM lesson plan for grades 7-12 using the Night Witches to understand plane design and its impact.

“Women in the War” is a Social Studies lesson plan for grades 7-12 about the impact of women on WWII – specifically the Night Witches and the WASPs.

Both of these plans accompany this YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmUZgCGCO8Y>

Additional material on the Night Witches and our production can be found on our dramaturgical website: uofunightwitches.wordpress.com

Our production’s digital program with cast and creative team background can be found here: