

MEDIA ADVISORY

**2010 Young Voices High School Monologue Festival
Philadelphia Young Playwrights and InterAct Theatre Company
Young Playwrights received a record breaking 411 monologue submissions
Winning student monologues explore issues of identity, freedom and more
February 3 – 6, 2010 at the Adrienne Theatre**

WHEN: **Wednesday, February 3, Thursday, February 4, Friday, February 5 at 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, February 6 at 2:00 p.m.**

WHERE: **Adrienne Theatre, Mainstage (2030 Sansom Street, Philadelphia)**

WHO: Student playwrights and representatives from Philadelphia Young Playwrights will be available for interviews.

ADMISSION: **Wednesday – Friday** performances free for student groups. Reservations are required. To reserve seats, please contact Philadelphia Young Playwrights at **(215) 665-9226**. For more information about PYP visit www.phillyyoungplaywrights.org. **Saturday** performance is \$5 general admission. Tickets are available at the InterAct Theatre Company Box Office, by phone at **(215) 568-8079**, or online at www.interacttheatre.org.

WHAT: From **February 3 – 6, Philadelphia Young Playwrights (PYP)**, in collaboration with Philadelphia's **InterAct Theatre Company**, will present four staged performances by winning student writers from the **2010 Young Voices High School Monologue Festival**. This year, Young Playwrights received a **record breaking 411 monologues** from students across the region. Young Playwrights and InterAct asked students to draw inspiration from InterAct's upcoming World Premiere ***City of Numbers*** by playwright **Sean Christopher Lewis**, which explores both the sharp divisions and deep sense of community that define Philadelphia. Through their original monologues, students created stories about identity, freedom, imprisonment, violence, loss, and forgiveness. The 3-day Festival will be held at the **Adrienne Theatre, Mainstage** – home of InterAct Theatre Company (2030 Sansom Street).

"As we began planning for this third consecutive installment of the Young Voices High School Monologue Festival, we thought it would be ideal to tie it to *City of Numbers*," says InterAct's Producing Artistic Director **Seth Rozin**. "*City* is a collage of monologues, channeling a number of real-life voices. It has served as inspiration for participating students as they learn to express themselves through monologue form. The play also explores such fundamental issues as identity and freedom, which provided a thematic springboard for the students."

The result of this unique Festival and the ongoing collaboration between PYP and InterAct is rooted in the overwhelming talent which emerged from the young voices who submitted their monologues. Out of 411 submissions, sixteen monologues were selected as first-place winners. During the Festival, these student writers and their peers will see their monologues performed by professional actors from Philadelphia's theatre community including **Thomas Choinacky, Ankit Dogra, Alisa Howard, Bi Jean Ngo, Anjoli Santiago**, and **Johnny Walker**. *[A full list of winning students and participating schools follows below.]*

Winning students came from schools throughout the region, including Northeast Philadelphia's **Little Flower High School** and **The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush High School**; Allegheny West's **Murrell Dobbins High School**; South Philly's **Academy at Palumbo**; Spring Garden's **J.R. Masterman School**; Olney's **Philadelphia High School for Girls** and **Central High School**; Center City's **Constitution High School**, **De La Salle in Town**, **Franklin Learning Center**, **Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts** and **Science Leadership Academy**; Mt. Airy's **Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice**; Bryn Mawr's **The Baldwin School** in Montgomery County; and Delaware County's **Radnor High School**.

Student monologues to be performed include (in alphabetical order):

- **Kayla Anderson**, *Voice of Violence*, Little Flower High School, Grade 11
- **Nia Berry**, *Warr Avenue*, Science Leadership Academy, Grade 10
- **Sherice Bright**, *Boy to a Man*, Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice, Grade 12
- **Nicola Cianci**, *An Officer and a Gentleman*, Little Flower High School, Grade 11
- **Jacob Fagalino**, *The Patient*, Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts, Grade 10
- **Francisco Alberto "Albert" Garcia**, *What's My Next Move*, Academy at Palumbo, Grade 11
- **Daniel Gehm**, *Regretful Decision*, The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush, Grade 10
- **Savon Jefferson**, *Ronald*, Constitution High School, Grade 9
- **La Maya Mapp**, *Its Importance*, Science Leadership Academy, Grade 10
- **Olivia Ngo**, *Expectations*, Central High School, Grade 10
- **Scherlyne Pierre-Louis**, *The Day My Life Ended*, Franklin Learning Center, Grade 11
- **Elyse Pitock**, *After*, Radnor High School, Grade 11
- **Isabelle Ramos**, *Charity Starts at Home*, JR Masterman, Grade 10
- **Kelsey Venno**, *Colorful*, The Baldwin School, Grade 11
- **Harish White**, *A Man Vs. Himself*, De La Salle in Town
- **Jerry Wise**, *Rock Speaks*, Murrell Dobbins High School, Grade 9

Many student writers who participate in the Young Voices festival continue their involvement with Young Playwrights. Two winning monologues from the 2008 festival will be presented in March at **Philadelphia Young Playwrights 2010 Professional Productions** (March 2 – 5 at the Suzanne Roberts Theatre, 480 South Broad Street, Philadelphia). The monologues *F.A.T.* by **Kya S. Johnson** and *Torn Between* by **Aimee Leong** will be performed alongside *Milk and Honey* by **Emily Acker**, 2009 Young Playwrights Inc. National Playwriting Competition winner. Acker's play also had a successful off-Broadway reading in early January. The productions will be performed by professional actors, directed by **David Bradley**.

The 2009 Young Voices High School Monologue Festival is made possible in part by the individuals driving the program including: **Amy Hodgdon**, Director of Education and Programs, Philadelphia Young Playwrights (Co-Producer, Monologue Festival Dramaturg); **Dwight Wilkins**, Education Director at InterAct Theatre Company (Co-Producer, Monologue Festival Dramaturg); **Rebecca Wright**, Literary Director and Dramaturg, InterAct Theatre Company (Festival Director and Dramaturg); **Jerrell**

Henderson (Festival Director); **Genne Murphy**, Program Manager, Philadelphia Young Playwrights (Festival Dramaturg); and InterAct interns **Daniel X. Guy** (Festival Director and Dramaturg) and **D'Andrea Durham** (Festival Director and Dramaturg). Honorary Producer for this year's Festival is **Eileen Baird**, member of Philadelphia Young Playwrights' Producers' Circle.

Celebrating 23 years of service, Philadelphia Young Playwrights remains the only theatre arts program in the region promoting literacy through playwriting and supporting the development of each student's distinctive voice. The organization's programs provide students with unique opportunities to advance academic and personal skills, share their stories and be heard by their peers and communities. Young Playwrights offers an antidote to decreasing arts education and places an incredibly compelling learning process in the eager hands of our young people.

About InterAct Theatre Company

InterAct is a theatre for today's world, producing new and contemporary plays that explore the social, political, and cultural issues of our time. Founded in 1988, InterAct's aim is to educate, as well as entertain its audiences, by producing world-class, thought-provoking productions, and by using theatre as a tool to foster positive social change in the school, the workplace and the community. Through its artistic and educational programs, InterAct seeks to make a significant contribution to the cultural life of Philadelphia and to the American theatre. For more information about the company, visit www.interacttheatre.org.

About Philadelphia Young Playwrights

Founded in 1987 by Adele Magner, and led today by Executive Producing Director Glen Knapp, Philadelphia Young Playwrights is an award-winning program that taps the potential of youth and inspires learning through playwriting in up to 50 public and private K-12 schools each year. A leader in the region's educational programs for youth and built upon its primary belief that all students have something important and valuable to say, Young Playwrights has enriched the Greater Philadelphia community, touching the lives of thousands of students, teachers and parents for the past twenty years. Since 1987, approximately 60 professional playwrights have led workshops, and nearly all of Philadelphia's professional theater companies have participated by performing, producing, or directing student works. Nearly 55,000 students have seen peers' work produced in class or by professionals. Young Playwrights' Literary Committee includes more than 60 educators, writers, parents, and former Young Playwrights students who read and critique each student script. Young Playwrights has been recognized as a *Champion in Action* by Citizens Bank and is the past recipient of a 2005 Barrymore Award for Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service, a 1997 Barrymore Award for Theatre Education, a 2003 George Bartol Award for Excellence in Arts Education, a national "Points of Light" designation, and a 2004 Eastern University Award for Nonprofit Excellence. For more information about PYP, visit www.phillyyoungplaywrights.org.

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Please call in advance to schedule an interview or camera.

Press Contact: Emaleigh Doley, Canary Promotion
office: 215-242-6393, email: emaleigh@canarypromo.com