

CELEBRATE Cultural Expression through the Theatre Arts

A unique opportunity for 10 underrepresented high school students and 10 university students

What would teens say if given a voice about their experiences? Can adults understand the words they would choose? Would they talk about seeing a death in the street, or betrayal, or even a parent negating their dream? Shakespeare wrote of these everyday life situations in a vernacular that was, at the time, geared toward the common population – a form of language not unlike urban slang, Spanglish, or English of today. CELEBRATE Cultural Expression through the Theatre Arts program proposes to give youth just such an opportunity.

CELEBRATE Cultural Expression through the Theatre Arts is a three-part community educational outreach program from the School of Theatre at Illinois State University in partnership with the Illinois Shakespeare Festival that **exposes youth to the creative process as a vehicle for expressing themselves in their own voice that may leverage neighborhood-familiar vernacular.**

The workshop will be offered in collaboration with Chicago-based Hip hop theatre director Aaron Todd Douglas, and participants will work side by side, college and high school students, to develop culturally sensitive scenes, monologues, sonnets, and other theatrical devices based on Shakespeare's work using the participant's vernacular. Theatrical pieces will use multiple language vernaculars so that audiences can infer meaning by comparison.

Developed material will perform this summer at multicultural celebrations at the Ewing Cultural Center and Miller Park, in addition to junior high and high schools in the fall.

Workshop Information

Dates: June 14 – July 2, 2010
Times: Monday through Thursday, 9 am – 3 pm
Location: School of Theatre

For Project Information

Contact Dick Folsie at (309) 438-8697
or rlfolsie@ilstu.edu



Mr. Aaron Todd Douglas is a founding member of Congo Square Theatre Company, a freelance actor, director and part time faculty member at Loyola University Chicago.

Recent projects include acting in the world premiere of PERFECT MEDACITY (Steppenwolf Theatre), and directing CHECKMATES (ETA), THE TALENTED TENTH (Black Theatre Alliance Award-Best Production), and 4PLAY (Theatre Building). Additional acting credits include JULIUS CAESAR (Chicago Shakespeare), and JOURNAL OF ORDINARY THOUGHT (Chicago Theater Company). Recent directing credits include THE AFRICAN COMPANY PRESENTS RICHARD III by Carlyle Brown (Congo Square), and THE HIP HOP PROJECT: INSIGHT INTO A GENERATION (Professional guest director University of Illinois).



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