



235 W. 50<sup>th</sup> St. between Broadway & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 14, 2014 New York City, NY**

**CONTACT [jmann@circlesquare.org](mailto:jmann@circlesquare.org)**  
**(212) 307-0388**

## **NYC THEATER TEENS TAKE ON BROADWAY**

*Teens On Broadway* is an initiative of Circle in the Square Theatre School to celebrate, encourage and build the performing arts community in New York City public high schools.

On Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m., 120 students from the following schools will perform scenes of best works at Circle in the Square Theatre. The event will be attended by members of these school communities. The general public is also invited to attend.

- **Fordham High School for the Arts (Bronx)**
- **Brooklyn High School of the Arts (Brooklyn)**
- **Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School for the Arts (Brooklyn)**
- **Professional Performing Arts School (Manhattan)**
- **Repertory Company High School for Theatre Arts (Manhattan)**
- **Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing & Visual Arts (Manhattan)**

"With *Teens On Broadway* we celebrate achievements and encourage the desire of talented New York teens who dream of a career in the theater. We also support and acknowledge the many pre-professional public high school programs across the City that nurture new generations of theater-makers and theater-lovers."

- Circle in the Square Theatre School Board President Paul Libin

There are thirty NYC public high schools with pre-professional training programs. The opportunity to perform is rotated to make it equally accessible, regardless of how extensive or small each school's training program may be. The unifying factor is the students who aspire to performing arts careers. This year's six schools have each chosen 15 minutes excerpts that demonstrate the musical theater, drama, comedy, dance, and monologues they have been working on.

### **Students to be featured in *Teens on Broadway 2014* include:**

**Nygeeba Gasques'** original play *Cupid's Blowout* originated from a class improvisation, developed as a labor of love with the help of her class and the theater department.

Nygeeba, a junior at Brooklyn HS of the Arts is also the theater department's primary costume designer. She has designed costumes for over five shows at the school.



235 W. 50<sup>th</sup> St. between Broadway & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**Randy Arbujo** entered Dr. Susan S. McKinney SSA because of its geographic convenience and selected to be a theatre major by default. Early in his sophomore year, Randy discovered his deep love of acting as he took on the role of Cassius in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

Having entered Fordham HS for the Arts as a transfer student **Justin Valero** found his niche in the musical theater program where he could express his talent and collaborate with peers, building a sense of confidence, community, and life-long friendships. Justin's dream is to become a professional performing artist.

**Regan Sims** is originating a character in *Salomé of the Moon*, a world-premiere by Nick Jones (writer, *Orange is the New Black*), commissioned by Waterwell at Professional Performing Arts School. After winning the NY State English-Speaking Union (ESU) Shakespeare competition, Regan will represent New York at the national competition.

Since entering Repertory Company HS as a shy, limited-English-speaking 9<sup>th</sup> grader, **Betsy Paula** has blossomed into a confident and talented young artist eager to share her gifts with the world. She has been cast this year as a lead in both main stage productions.

Wadleigh School for the Performing Arts' **Alana Cowan** will appear in the season premiere of *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit* and has been cast in a starring role in feature film *The Best Man 3*. **Dariel Cruz** studies with Anne Bogart's SITI Company at Skidmore University.

**What participating schools have to say about *Teens On Broadway*:**

“... gives schools a built in network that helps inform our practice and celebrates young artists.” – Principal Margaret Lacy-Berman, Brooklyn HS of the Arts

“... an outstanding opportunity that gives students a professional-level platform to highlight their accomplishments.” - Principal Paula Holmes, Dr. Susan S. McKinney SSA

“... enables students to express themselves in front of peers and learn from each other...”  
- Principal Iris Blige, Fordham HS for the Arts

“... an incredible and rare opportunity for students and educators to share their work.”  
- Rebecca Schwartz, Manager of Waterwell Drama Program at Professional Performing Arts School



235 W. 50<sup>th</sup> St. between Broadway & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue

“The opportunity to have our students’ hard work reach beyond the four walls of our school and in a venue as prestigious as the Circle in the Square Theatre is a priceless one. We look forward to participating in this fantastic event now and in the future.”

– Principal Michael Urena, Repertory Company HS

“Many of our students have only been to a Broadway theater once. Performing on Circle in the Square’s stage will be a highlight of their high school careers.” – Matt Bresler, Drama Teacher at Wadleigh School for the Performing Arts

Attending *Teens On Broadway* is a great way to learn about the community of performing arts high school programs in New York City. A reception in the theatre lobby (where press can photograph, videotape and interview participants) follows the performance. Seating is limited so please **reserve your press pass** soon.

**Pre- and post-event interviews can be arranged.**

Contact: Jonathan Mann [jmann@circlesquare.org](mailto:jmann@circlesquare.org) or call (212) 307-0388

## **SOCIAL MEDIA COMPONENT**

In addition to performing, each school selects two students to serve as Teens on Broadway Social Media Team representatives (SMT Reps) throughout the school year. SMT reps attend afterschool meetings at Circle in the Square and post images and comments weekly about performance-related work and achievements at their schools, invite students at other schools to attend their performances, share information and resources, and network.

## **BACKGROUND**

**In 2013** six schools participated: **Brooklyn Theatre Arts High School** (Brooklyn), **Gramercy Arts High School** (Manhattan), **Performing Arts & Technology High School** (Brooklyn), **Robert F. Wagner, Jr. High School** (Queens), **Susan E. Wagner High School** (Staten Island), **Theatre Arts Production Company High School** (Bronx).

“Teens On Broadway is an amazing opportunity that has given our students a chance to take flight and let their artistic voices soar.”

– Mr. Buresch, Gramercy Arts High School Dean-participant

**In 2012** *Teens On Broadway* was piloted with two schools: **Humanities And The Arts High School** (Queens) and **Edward R. Murrow High School** (Brooklyn).

"The whole experience was terrific."

- Ms. Bragdon, Humanities and the Arts HS 2012 Teacher-participant



235 W. 50<sup>th</sup> St. between Broadway & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue

### **OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

*Teens On Broadway* is a recent addition to other successful Outreach Programs the School has provided since 1995. Two performance series *Three Plays for Grades K-6* and *Festival Of Theater* serve thousands of students and senior citizens who enjoy entertaining and educational productions on our Broadway stage each year.

We conduct a 22-day playwriting residency for the entire third grade at PS 11, through which each student writes an original short play that is then performed by graduate actors at Circle in the Square. We train select Theatre School graduates to become teaching artists, enabling them to help schools and human service agencies achieve their goals.

### **CONSERVATORY TRAINING ON BROADWAY**

Circle in the Square Theatre School, one of the country's premier schools of professional training for actors and singers is the only conservatory in a Broadway theater facility. The School features a comprehensive and eclectic mix of techniques that prepares performers for the diverse approaches they will encounter in the profession. Students receive individual attention in small classes, led by a faculty which consists of accomplished professionals. Both a two-year Professional and seven-week intensive Summer programs are provided to students from across America and around the world. Established in 1961 and accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre, the School was created by the late Theodore Mann and his long-time partner Paul Libin. Executive Director E. Colin O'Leary has worked at the School since 1979.

Among the School's distinguished alumni are: Kevin Bacon, Idina Menzel, Nicole Ari Parker, Benicio Del Toro, Felicity Huffman, Jeremy Shamos, Molly Shannon, Matthew Lillard, Justin Kirk, Thomas Sadoski, Lady Gaga and many other luminaries of the stage and screen.

**Teens On Broadway. Advance reservations are requested. Suggested donation is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students. Reservations include a post-show reception. Call 212-307-0388 during business hours or email [reservations@circlesquare.org](mailto:reservations@circlesquare.org).**

For more information about Circle in the Square Theatre School visit [www.circlesquare.org](http://www.circlesquare.org).