

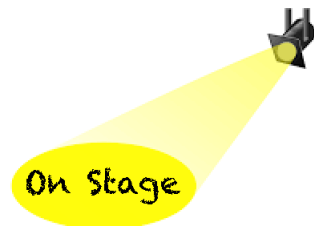
# **On Stage: Creating a Community Dialogue Around Live Theater**

***Skeleton Crew***

**Yellow Tree Theatre and New Dawn Theatre,  
January 31 – March 1, 2020**

**Created by: Lucas Erickson**

**Fiscal Sponsor: Springboard for the Arts**



## **On Stage: Creating a Community Dialogue Around Live Theater**

**Mission:** To make local theater relevant to younger and non-traditional audiences and to lay the groundwork for building future theater audiences

On Stage raises awareness of the theater offerings in the Twin Cities to academic classes and groups. It brings local actors to Twin Cities college classrooms and community settings to read scenes from a play in current local production. Participants then engage in a lively discussion of the play's themes, tying in current events, personal values and narratives to stimulate critical thinking. Subsequently attending the full play is encouraged.

## **ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Discussion Schedule**

**1. North Hennepin Community College - ENGL 2020: Writing Stories - Baumgart, Brian. Monday February 10th, 9:30 - 10:30AM. (20 STUDENTS)**

\* This course offers beginning instruction in the art of writing fiction. Exploring techniques for generating material, engaging in writing exercises, and critically examining contemporary short fiction are important aspects of this course.

**2. Roseville Library (co-hosted by East Side Freedom Library) - Carol and Paul - Monday February 10th, 7:00 - 8:00PM. (10 PARTICIPANTS)**

\* The largest of the seven libraries, this LEED Gold certified branch circulates almost two million items annually.

**3. MCTC - SOCI 1105: Intro to Sociology - Miller, Catherine. Tuesday February 11th, 10:30 - 11:30AM. (50 STUDENTS)**

\* This course covers an introduction to the sociological method and perspective. The course will give you a grasp of how social scientific inquiry is conducted; how to use sociological theory and concepts; and the importance of a global perspective in understanding people, their problems and potentials.

**4. University of Minnesota - ENGL 4233: Modern and Contemporary Drama - Jo Lee. Wednesday February 12th, 9:45 - 10:45AM. (10 STUDENTS)**

\* It's a class on "Modern and Contemporary Drama" and here's what they will read and discuss before your visit: Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll House* (1879); Anne-Charlotte Leffler Edgren, *True Women* (1883) ; George Bernard Shaw, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*; Angelina Weld Grimké, *Rachel* (1920); Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895).

**5. Hennepin Technical College - SOCI 2200: Racial and Ethnic Relations (CLASS #1) - Van Oort, Madison. Thursday February 13th, 9:00 - 10:00AM. (16 STUDENTS)**

\* This class focuses on the social construction of race as a concept, the processes by which social institutions create and reproduce racial inequalities, and the role of social movements in bringing about social change.

**6. Normandale - COMM 1131: Intercultural Communication - Willie Johnson. Thursday February 13th, 2:00 - 3:00PM. (25 STUDENTS)**

\* The primary purposes of this course are to raise awareness of cultural values, beliefs, norms, and biases and address how culture affects communication choices on the interpersonal, group, cross-cultural and global levels.

**7. Hamline - PSCI 3690: Politics of Urban and Metropolitan America - Schultz, David. Friday February 14th, 10:20 - 11:20AM. (26 STUDENTS)**

\* The emergence of metropolitan American and urban political systems. Special focus on ethnic and racial politics; machine and reform politics; community elites; urban political economies; political problems of metropolitan areas; metropolitan reform.

**8. North Hennepin Community College - SOC 1110: Introduction to Sociology (CLASS #1) - Shallal, Musa. Monday February 17th, 12:30 - 1:30PM. (45 STUDENTS)**

\* This course is a study of social and cultural aspects of human behavior. Topics include society and culture, roles and norms, groups and organizations, deviance, inequality, social and cultural change, and research methods.

**9. Hennepin Technical College - CULINARY CLASS (Advanced Food Preparation - 3rd semester students). EVENT: "Potluck in the break room: A five-course meal inspired by Yellow Tree Theatre and New Dawn Theatre's play, *Skeleton Crew*." Durnev, Denis, Kaye, Jonathan. Tuesday February 18th, 11:30 - 1:00PM. (20 STUDENTS)**

\* This course is designed to give the student advanced knowledge, skill, and understanding of stocks, sauces, soups, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish cookery, and breakfast food preparation techniques in a restaurant production setting.

## **ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Discussion Schedule Cont.**

**10. St. Thomas - SOCI 350: Inequality: Power and Privilege - Laura Fischer. Tuesday February 18th, 4:00 - 5:00PM. (16 STUDENTS)**

\* This course identifies and investigates the following topics: general principles of stratification, theoretical explanations by which inequality emerges and is maintained, the relationship between social class and other forms of inequality in the United States including gender, race, and changes in social hierarchy over time.

**11. North Hennepin Community College - SOC 1110: Introduction to Sociology (CLASS #2) - Shallal, Musa. Wednesday February 19th, 9:30 - 10:30AM. (40 STUDENTS)**

\* This course is a study of social and cultural aspects of human behavior. Topics include society and culture, roles and norms, groups and organizations, deviance, inequality, social and cultural change, and research methods.

**12. St. Paul College - CULINARY CLASS (Advanced Food Preparation - 3rd semester students). EVENT: "Potluck in the break room: A five-course meal inspired by Yellow Tree Theatre and New Dawn Theatre's play, *Skeleton Crew*." Jason. Wednesday February 19th, 11:15 - 12:30PM. (20 STUDENTS)**

\* Students explore various aspects of quantity food production in a fast-paced, high-volume food service setting. Students are introduced to aspects of quantity range, bake shop, short-order and pantry operations.

**13. Hennepin Technical College - SOCI 2100: Introduction to Sociology (CLASS #2)- Van Oort, Madison. Wednesday February 19th, 5:00 - 6:00PM. (18 STUDENTS)**

\* This class explores the systematic study of the relationship between the individual and their society.

**14. North Hennepin Community College - ENGL 2270: Modern American Literature - McGehee, Michael. Thursday February 20th, 11:00 - 12:00PM. (30 STUDENTS)**

\* This course will introduce students to selected American writers of the twentieth and/or twenty-first centuries and their works.

**15. Hennepin Technical College - SOCI 2100: Introduction to Sociology (CLASS #3)- Van Oort, Madison. Thursday February 20th, 2:50 - 3:50PM. (21 STUDENTS)**

\* This class explores the systematic study of the relationship between the individual and their society.

**16. Concordia - SOC 152: Intro to Sociology - Elizabeth Glynn Chambers. Friday February 21st, 8:00 - 9:00AM. (22 STUDENTS)**

\* This course provides an introduction to the systematic study of society and social behavior. Investigation will focus on the values and norms shared by society's members, the groups and institutions that compose social structure, and the forces that are transforming social reality.

**17. Hennepin Technical College - SOCI 2100: Introduction to Sociology (CLASS #4 - at the Eden Prairie campus) and Hennepin Gateway to College (GTC) program - Van Oort, Madison, Charlotte Guild and Jean Maierhofer. Friday February 21st, 10:50 - 11:50AM. (35 STUDENTS)**

\* This class explores the systematic study of the relationship between the individual and their society. In the weeks prior to your visit, students will be learning about the discipline of sociology, sociological research, class inequality, and race/ethnicity.

**ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Total Tickets Purchased**

**Total Participants: 424**

**Total Tickets Purchased: 60**

**Note: Total tickets purchased was confirmed by the Yellow Tree Theatre Box Office.**

**ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Survey Results**

**1. Have you seen a play before?**

**53 YES (71%)   22 NO**

**2. Have you been to this specific theater before?**

**2 YES   73 NO (97%)**

**3. After our visit, do you feel more inclined to see the play?**

**63 YES (85%)   11 NO**

**4. Do you now feel more inclined to see other plays at this theater?**

**53 YES (75%)   18 NO**

**5. Do you think this program works well in college classes?**

**63 YES (85%)   11 NO**

**Note: This survey was issued to participants in six of the seventeen discussions.**

## **ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Discussion Agenda/Topics**

**Lucas** will welcome the class, say why we are there/what On Stage is, the fact that we do NOT work for Yellow Tree Theatre (this is not marketing for them), the play we are there to talk about, and turn it over to

**Austene/Maria/Wendy/Nora/Harry/Rajane** for introductions and maybe why you think it is important to see live theater. Also talk a bit about Dominique Morisseau and a SUPER QUICK “this play is about” - Working class survival amidst the eroding American dream; This play takes a look at one of the last auto stamping plants in hard-hit Detroit during the great recession, as four workers are forced to choose how to move on if the plant goes under. If it’s a smallish class, we can go around the room and have students say their names, their majors, and tell us the last play or live event they saw.

**PLAY A GAME! PROTECTOR AND ENEMY:** Everybody stand up and without saying anything, pick out a student who is their “protector” and another student who is their “enemy”. Now walk around the room and try to make sure your “protector” stays between you and your “enemy.” How was this experience? Have a short discussion about status, labels and stereotypes. Dehumanizing/“othering” of workers is a key thread in the play (i.e. Betsy DuVos calling students “seats”).

While we are all standing up, move to one side of the room or the other (or middle) depending on their answer to the question: Have you or anyone in your family ever worked in a factory before? Ask students who say yes to explain who and what factory/work. The American Dream - What happens when too much shit is piled on? Job security?

Move to one side of the room or the other (or middle) depending on their answer to the question: Have you or anyone in your family been in a union? Ask students what they know about unions/minimum wage in different sectors. Are unions important? Working on a team/pride in the work you do. Shanita in the play feeling “needed” on the line. She feels like it will fall apart if she wasn’t there. Have a student read her short monologue: (Pg. 40 - 41).

Move to one side of the room or the other (or middle) depending on their answer to the question: Have you been to Detroit before? What do you know about Detroit? First impressions? Quick history? Start with the students who have NOT been to Detroit what they know about the city - then ask the people who have been there what they remember.

Have students find a partner by touching elbows. Ask students to tell your partner what sounds/noises/rhythms in your life do you hear that put you at ease? How do the sounds of where you live influence your life? What is the relationship to the sounds and where you live? Play some factory sounds. What do these sounds mean to you?

Time to sit down! **MATCHING SENTENCES/LINES.** Pass out lines from the play - find the other people who have the same line as you - have a quick discussion about what this line means - hear from each group.

Ask **FOUR BRAVE READERS** to read an excerpt from the play (Pg. 53 - 54). What’s that about? What did you hear?

Ask **ONE BRAVE READER** to read an excerpt from the play (Pg. 57 - 58). What’s that about? What did you hear? Road rage! People are selfish. The city is crumbling and you aren’t able to control anything. How do you relieve stress?

**IF TIME:** **PLAY A GAME! STATUS GAME:** This game is all about labeling and how we treat people differently depending on status/your number/rank. Tape #1 - #10 on the back of students. Explain the 1 - 10 scale. Have them walk around and introduce themselves to each other and then the other student reacts depending on the number on their back. Students will then try to line up #1 - #10. How did they do? How was this experience?

Wrap up! Questions?

**Lucas** will remind everyone how to get \$10 tickets to [see the play](#). Ask educators to plug work they are doing.

## **ON STAGE: Skeleton Crew – Feedback**

*Lucas,*

*Thank you—and the others--so much for visiting us! The response immediately afterward was overwhelmingly positive and appreciative. They were excited about the ideas the play put forth, the activities (although they joked about how they don't want me to have them walking around the classroom every day), the way the discussion connected to our writing and contextual social awareness... and quite a few expressed interest in going to see the play. I particularly appreciated Austene's commentary regarding the production and characters. I'd be more than happy to have On Stage back.*

*Brian Baumgart – North Hennepin Community College*

*Hi Lucas,*

*Thanks so much to all of you at On Stage for coming to talk about Skeleton Crew and theater. Everyone was so thoughtful, and I loved hearing about different aspects of putting on the production. If you have ideas for how On Stage would like to collaborate on something else, let me know any time!*

*Paul Lai - Ramsey County Library*

*Hey Lucas!*

*Thanks again for coming! This was the best one yet! The class was absolutely alive! The students were really engaged and you guys created that! Thank you! I will share some of what the students say in their reflection papers which I'll get next week. I know that some of them are planning to come to see the play and some want to see The Convert too! Take care!*

*Willie Johnson – Normandale Community College*

*Hi Lucas,*

*Thanks so much for your visit! I had students write reflections about how your visit relates to what we've read or talked about in class, and they were able to make connections to stereotypes, labelling, microaggressions, and structural/institutional racism. Multiple students approached me after class telling me how much they enjoyed your visit and how it got them thinking. I can also say from an instructor standpoint that it was such a nice change of pace to have visitors and to engage with each other in a different way. Sociology can sometimes feel abstract and sort of disembodied, so I really appreciated digging into these personal stories. Even just re-arranging the room felt powerful. I look forward to seeing you all again next week,*

*Madison Van Oort – Hennepin Technical College*

## **ON STAGE: Skeleton Crew – Feedback Cont.**

*Hi Lucas - so glad to hear from you! I thought our time on Tuesday was fantastic! I haven't checked with the students yet but I will ask their feedback; but from my perspective it was great - it was so helpful to have Austine, Jamecia, and Rajane there as well...each had an interesting perspective on the issues and the play. I would definitely love to have you come to class again ... will be teaching Intro in the fall, so let's keep in touch.  
Thanks again,*

*Laura Fischer – University of St. Thomas*

*Hi Lucas! Thanks so much to all of your for today's activity! It was a very fun class and I and I think they really enjoyed it! I also love that it connected to the chapter we just discussed and also acts as an introduction to our next 2 chapters as well. It was a terrific activity, so thank you so much. Thank you again and hopefully something in the future works out as well.*

*Beth Glynn Chambers – Concordia University*

*Lucas, here is the evaluation summary for today's event. As you can see from the ratings and comments, it was a HUGE SUCCESS.*

*Highlights include:*

- **Overall, how satisfied are you with this event** 4.3/5.0 (5=Very Satisfied)
- **Sample key takeaways/comments**
  - Community is extremely important for a positive & functioning society
  - Skeleton Crew looks awesome
  - The small snippet of the play was really good
  - Very interactive & took me out of my comfort zone

*Jean Maierhofer - Hennepin Technical College, Eden Prairie*

### **ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Financials**

- **Wendy Knox (Facilitator) - \$780**
  - \* 5 discussions (\$500), 1 planning meeting (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Austene Van (Facilitator) - \$1480**
  - \* 12 discussions (\$1200), 1 planning meeting (\$100), facilitator prep-fee (\$150) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Harry Waters Jr. (Facilitator) - \$480**
  - \* 3 discussions (\$300), facilitator prep-time (\$150) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Maria Asp (Facilitator) - \$1280**
  - \* 10 discussions (\$1000), 1 planning meeting (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Rajane Katurah Brown (Facilitator) - \$880**
  - \* 6 discussions (\$600), 1 planning meeting (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Nora Montanez (Facilitator) - \$980**
  - \* 7 discussions (\$700), 1 planning meeting (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Jamecia Bennett (Actor) - \$430**
  - \* 4 discussions (\$400) and parking expenses (\$30).
- **Lucas Erickson (Project Manager) - \$663**
  - \* Planning and coordination of all On Stage discussions (\$500), printing and copying (\$108), miscellaneous (\$25) and parking expenses (\$30).

**TOTAL: \$6,973**

*Notes: 1 discussion (1 hour in length) is \$100, 1 rehearsal (2 hours in length) is \$100, 1 extra discussion (1 hour in length) is \$100, prep-time for the facilitator is \$150, and the coordination stipend is \$500. These fees are based on a similar program that was used at the Guthrie Theater (Creating Dialogue) and Project SUCCESS (fiscal sponsor pilot program). The program emphasizes education and is not a performance piece. The discussions will take place in college classrooms and community spaces (i.e. library room, public meeting room, etc.).*

## **ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Sample Contract**

### **PROJECT CONTRACT**

#### ***On Stage: Creating a Community Dialogue Around Live Theater***

This Agreement is made effective as of **10/15/16** by and between **On Stage**, and the following individual ("Actor")

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES AND PAYMENT.** Actor will receive compensation for providing the following services/expenses including but not limited to: 6 discussions (\$600), 4 planning meetings (\$200), facilitator prep time (\$150), and parking expenses (\$20).
- 2. TOTAL PAYMENT.** On Stage will pay total compensation for services in the amount of **\$970**. Payment will be sent directly to the Actor from On Stage at the address listed above at a date postmarked on or before **11/14/16**.
- 3. TERM/TERMINATION.** This Agreement shall terminate automatically on **11/14/16**.
- 4. RELATIONSHIP OF PARTIES.** It is understood by the parties that the Actor is an independent contractor with respect to On Stage, and not an employee or contractor of On Stage.
- 5. WORK PRODUCT OWNERSHIP.** Any copyrightable works, ideas, discoveries, inventions, patents, products, or other information (collectively, the "Work Product") developed in whole or in part in connection with the Services Rendered shall be the exclusive property of On Stage.
- 6. NAME AND LIKENESS.** Actor agrees to allow On Stage full use of their name, likeness, voice, testimonial, and/or portrayal in whole or in part, severally or in conjunction with other material, for any documentation and marketing purposes at any time including after determination of this agreement.
- 7. ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties, and there are no other promises or conditions in any other agreement whether oral or written. The actor waves any liability against On Stage.
- 9. SEVERABILITY.** If any provision of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and enforceable. If a court finds that any provision of this Agreement is invalid or unenforceable, but that by limiting such provision it would become valid and enforceable, then such provision shall be deemed to be written, construed, and enforced as so limited.
- 10. APPLICABLE LAW.** This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota.

This Project Contract is executed and agreed to by:

**ACTOR**

(Printed Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Date Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

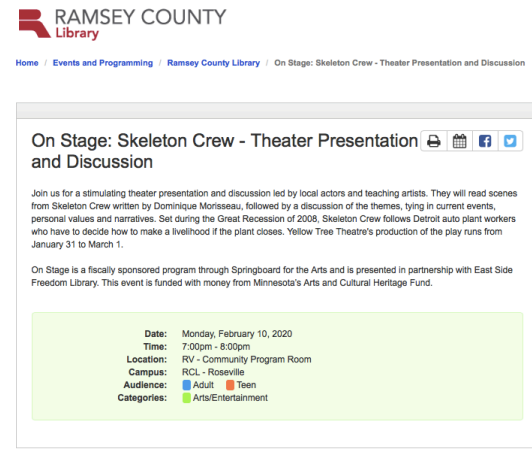
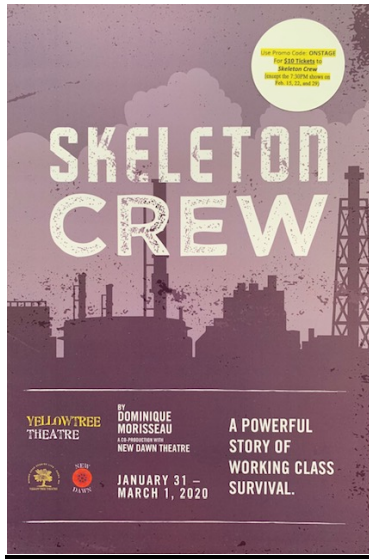
**ON STAGE**

(Printed Name) \_\_\_\_\_ (Project Manager)

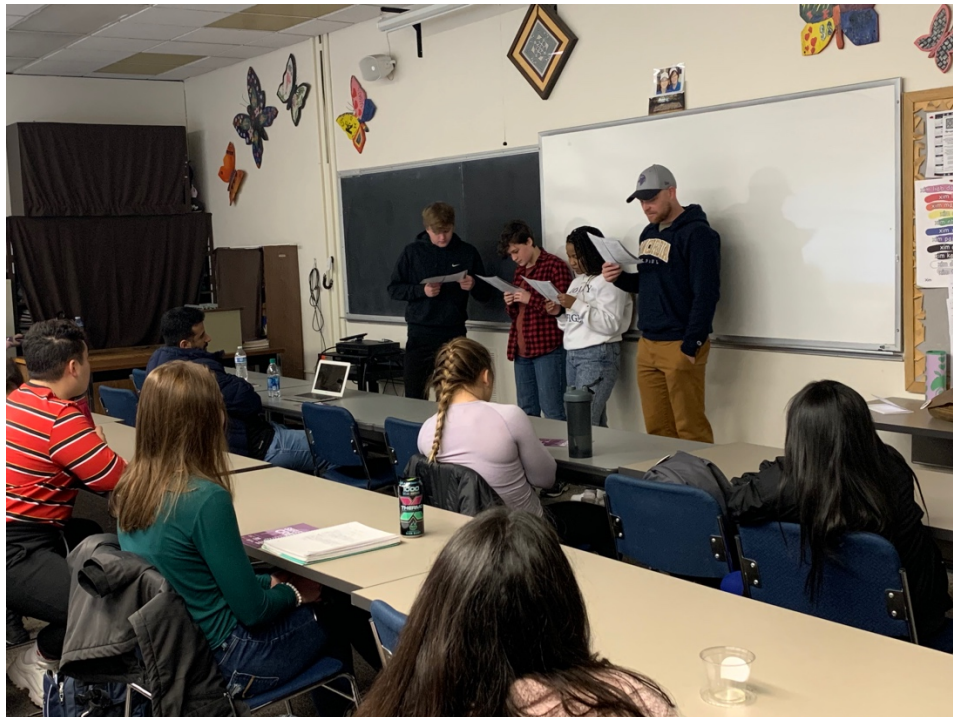
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(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

## **ON STAGE:** *Skeleton Crew* – Marketing



## ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew – Photos*



**ON STAGE: *Skeleton Crew* – Photos**



## **ON STAGE: Total Outreach**

*An Octoroon* (Mixed Blood Theater – Fiscal Sponsor: Project SUCCESS)

Total Participants: **196** Total Tickets Purchased: **115**

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*A Raisin in the Sun* (Park Square Theater)

Total Participants: **190** Total Tickets Purchased: **100**

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*Anna in the Tropics* (Jungle Theater)

Total Participants: **142** Total Tickets Purchased: **73**

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*We are the Levinsons* (MN Jewish Theatre Co.)

Total Participants: **128** Total Tickets Purchased: **30**

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*Pike St.* (Pillsbury House Theatre)

Total Participants: **163** Total Tickets Purchased: **25**

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*Revolt. She said. Revolt again.* (Frank Theatre)

Total Participants: **296** Total Tickets Purchased: **100**

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*Collected Stories* (MN Jewish Theatre Co.)

Total Participants: **199** Total Tickets Purchased: **42**

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*The Lorax* (Children's Theatre Co.)

Total Participants: **483** Total Tickets Purchased: **55**

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*Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* (Jungle Theater)

Total Participants: **155** Total Tickets Purchased: **28**

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*West of Central* (Pillsbury House Theatre)

Total Participants: **399** Total Tickets Purchased: **150**

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*Marie and Rosetta* (Park Square Theatre)

Total Participants: **313** Total Tickets Purchased: **140**

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*Actually* (MN Jewish Theatre Co.)

Total Participants: **264** Total Tickets Purchased: **107**

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*Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Theater Latté Da)

Total Participants: **172** Total Tickets Purchased: **54**

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*Small Mouth Sounds* (Jungle Theater)

Total Participants: **124** Total Tickets Purchased: **11**

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*Escaped Alone & Here We Go.* (Frank Theatre)

Total Participants: **392** Total Tickets Purchased: **113**

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*Aubergine* (Park Square Theatre)

Total Participants: **371** Total Tickets Purchased: **81**

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*Skeleton Crew* (Yellow Tree Theatre and New Dawn Theatre)

Total Participants: **424** Total Tickets Purchased: **60**

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**TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 4,411**

**TOTAL TICKETS PURCHASED: 1,284**

**\* 29% OF THE STUDENTS/COMMUNITY MEMBERS WE VISITED SAW THE PLAY THAT WAS DISCUSSED.**

## **The Need For A Younger Theater Audience**

NEA 2012 Survey: The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) is the largest and most comprehensive survey of U.S. arts participation, with a total sample size exceeding 37,000 adults, ages 18 and over.

- Adults who attended performing arts or visited museums as children were three to four times as likely to see shows or visit museums as adults. Exposure to the arts in childhood turns out to be a stronger predictor of adult arts participation than education, gender, age, or income.
- Technology is a great enabler of arts creation and participation. In 2012, nearly three-quarters of American adults—about 167 million people—used electronic media to view or listen to art.
- 12.3 percent of adults in 2002 said they had attended a non-musical play in the past year; only 8.3 percent of adults in 2012 could say the same.
- The average age of those attending classical music performances, the ballet, jazz concerts and plays is increasing. This is not just because the median age of the general population is creeping up as well; it is the result of one generation of audience members not being adequately replaced by the next.
- The average age of the theatergoer for touring Broadway is 52 (according to The Broadway League).

June 17, 2012, Boston Globe:

“The Boston area is home to an estimated 250,000 college students from September to June. In other words, there is a huge population of 18-to-22-year-olds at more than 65 colleges and universities, quite a few of whom are eager, even desperate, for something to do off-campus on the weekends. Many who go to college here settle down in the area after graduation; they are the logical foundation of Boston theater’s future. So, theoretically, Boston should be the perfect laboratory for experiments in how to attract young adults to the theater, right? ... Intellectual curiosity and a spirit of cultural adventure are, or should be, cornerstones of higher education” (Don Aucoin).