

Time to Renew!

If you have not already submitted your 2007-2008 *Play by Play* Magazine Renewal Form, please do so ASAP! If you did not receive a form or have any questions, please contact Branden Huldeen, Assistant Editor, at (212) 221-0885 ext. 252. Remember you must renew in order to continue to receive *Play by Play* next school year!

SPECIAL FEATURE: SUMMER FESTIVAL GUIDE '07!

From **Fresh Fruit** at Cherry Lane to **FreshPlay** at MCC... From **HOT!** at Dixon Place to **The Ice Factory** at the Ohio Theatre... Summer in the city has never looked so good!

Play by Play is now available at public libraries throughout New York City. Look in the teen/young adult section for your copy!

The Summer issue of *Play by Play* will soon be at your school, giving you and your students the best of New York City theatre. Please distribute it right away!

This guide is designed to familiarize you with the upcoming issue of *Play by Play*, and to suggest ways it can be used in a variety of classroom settings and curricular contexts.

How to Introduce *Play by Play*

Using *Play by Play* as a classroom resource supports New York City and State learning standards in Drama and English Language Arts, as well as the New York City **Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts**. In this issue, you can:

- ✓ **DEVELOP THEATRE LITERACY** with a writing exercise combining rhythm and rhyme, inspired by *Passing Strange* at the Public Theatre!
- ✓ **MAKE CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS** with current Broadway and Off Broadway shows (listed in this guide) which relate to subjects you may be studying.
- ✓ **WORK WITH COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL RESOURCES** by visiting one of

the neighborhood theatres featured in this issue—from Central Park's Delacorte Theatre to Staten Island's Snug Harbor Cultural Center!

Other options featured in this guide:

- ✓ **WORKSHEET:** Reproduce and distribute the *Play by Play* A to Z worksheet on the back page of this guide along with the current issue of *Play by Play*.
- ✓ **PUZZLE:** Use the puzzle found in *Play by Play* as a quick, fun and easy way to familiarize your students with the content of the issue. (Answers inside this guide.)



Cool Down This Summer...with Big Theatre Discounts!

Many of you are already TDF members and enjoy **great theatre at deeply discounted prices** through our mailings and Web site. Why not remind your fellow full-time educators and your students that they're also eligible to join TDF and get the best ticket deals in town for Broadway, Off Broadway, music and dance?

www.tdf.org/application

IN THIS ISSUE:

Reviews:

■ **Legally Blonde** is the new Broadway musical based on the popular movie starring Reese Witherspoon. But, as *Play by Play* reviewer Candice Brown reports, the stage rendition “is even better than its inspiration!”

■ **Coram Boy** reveals a darker side of 18th Century British aristocracy. Read why *Play by Play* reviewer Melissa Elgandy considers this inspiring new play with music a “truly unique Broadway experience.”

■ **Be**, according to *Play by Play* reviewer Mariana Quinn Makwaia, is “a series of step dances gone wild!” Read all about this thrilling dance and percussion event!

Other Shows Highlighted in this Issue:

■ **Spring Awakening** has high school teens coming back for more! Read why *Play by Play* writer Julia Keimach has seen the sensational Broadway musical four times, and “wouldn’t rule out going again”!

■ **Passing Strange** is a sensational rock n’ roll, spoken-word performance by poet-musician Stew. Read *Play by Play* writer Charlie Peppers Jr.’s recent interview with Stew.

■ **Radio Golf** is the last in August Wilson’s ten-play cycle documenting the twentieth century African American experience. Read *Play by Play* writer Quaseem Raab’s look at the contemporary issues of this Broadway must-see.

■ **365 Days/ 365 Plays** is the result of playwright Suzan-Lori Parks’ decision to write a play a day for a whole year. Find out where you can catch a piece of the action!

■ **The Sublet Experiment**: Read what happens when a playwright and team of actors take over a new apartment every week to set the stage for drama!

Other Features:

■ **Shakespeare in the Park**: Almost every morning this summer, patrons of the Public Theater’s Shakespeare in the Park will stand on line for hours for free tickets to the star-studded event. Read *Play by Play* writer Olivia Wooden Virta’s veteran account of how to make the most of the wait!

■ **Spotlight on a Neighborhood Theatre**: *Play by Play* writer Jeremy Friedman gives an overview of Staten Island’s Snug Harbor Cultural Center.

Using the Back Page: *Play by Play* A to Z

The worksheet provided on the back page of this guide is designed to help students navigate through the issue and discover the opportunities it contains. Reproduce the worksheet and assign it as homework, or put students into groups and encourage them to complete it together in class. Try setting a time limit, and see which group can find the most correct answers.

Answers: Lauren Ambrose, BRIC Studio, Coney Island, Duffy Square, Eugene O’Neill, Flea Theatre, Gallery Players, Hip Hop Theater Festival, Imperial Theatre, *Journey’s End*, Julia Keimach, Laura Bell Bundy, Mayumana, *No Child...*, Ohio Theatre, Suzan-Lori Parks, Queens Theatre in the Park, Rumsey Playfield, Stew, *Talk Radio*, *Urinetown: The Musical*, Will Van Dyke, Marisa Wegrzyn, Xanthe Elbrick, Youth Onstage!, Susan Zeder

WRITING EXERCISE

Passing Strange @ The Public Theatre

Say it with Rhythm, Say it with Rhyme...

Passing Strange uses the infectious rhythm of rock n’ roll to tell the semi-autobiographical tale of Stew, a singer-composer growing up as an African American artist in the US, Amsterdam and Berlin. In his interview with *Play by Play* writer Charlie Peppers Jr., Stew says of *Passing Strange*: “The play was purely autobiographical when I started writing it. Now it is more of an emotional biography than a factual one.”

Perhaps what makes *Passing Strange* so compelling is Stew’s knowledge that the performance contains issues about “being a black artist in America and abroad that I think have never been said on the stage...or at least have not been said enough.”

Exercise: Write your own “life-inspired” spoken-word poem: a rhythm-inspired poem that highlights important issues and events of your life, embellishing and expanding them for the sake of creativity.

1. The first step is **identifying a theme** for your poem. What’s an issue in your life that you feel needs to be voiced? Something that people don’t talk about, but should...or don’t talk about enough?

2. The next step is **brainstorming some content** for your poem: the autobiographical truths about you that will provide the heart of your poem.

List on a piece of paper:

- two true facts about yourself, and one lie
- two people in your life who are important to you, and one person you just met this week
- three different places you’ve been—different street corners, boroughs, or countries—and one place you’ve never been to that you’d like to visit (the more exotic, the better!)
- your favorite and least favorite color
- your favorite and least favorite food
- your favorite slang phrase
- your favorite title or lyric from a popular song
- your favorite line from a poem or piece of literature
- a nickname that people call you
- a nickname you’ve never had, but that you wish you did
- the thing that gets on your nerves more than anything else
- the place where you feel most at home

3. Next, **choose a rhythm** for your poem, be it rap, rock, reggae, punk or anything in between.

4. Now start to **craft your answers from #2 into a poem**. Find ways to weave, repeat and combine the phrases and ingredients you’ve chosen into a story or narrative that addresses the theme from #1. How can you use the facts about yourself to highlight the issue or event you want your audience to think about?

5. While you’re crafting your poem together, try to:

- write at least two lines that rhyme
- use at least one instance of repetition of words or phrases
- use at least one metaphor, where you express a similarity between two unrelated things: *My thoughts are a blizzard in my*

brain. You are the sunshine of my life!

- use one instance of alliteration, where a phrase contains words beginning with the same consonant sound: *I put pen to paper, then peddle for praise...*

6. Choose a title. Stew's title, *Passing Strange*, is borrowed from Shakespeare's *Othello*. Choose a word or phrase, perhaps borrowed from another artist, that you think adds meaning to your poem. Find a way to weave that word or phrase into your poem, if you haven't already.

7. Perform it! Bring in the music that you chose to accompany your poem, or perform it a capella if you don't have a recording. Either way...Get an audience to hear what you have to say!



Get your *Play by Play* poster now!

Just e-mail Playbyplay@tdf.org with your name, school, address and how many posters you would like and they will be sent right off to you!

DISCUSSION HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

After the dark plot twists of *Coram Boy*, *Play by Play* reviewer Melissa Elgendy isn't satisfied with the play's "traditional happy ending."

What makes a happy ending a *good* ending? What's the difference between an ending that makes you happy and an ending that satisfies you?

- Discuss the review of *Coram Boy*. Based on the plot points reviewer Melissa Elgendy provides, how do you think the play ends? How many possible 'happy endings' can you imagine for the play?
- Do you expect a happy ending every time you read a book, or see a play or movie? Why or why not?
- Discuss the books you've read in class this year, and/or other stories you're all familiar with. Which stories ended the way you expected? Which ones have endings you wish you could change? How would you change them?
- Host an afternoon of "fractured fairy tales"! Have students volunteer to tell a familiar story to the class, but providing a new and unexpected ending... (What happens if one of Cinderella's stepsisters fits into the glass slipper? What happens if the Three Little Pigs decide to go into business with the Big Bad Wolf? What happens if Rapunzel decides to get a haircut?)

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Many Broadway and Off Broadway productions can support the curriculum you teach. The list below includes shows featured in *Play by Play*, as well as other productions that may or may not offer a specially priced student ticket.

NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, tickets can be purchased for the following shows by calling Ticketmaster at (212) 239-6200.

Literature:

- **The Color Purple** The hit musical based on Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Broadway Theatre, 1681 Broadway. www.colorpurple.com
- **Wicked** The long-running hit based on the novel by Gregory Maguire. Gershwyn Theatre, 222 W. 51 St. www.wickedthemusical.com

History/Government:

- **Frost/Nixon** Based on the heated interviews between former President Richard Nixon and British talk-show host David Frost. Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre, 242 W. 45 St. www.frostnixononbroadway.com
- **Coram Boy** (Reviewed in this issue, p. 3)

Ethnicity/Multicultural:

- **In the Heights** Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical of three days in the life of Washington Heights. 37 Arts Theatre A, 450 W. 37 St. www.intheheightsthemusical.com
- **Don Quixote** By Miguel de Cervantes; in Spanish with simultaneous English translation. Through June 6. Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27 St. (212) 225-9940. www.repertorio.org

Current Events/Ethics:

- **Inherit the Wind** Christopher Plummer and Brian Dennehy star in this classic retelling of the famous 1925 Scopes "Monkey Trial." Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45 St. Through July 8.
- **Radio Golf** (Featured in this issue, p. 2)

Shakespeare and the Classics:

- **Romeo and Juliet** and **A Midsummer Night's Dream** Delacorte Theatre in Central Park, enter at W. 81 or E. 79 St. June 5-July 8 (R&J) and Aug. 7-Sept. 9 (Midsummer). (212) 539-8750. www.publictheater.org
- **Romeo and Juliet** An experimental musical version of the Shakespeare classic. La Mama E.T.C., 74A E. 4 St. May 24-June 17. (212) 475-7710. www.lamama.org

Using the *Play by Play* Puzzle

Pass out *Play by Play* to your class. Give the students ten minutes to read through the issue, and fill in the word scramble on the bottom of page 5.

Answer Key: 1: music, family; 2: Harvard law School; 3: Shakespeare in the Park; Solution: Hold Me To It

Play by Play/TDF

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Play by Play **A to Z**

Use this issue to find answers which start with the following letters.



A

Pictured here, she's playing Juliet in Central Park this summer (last name)

B

This alternative Brooklyn performance space is on Rockwell Place

C

Radio Golf by August Wilson is set in this Brooklyn neighborhood

D

A new TKTS ticket booth is being built here

E

See *Spring Awakening* at this theatre

F

\$20 tix are available to *Smoke and Mirrors* at this theatre

G

Their Black Box summer festival features three weeks of world premieres

H

They're performing part of Suzan-Lori Parks' *365 Days/365 Plays*

I

Coram Boy is playing at this theatre

J

\$20 rush tix are available for this show at the Belasco Theatre

K

She's obsessed with *Spring Awakening*, and isn't afraid to write about it! (last name)



L

Pictured left, she's the star of *Legally Blonde: The Musical*

M

They're the group featured in *Be*

N

\$20 rush tix are available for this one-woman show by Nilaja Sun

O

Cool down this summer with the Ice Factory festival at this theatre

P

She's the playwright pictured right (last name)

Q

You'll see a variety of theatre, music and dance pieces at this theatre in Flushing Meadow

R

Central Park Summerstage heats up here this summer

S

Pictured right, he's the composer of *Passing Strange*

T

\$25 rush tix are available for this play by Eric Bogosian

U

Snug Habor Cultural Center's summer season includes this musical

V

He wrote *Pages* with Josh Halloway; and you can get \$18 tix to the performance at CAP21 (last name)

W

\$10 rush tix are available for *The Butcher of Baraboo* by this playwright (last name)

X

She plays Alexander in *Coram Boy*

Y

Check out the All Star Project for \$5 tix to this and other productions

Z

You can see her play *The Milk Dragon* at the New Plays for Young Audiences summer series (last name)



Think about it/Talk about it: Which show featured in the issue most interests you, and why?