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## Life

Home Arts/Life Life Mentors to train youths about all aspects of theatre

## Mentors to train youths about all aspects of theatre

Posted By CAROL FEENEY

Posted 1 month ago

Festival Players of Prince Edward County has a new home and starts 2009 with exciting opportunities for youth in the area. They have taken up residence, thanks to longstanding supporters of all things cultural and County, Mark Henry and Lynne Ellis, at Fields on West Lake in the big red barn at 15786 Loyalist Parkway between Bloomfield and

Wellington.

Beginning in late

February, and continuing through the

summer, area youths aged 14-- 19 will be engaged in all aspects of theatre and mentored by the professionals taking part in Festival Players' 2009 Season which runs July 8 to Aug. 23 presenting an eclectic mix of new plays.

Ship of Fire by Marion de Vries, Bernie Gaw, Tom Leighton and Suzanne Pasternak is set in 1853 aboard the Ocean Wave where a young Irish girl and a ship's crewman meet on the fateful last voyage of the luxury passenger steamship travelling between Montreal and Hamilton. This show will take place at Mt. Tabor Playhouse in Milford.

Schoolhouse, by Leanna Brodie, is a hilarious and heartwarming circa 1938 set in a one-room schoolhouse in a small town in rural Ontario. Miss Linton, a fresh, young schoolteacher, just out of college, finds herself facing her first class of students, and a big heap of challenges.

Colours in the Storm, by Jim Betts, is set in Algonquin Park in 1917 and is based on the story of Tom Thomson's life and mysterious death as seen by the locals who looked upon him with varying degrees of suspicion and amusement as Thompson captures the raw beauty of the park in his sketches. This show will play at Osterhout-Henry Hall at Fields on West Lake.

The mentorship program has Phillips leading participants through the initial stages of launching a theatrical production. The process begins with learning about the plays being produced by Festival Players and tackling questions like: "How does a director break down a script?" "What does the actor do to prepare for a role?" and "How does the designer come up with the vision for the production?" "The Youth Mentorship Program is unlike anything being offered to area students," says Phillips. "It's the chance of a lifetime for a young person with theatrical aspirations, or even just a curiosity about the inner workings of the theatre."

During the course of the program, workshops by other theatrical professionals will be provided in such things as group dynamics, choral work, mask, clown, period dance, auditioning, voice, acting technique, dialects, costume, set, sound and lighting design, singing, improvisation, reading

Shakespeare, and others. Youths will be paired up with a Festival Players company member who will mentor them throughout the season.

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The latest addition to the Youth Mentorship roster of instructors is Martha Ross, coartistic director of the award-winning Theatre Columbus in Toronto, who will lead the group through the process of creating and presenting their own piece of theatre. A painting by the artist Tom Thomson will be the inspiration. The Youth Mentorship Program will culminate in a presentation for invited guests.

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"We're absolutely thrilled to add a theatre professional of Martha's calibre to our program," says Phillips. "The youths will be given an opportunity to use all the knowledge and tools they will have acquired during the season to put together a piece of theatre. It's perfect."

The Players will begin casting young people ages 10 and up for roles in Schoolhouse. This is a great opportunity for area youths to perform alongside seasoned theatre professionals. There are eight roles available for young people. Auditions for the adult roles will follow. Rehearsals begin in June during non-school hours and then continue in earnest once school has ended for the year. Previous theatrical experience is preferred but not necessary.

Interested youths should send a photo of themselves with their name, age, contact information and a bit about their background to

[info@festivalplayers.ca](mailto:info@festivalplayers.ca).

Deadline for submissions to the mentorship program is Feb. 7 at 5 p. m. Festival Players of Prince Edward County has acknowledged the positive response its call for 2009 Youth Mentorship Program applicants by scheduling an online information session. Taking place on

Wednesday, Feb. 4 at 8:30 p. m., anyone interested in applying for the program can join Artistic Director Sarah Phillips in a free, open access online chat. Interested parties should immediately contact Sarah Phillips at [sarah@festivalplayers.ca](mailto:sarah@festivalplayers.ca) 613- 399-5677. This program is limited to 10 participants, so don't delay.

The season runs from July 8- Aug. 23. Flex Passes are being offered at a 25 per cent discount from single tickets at \$67, redeemable for three regular tickets to the 2009 season. Single tickets will be on sale in the early spring. Order your Flex Pass by phone 613-471- 1444 or at

[info@festivalplayers.ca](mailto:info@festivalplayers.ca).

\*

Carol Feeney is the executive director of the Quinte Arts Council.

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