

Young Playwrights Institute **Young Playwrights Institute**

Learning the fundamentals of playwriting on the campus of
Montclair State University

July 7 - July 25, 2003

10:00am - 12:30pm

Curriculum Guide

Young Playwrights Institute

THEATREFEST AND THEATREFEST FOR KIDS

TheatreFest is the professional Equity theatre-in-residence at Montclair State University. TheatreFest for Kids offers premium children's theatre and educational activities to pre-school through middle-school aged children. The program was created to provide educational and thought-provoking theatre events to all children of the community, including children-at-risk. TheatreFest for Kids provides a thrilling introduction to theatre and a welcoming excursion to the campus of Montclair State University through numerous outreach programs including the *Arts Voyage* program, Camp TheatreFest and the Young Playwrights Institute.

JOHN WOOTEN *(instructor)*

John Wooten is the Artistic Director of TheatreFest, Montclair State University's professional Equity theatre-in-residence. An alumnus of the college, Mr. Wooten received his B.A. in theatre, and himself is both a professional director and playwright. After founding Life Rep Theatre in Manhattan, Mr. Wooten "returned home" to become TheatreFest's Managing Director, and then its Artistic Director four years later. His plays have been produced off-Broadway, regionally, in London, and for film. Seven of his plays are published. He is currently involved in expanding the organization's very popular annual playwrighting contest into a regional event as part of the new Center for the Arts at Montclair State University, and with launching the Young Playwrights Institute. John is a member of the Dramatists Guild.

MARIE SPARKS *(coordinator)*

Marie Sparks presently serves as the School of the Arts Program Administrator for Education and Community Outreach. Marie received a Bachelor's Degree from Montclair State University in 1994. Since 1998, as Education Coordinator for TheatreFest, she has successfully spearheaded and implemented several arts education and outreach programs addressing the needs of children-at-risk and special populations.

Program Goals

The Young Playwrights Institute, which will focus specifically on the writing of a play, will provide an intensive arts outlet to kids with aptitude and interest in playwrighting inside a creative learning environment.

The following are the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards that the Young Playwrights Institute addresses:

1.2 (Creation and Performance): All students will refine perceptual, intellectual, physical, and technical skills through creating dance, music, theatre, and/or visual arts. Through an education in the arts, students enhance their perceptual, physical, and technical skills and learn that pertinent techniques and technologies that apply to the successful completion of the tasks. Active participation in the arts is essential to deep understanding of the imaginative and creative processes of the arts as they relate to the self and others.

1.3 (Elements and Principles): All students will utilize arts elements and arts media to produce artistic products and performances. In order to understand the performing arts, students must discover elements and principles that are both unique and common. The understanding of these elements and practice of the principles ensure the strengthening of interdisciplinary relationships in theatre.

1.4 (Critique): All students will demonstrate knowledge of the process of critique. Through the informed criticism of written works, students will develop a process by which they will observe, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate artistic expression and quality in both their own artistic creation and in the work of others.

Program Overview

Time Frame: July 7 – July 25, 2003

- 1) The Aspects of Playwriting- The students will learn play structure and will participate in active exercises and games that reinforce the following aspects:
 - Character
 - Time
 - Setting
 - Theme
 - Plot
 - Conflict
- 2) With a working knowledge and understanding of play aspects and tools, playwrights will begin writing short one-act plays
- 3) Students will read each other's work and give suggestions for continued development under a play conservatory format.
- 4) Professional actors will be brought in to work the one act plays. Each student playwright will have the opportunity to work in rehearsal with the actors.
- 5) Professional actors will perform the plays in the Howard Fox Studio on the campus of Montclair State University. Parents, professionals in the field, and friends are invited to attend the performances, as well as the Certificate ceremony and reception following the performance.