

Round House Theatre Teen Performance Company/The Sarah Metzger Memorial Play Information Sheet 2021-2022

THE PROGRAM:

The Round House Theatre Teen Performance Company is a pre-professional program for the next generation of theater artists. The program exposes teen artists to all the elements that are required to bring a professional production to the stage and culminates in a world premiere production. In addition students selected gain behind-the-scenes access to RHT productions and attend special events and master classes with RHT Artists.

The program culminates in The Sarah Metzger Memorial Play, produced by the Round House Theatre. This world-premiere production provides high school students with the unique opportunity to collaborate with their peers in a professional setting working on a world premiere play, commissioned by Round House Theatre for the Teen Performance Company. The production is directed, designed, stage managed, and performed by the Teen Performance Company working closely at every step with experienced professional artists and practitioners as mentors.

The Teen Performance Program seeks to inspire, teach, guide, and support young theater artists in the professional play-making process. We encourage the development of critical life skills: time management, forward thinking, communication, collaboration, and creative problem solving.

This is an educational program, and while it is a significant time commitment, previous experience is not required to apply or audition!

REQUIREMENTS:

- This program is free of charge.
- Students must be in the 9-12 grade as of Fall of 2021.
- Participation is through interview or audition only.
- Students must commit to the program for the full season. Additional information on the time commitment is included later in this packet.
- Participation in this program includes the following required dates:
 - **Feb 15-20, 2021:** Tech for the entire company
 - **Feb 22-24, 2021:** Dress Rehearsals
 - **Feb 25-27, 2021:** Performances

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING?

- In the Teen Performance Company, you get to act, direct, design, dramaturg or stage manage in a professional theatre setting. You exercise creative freedom over your ideas and learn hands-on techniques for navigating every step of the production process. But don't worry! Our TPC mentors will help you every step of the way, providing the expertise to guide you over the course of the year.
- You become a part of the Round House family, observing rehearsals and meetings, and participating in special events. We consider our teen artists to be a central part of our company and seek to include you in every aspect of theatre making.
- While you will be specializing in a single discipline, we believe that all our teen artists should get an inside look at every aspect of this craft. Over the course of the year, you will engage in a series of Master Classes to teach you about the many aspects of bringing a professional production to the stage.
- One of the best parts of TPC is meeting other students who care about theatre as much as you do! TPC is a great way to meet teens from a diverse array of high schools, coming together based on shared interests to create a community.
- We all know college is on your mind...and we've got you covered. As a member of TPC, you will demonstrate commitment, collaboration, dedication, and the ability to multitask. Mentors regularly write recommendations for students. TPC alums go on to great college programs, and work in the DC theatre community, and beyond.

WHAT POSITIONS ARE FILLED BY STUDENT COMPANY MEMBERS?

- Director – Guides and oversees the production artistically. They conceive and develop the unique world within which the playwright’s words come to life.
- Dramaturg/Production Associate – Compiles research for the production, creating packets of background information for the artists and writing articles and supporting materials for the audience. In addition, this position work with the RHT’s Education & Marketing departments to provide support for the Teen Performance Company
- Stage Manager – The record keeper and organizer of the production. Also “calls” the show in performance from the booth.
- Assistant Stage Manager – Assists the stage manager and acts as crew chief.
- Run Crew – Runs lights, sound and backstage. Are also involved in light hang and focus and other technical elements of the show.
- Costume Designer – Envisions and creates the costume design for the show.
- Lighting Designer – creates the stage lighting for the play, by writing light cues on a ETC Ion light board, working from a plot created in partnership with their advisor.
- Sound Designer – creates or finds all the music and sound for the show, and working with their advisor, programs them in to QLab for the run of the show. Can, but does not have to, include composing.
- Properties Designer – works with the RHT staff to create the set & properties for the show.
- Actor – performer in the show.

Students in all positions are members of the Teen Performance Company, and attend all classes and special events. Depending on their school’s requirements, students may be able to receive SSL hours through participating in the show.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

Please note that events take place at the RHT Education Center at 925 Wayne Ave, Silver Spring AND at Round House Theatre at 4545 East-West Highway, Bethesda. Company members are responsible for their travel to and from all events. A travel stipend may be available for students who demonstrate significant need.

A list of tentative dates for the company is available at the end of this document. A general timeline is below.

- **Early summer 2021:** Director chosen
- **June/July 2021:** Interviews for other positions
- **September 2021:** Auditions for the acting company
- **September 2021:** Director and Production Team begin the initial planning and production process, as well as mentor meetings.
- **September-December 2021:** The full company participates in Master Classes to develop essential skills for the production process and participates in the play development process by attending readings and workshops with the playwright. The company will also attend rehearsals and special events.
- **December 2021-mid February 2022:** Rehearsals for actors, director and stage manager happen 3-4 times per week. Designers meet 3-5 times per month until
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- While every effort is made to adhere to the master calendar, it is updated periodically to reflect schedule updates. RHT will make every effort to accommodate conflicts that students provide at the beginning of the program. Students receive a weekly email every Friday with the schedule for the next week. Parents are included in monthly updates as well.
- In general, we find that students are able to participate in the Fall shows at their schools or other venues.
- Unless the student is sick or there is a family emergency, we expect students to be present and on-time, unless they have a pre-approved conflict.

WHY IS THE PRODUCTION CALLED THE SARAH PLAY?

The Sarah Play honors the memory of Sarah Emily Metzger, an active member of the theatre community in her school and at Round House. One of the Round House family's lasting memories of Sarah is that, while still a high school student, she independently mounted a full-scale theatre production. Wishing to expand on the opportunities offered by her high school's theater department, Sarah worked to raise funds, secure facilities and a production staff, market and promote her production, and direct a full-length play.

Sarah passed away in a car accident her freshman year at University of Michigan. After her passing, Sarah's family worked with Round House to create and fund an annual program that would serve as a tribute to this inspiring young woman. The resulting Sarah Metzger Memorial Play was established by the Metzger family and friends to celebrate the memory of Sarah Metzger. It was created to provide similarly motivated high school students with a unique opportunity.

Through this program more than 325 students have taken part in producing a play at Round House over the past 18 years – and thanks to the generosity of donors, all activities of this program continue to be free of charge to students.

OTHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How is the Teen Performance Company at Round House different from just doing a play?

It is truly a company – so you will get to know and work with people in all theatrical disciplines, and learn about all areas of theatre, regardless of your role. This program is also tied to the RHT Mainstage and its award-winning company. The adult artists you will be working with are accomplished professionals and teachers applying their craft at RHT and other professional stages across DC.

How do the adult mentors and advisors work with the students?

Each student is assigned an RHT staff member to serve as their mentor. Mentors are available at every step to guide the process and support the students. Our focus is on teaching the process of a professional production and providing the training to be successful, as well as on the growth of each student professionally and personally.

In addition, artists from the professional community serve as Artistic Advisors and join the students during critical learning periods. They function as the artistic sounding board and confidant. Their primary concern is supporting the student's artistic vision for the production and reinforcing the independence of the student in their choices.

Guest Artist that also work on the RHT Mainstage act as Master Class teachers, providing concentrated training to the entire company on a particular discipline in the arts.

Do I have to have a lot of experience to apply?

The program is designed to take students at every level and prepare them to participate in a final production. We encourage students of varying backgrounds to apply regardless of your prior experience.

What if I have other after school activities or other conflicts?

At the beginning of the process and before finalizing the schedule, all students are asked to provide their conflicts. If you are accepted into the company, every effort will be made to schedule around those conflicts. New conflicts must be approved by the Director of Education.

What are the "special events"?

Special events include activities such as opening nights for RHT Mainstage productions, discussions, dress rehearsals, and attendance at other theatre companies.

Tell me about Round House.

Our Mission Round House is a theatre for everyone. We enrich our community through bold, outstanding theatrical and educational experiences that inspire empathy and demand conversation.

Our Values

- **Theatre for Everyone.** We are a theatre of and for our community, committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Accessibility. We believe that engaging in the arts is essential to the human experience and that arts education should be available to all. Therefore, we intentionally and rigorously work to break down barriers to attending, learning, and creating theatre—including those based in race, gender, sexuality, ability, and economics. We amplify voices that have been historically under-represented and under-resourced by the theatre field and strive to incorporate anti-racist and anti-sexist practices across all aspects of our work.
- **Artistic Ambition** We hold ourselves to the highest professional standards in all our work. We aim to be an important voice in the theatrical world by creating art locally that has an impact globally.
- **Community** We believe that we enhance our communities through our collaborative artistry both on stage and in the classroom. We invest locally—in both talent and products. We create civic dialogues with art at the center and endeavor to be the artistic home for our community. We consider our communities to encompass Bethesda, Silver Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland, the Washington theatrical community, and the broad Washington metropolitan area.
- **Empathy** We believe that fostering empathy creates stronger communities and that communities thrive when they represent a wide and diverse set of stories and viewpoints that reflect the breadth of human experience. We challenge audiences and theatre-makers to awaken their empathy through artistic risk on the stage and in the classroom.
- **Integrity** We believe in treating everyone with respect—staff, artists, students, trustees, and patrons. We endeavor to create a supportive culture that allows our teams to do their best work with an appropriate work/life balance. We are transparent about achieving our mission-based artistic and education initiatives and are committed to doing so in a financially responsible manner.

WHAT DO STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THE TEEN PERFORMANCE COMPANY/SARAH PLAY?

"Participating in TPC taught me more about theatre and collaboration than anything else I did during high school. Since going to college, I've grown even more thankful for having the opportunity to develop new work in such an encouraging environment, and I catch myself referencing my time in the company often."

"TPC has enabled me to learn about all aspects of theatre, some I've come to love and some I don't care much for, but most importantly, it formed my strongest friendships and created my best memories."

"Being in TPC was such a unique opportunity because young actors typically aren't able to experience the process of putting up a piece of new, professional work. From beginning to end we were immersed in professional settings, showing what the process is for real world actors".

"The mentorship in the Sarah Play program is beyond belief. Being able to work one-on-one with professionals in *all* facets of the theatrical experience is absolutely life-changing. And to top it off, they treat you like you are serious about theater, and like you know what you're doing, no matter the discipline and no matter your experience. They challenge you, and they push you to give an effort that even you didn't know you could."

"As an actor in the Sarah Play, this was the first time in my life that I felt successful. Truly successful. This experience has shown me that I can accomplish great things artistically and it made me a believer in my own abilities."

"It's so incredible to be able to meet these teens from around the greater DC area who are in love with the same thing you are. Some of my best friends have come from the Sarah Play, and these are friends who are now studying theater at schools across the country."

"It's been the best theatre program I've ever done because it doesn't show you one aspect of theatre, it shows you every aspect. I did it last year and it was amazing so I did it again this year."

"You get to meet other high school students who have the same interests as you, you get to see how a play comes together from the ground up and you get to have fun doing what you have a passion for with like-minded peers."

"I think the Sarah Play's mentorship program is super unique and special. You have access to so many different experienced and helpful professionals from a wide variety of fields, letting you learn about all the different parts that go into producing a play whether it be acting or design or crew work."

"My involvement with The Sarah Play helped me gain a deeper understanding of the actor's role in professional theater. I thought I knew what it meant to be professional- now I really do!"

"Directing the Sarah Play has been the most inspiring and exhilarating theatrical experience I have ever had. The Sarah Play is truly one of the best theater programs for students in the country, offering a unique opportunity for students to experiment, learn, and grow. This learning and growth is fostered through the mentors' commitment to the show and to the student team."

TENTATIVE DATES FOR 2021/2022
TEEN PERFORMANCE COMPANY

- All required TPC activities are outside of regular school hours (except Friday Student Matinee).
- Company members should plan on being available for Monday & Friday evenings, and Sunday late morning/early afternoon on a regular basis.
- All company members will not necessarily be called on all dates. This calendar tries to identify all potential dates.
- Individual mentor meetings may happen in addition to these dates.
- Calendar is subject to change, based upon the students' availability.
- **NOTE – Once we reach December, actors should expect to be called 3-4 days a week. The additional days will be determined based on actor availability.**

TPC Actor Auditions – Sep 9-12

Sun, Sep 26
Mon, Sep 27

Fri, Oct 1 – Teen Night

Sun, Oct 3
Mon, Oct 4
Sun, Oct 10
Mon, Oct 11
Fri, Oct 15
Sun, Oct 17
Mon, Oct 18
Fri, Oct 22
Sun, Oct 24
Mon, Oct 25
Sun, Oct 31

Mon, Nov 1

Fri, Nov 5
Sun, Nov 7
Mon, Nov 8
Fri, Nov 12 - Full Company/Teen Night
Sun, Nov 14
Mon, Nov 15
Fri, Nov 19 – hold for possible school show trip
Sun, Nov 21
Mon, Nov 29

Fri, Dec 3
Sun, Dec 5

Mon, Dec 6
Fri, Dec 10
Sun, Dec 12
Mon, Dec 13
Fri, Dec 17
Sun, Dec 19
Mon, Dec 20

Mon, Jan 3
Fri, Jan 7 – Full Company/Teen Night
Sun, Jan 9
Mon, Jan 10
Fri, Jan 14
Sun, Jan 16
Mon, Jan 17
Fri, Jan 21
Sun, Jan 23
Mon, Jan 24
Fri, Jan 28
Sun, Jan 30
Mon, Jan 31

Fri, Feb 4
Sun, Feb 6
Mon, Feb 7
Wed, Feb 9
Fri, Feb 11
Sat, Feb 12
Sun, Feb 13
Tues, Feb 15– Reh onstage
Wed, Feb 16 - Reh onstage
Thurs, Feb 17 – TPC Dry Tech (no actors)
Fri, Feb 18 - TPC Dry Tech (no actors)
Sat, Feb 19 - TPC Tech, Full Company, Full day
Sun, Feb 20 – TPC Tech, Full Company, Full day
Tues, Feb 22- Dress, Full Company
Wed, Feb 23– Dress, Full Company
Thurs, Feb 24 – Dress, Full Company
Friday, Feb 25 – 10am Student Matinee &
Opening Night/Full Company
Saturday, Feb 26 – Matinee and Evening Performances
Sunday, Feb 27 – Matinee Performance

Sun, March 13 – Full Company debrief and party
Fri, April 8 – Teen Night