



**At Vittum Theater
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Mission

Adventure Stage Chicago creates dynamic and transformative theatre for young audiences that activates the imagination, inspires dialogue and strengthens community among families, educators and artists.

Vision

Adventure Stage Chicago strives to become Chicago's premier destination for theatrical productions and programming designed for young people aged 8 to 14 and the adults in their lives. We aim to be leaders in theatre education through professional development workshops, residencies and resources that offer innovative ways to infuse theatre into the classroom. We seek to cultivate and create challenging new work as well as produce celebrated stories.

Values

We believe:

- The arts are an essential part of every child's education.
- Our work must reflect the complexity and diversity of the community in which we live.
- Theatre inspires dialogue because it offers a safe setting in which to explore real-world situations.
- Young people contribute significantly to discourse when their perspective is valued.
- We have an obligation to provide every individual with a positive, self-affirming experience that promotes future participation in the arts.
- We must always serve the mission of the Northwestern University Settlement House.

Foundations and Corporate Support

Past/Current Funders: Americans for the Arts, Arts Work Fund for Organization Development, The John Buck Company, Henrietta Lange Burk Fund, Careerbuilder, Chicago Community Trust, Arie & Ida Crown Memorial, Patrick & Anna M. Cudahy Fund, Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, The Leo S. Guthman Fund, Grover Hermann Foundation, Illinois Arts Council, JCCC Foundation, Donald P. and Byrd M. Kelly Foundation, Kraft Foods, Inc., MB Financial Bank, McGraw Foundation, Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust, National Endowment for the Arts, Northern Trust Co. Charitable Trust, Polk Bros Foundation, St. Paul Travelers Foundation, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation

Production History

Katrina: The Girl Who Wanted Her Name Back[†]

By Jason Tremblay, Directed by Tom Arvetis

April 5 – May 21, 2009

*Holes**

By Louis Sachar, adapted from his award-winning novel; Directed by Matthew Reeder

November 16 – December 18, 2008

The Blue House[†]

(co-commissioned with the Chicago Children's Humanities Festival)

By José Cruz González, Directed by Tom Arvetis

April 5 – May 3, 2008

The Cay

By Gayle Cornelison, Directed by Amanda Delheimer

January 26 – February 17, 2008

Eye of the Storm[°]

By Charles Way, Directed by Kimberly Senior

November 3 – December 6, 2007

*The Ash Girl**

By Timberlake Wertenbaker; Directed by Amanda Delheimer

April 10 – May 12, 2007

*The Search for Odysseus**

By Charles Way; Directed by Nic Dimond

January 23 – February 18, 2007

*The Shakespeare Stealer**

By Gary Blackwood from his novel; Directed by Matthew Reeder

November 1 – December 9, 2006

*Still Life with Iris**

By Steven Dietz; Directed by Matthew Reeder

April 18 – May 13, 2006

I Dream in Blues[†]

By Tom Arvetis and Katherine Davis; Directed by Tom Arvetis

January 31 – February 25, 2006

And Then They Came For Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank

By James Still; Directed by Amanda Delheimer

November 20 – December 11, 2005

A Thousand Cranes

By Kathryn Schultz Miller; Directed by Laura Forbes

April 4 – 29, 2005

A Woman Called Truth

By Sandra Fenichel Asher; Directed by Tom Arvetis

January 25 – February 10, 2005

Sideways Stories from the Wayside School

Adapted by John Olive from the novels by Louis Sachar; Directed by Amanda Delheimer

November 8 – December 9, 2004

† - World Premiere

° - American Premiere

* - Chicago Premiere

Classroom Residencies

In 2004, Adventure Stage Chicago began implementing a unique classroom residency program in which classrooms throughout Chicago partnered with our teaching artists to identify and explore themes rooted in each season's productions. Each partnership determined which areas of the classroom curriculum could be investigated deeply with an arts-infused approach. Engaging lesson plans were developed and comprehensive units were executed in tandem over approximately 20 hours of classroom contact.

By taking part in a residency, students gained an increased awareness of, and confidence in, their own artistic and learning processes. Our goal has always been to facilitate the mastery of creative and academic skills at the highest level of evaluation and synthesis. Ideally, teachers conclude each partnership with a tested model for arts-integrated lesson planning and implementation, which they could recreate and redevelop over time and across the curriculum.

In 2007, Adventure Stage Chicago began a partnership with the Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis, MN) as a national dissemination site for the Neighborhood Bridges arts initiative. This partnership brought more structure to our existing residency work and refocused the curriculum, addressing critical literacy through storytelling, drama, creative writing, and listening.

Since 2004, Adventure Stage Chicago has provided 27 Residencies to CPS schools, including: five 8th grade classrooms and four 4th grade classrooms at Healy Elementary, five 4th grade classrooms and three 6th grade classrooms at Gladstone Elementary, one 8th grade classroom at Burr School, one 5th grade classroom and two 7th grade classrooms at Chopin Elementary, two 7th grade classrooms Newberry Academy, two 7th grade classrooms at Stowe Academy, and two 6th grade at Skinner Classical School. This year the program has grown to provide 12 residencies (6 in the fall and 6 in the spring).

2008-2009 – 12 Residencies

- Near North Elementary School (one 7th grade classroom)
- Darwin (one 5th grade classroom)
- Goethe Elementary (two 6th grade classrooms)
- Carpenter Elementary (one 7th grade classroom)
- Mitchell Elementary (one 5th grade classroom, one 6th grade classroom)
- Skinner Elementary (two 6th grade classrooms)
- Healy Elementary (three 8th grade classrooms)

Youth Classes/Summer Programming

- ❖ For four consecutive summers, starting in 2004, Adventure Stage Chicago partnered with Striding Lion Inter-Arts Workshop and the After School Matters Summer Youth Initiative to host a teen apprenticeship program. Fifteen high school students from across Chicago meet daily over the course of six weeks to devise, rehearse, and perform an original interdisciplinary production. The goal was to cultivate apprentices' known talents and uncover underlying and marketable skills within the safety and support of an ensemble.
- ❖ Since 2005, Adventure Stage Chicago offered a two-week performing arts camp at House in the Wood, a retreat center in Wisconsin owned by Northwestern University Settlement House. This overnight camp experience offers up to twenty-four young people the opportunity to improve self-confidence, develop teamwork and conflict-resolution skills, and learn new and positive ways to express themselves.
- ❖ In 2006, Adventure Stage Chicago initiated its first after-school program with Talcott Elementary, a neighborhood school. For three hours per week, sessions were led by a professional actor. Workshops emphasize communication, improvisation, and movement intended to build social skills needed to interact effectively with others. Additionally, students were exposed to Adventure Stage productions.
- ❖ In 2008-2009, Adventure Stage Chicago began a *Holiday Drama Kids*, a pilot program in partnership with award winning theater company Victory Gardens. Enrollment will be capped at 20 kids.
 - *Puppet Workshop* - December 29th, 2008, at Victory Gardens historic Biograph Theater

Kids will learn about the various styles of puppets, design and create their own puppet, receive discounted tickets to Victory Garden's production of *The Snow Queen*, and share their work on the main stage. Light snacks will be provided.

- *Mask Workshop* - February 13th, 2009, at Adventure Stage Chicago's historic Vittum Theater Kids will design and create masks, share scary stories, learn the fundamentals of mask performance, and work on the ASC Stage. Light snacks will be provided.
- *Playwriting Workshop* - April 7th, 8th, and 9th, 2009, between the Biograph and Vittum Theaters Kids will work on writing their own stories, work in small groups to create original plays, see ASC's production of *Katrina: The Girl Who Wanted Her Name Back*, and perform their own plays on the ASC stage. Light snacks will be provided on Tuesday and Wednesday, lunch will be provided on Thursday.

- ❖ In the summer of 2009, Adventure Stage Chicago hosted *Theater Adventure Camp* at Vittum Theater.. Classes were open to kids ages 8-14 and met five days a week for two weeks. Both groups then came together for a culminating performance for family and friends on the ASC stage! Sessions included:

Tools for the Journey:

- This class introduced young people to the exciting world of acting, with a focus on exploring an actor's basic tools: body, voice, and imagination. Through physical activity and improvisation, young people learned to work together as an ensemble.

Story Explorers:

- In this class young people were challenged to explore language and storytelling through select monologues and scenes from popular plays for youth.

Professional Development Workshops

Each year, Adventure Stage Chicago has implemented a number of professional development workshops for teachers working in the Chicago area. These workshops are inspired by the season's productions and are free of charge. Participants receive Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDU) for their participation. Since the programs inception in 2004, over 375 Chicago teachers have attended. Our current season offers traditional PD workshops, as well as a Storytelling Workshop Series, a new pilot program offered in partnership with CPS Office of Arts Education.

2008-2009 Season

Digging Up Destiny: Exploring Fate, Heritage & Friendship (November 7, 2008)

- This workshop will use Tall Tales as a starting point for storytelling, critical literacy discussions, and writing exercises. Hands-on activities will help teachers discover how they can draw from classroom literature to create meaningful interactive experiences for their students.

What's in a Name: Exploring Identity and Survival (March 27, 2009)

- Using the events surrounding Hurricane Katrina as a springboard for arts-integrated activities, workshop participants will explore how our pasts and experiences shape who we become. Teachers will participate in hands-on activities that can serve as an entry point into discussion about current events and how we deal with large-scale disasters.

Storytelling Workshop Series (October 2008 to May 2009)

- A year-long Professional Development Course in the art of storytelling. Designed for teachers who would like to use a variety of storytelling techniques in the classroom to connect with curriculum. Participants receive a stipend to attend monthly workshops at innovative locations throughout the city. Workshops will be led by professional storytellers and will focus on the genres of personal stories, folktales, history tales, and stories drawn from literature.

Saturday Workshops

Saturday Workshops are an opportunity to engage audience members in an art-making activity using simple media. Led by a trained visual or performance artist, young people and their families meditate on the production they are about to see by creating a piece of art or performance that draws on relevant themes. Due to the heightened level of engagement, enrollment is capped at approximately 25.

2008-2009 Season

HOLES: Where do we come from? Exploring Heritage through Drama and Art

- Through drama, discussion and art, workshop participants will explore their diverse backgrounds and family inheritances.

KATRINA: What makes me ME? Exploring Identity through Drama and Art

- Through drama, discussion and music, workshop participants will explore the meaning and origin of their names and how they feel their name affects their identity.

Presenter

- 2008 New Visions/New Voices Festival - Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, Washington D.C.
- 2005 Children's Theatre Showcase - AATE National Conference, Chicago

Awards/Recognition

- 2009 Ann Shaw Fellowship (TYA/USA) awarded to Producing Artistic Director Tom Arvetis.
- 2007 Zeta Phi Eta Winifred Ward Award for Outstanding New Children's Theatre Company (AATE)
- Neighborhood Bridges National Partner with Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis)
- Kraft Art Discovery Grant Recipient (2004, 2005 & 2006)
- Americans for the Arts/National Arts Marketing Project – Advance Training Program (Class of 2005)
- National Endowment for the Arts – Access to Artistic Excellence Grants (*Still Life with Iris, The Blue House*)

Affiliations

- American Alliance for Theatre and Education (since 2005)
- TYA/USA (formerly ASSITEJ/USA) (since 2005)
- Chicago Family Theatre Alliance (since 2005)
- Illinois Arts Alliance (since 2005)
- Illinois Arts Council Arts-in-Education Roster Artist (since 2005)
- League of Chicago Theatres (since 2000)
- Wicker Park/Buck Town Chamber of Commerce (since 2004)
- West Town Chamber of Commerce (since 2008)