

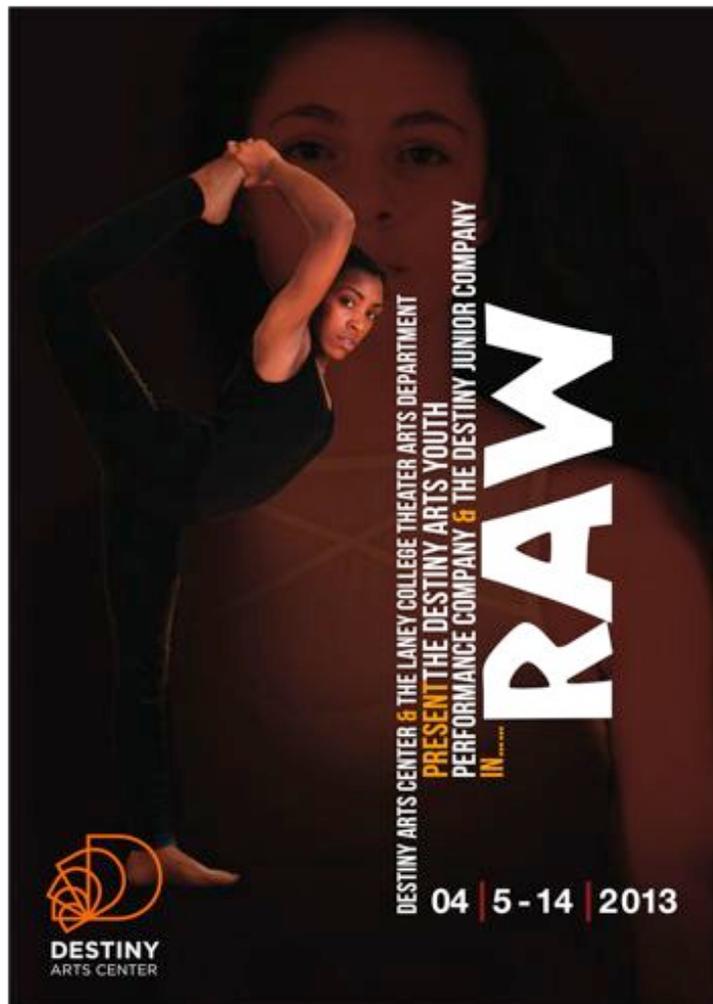


DESTINY
ARTS CENTER

“RAW”

April 2013

Teacher Packet



Dear Educator,

Thank you so much for bringing your youth to the Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company's show, *Raw*. It has been eight years since we introduced the field trip matinee performances and we have been extremely pleased with the outcome. The matinees are what our youth look forward to all year long, because their message is extremely personal and they know that other young people can relate to it and possibly find hope and inspiration from it.

Whether it is the first or the 20th Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company show that you have attended, I hope that you, as well as your students, enjoy the production and see it as more than just a show, but as an educational opportunity. In this packet you will find some of the poetry, monologues and scenes from the show, resources that we used to create the script material and some discussion questions, group exercises, theater games and class project ideas.

Because of the range of ages of the youth that attend the performance, we will not be able to cater this packet to specific age groups. Instead we hope that you will be able to modify what you find here to fit your students' grade level and needs.

We hope that you will find this material helpful and would greatly appreciate any feedback that you may have. Thank you and we look forward to seeing you at many more Destiny Arts Center events.

Sincerely,

Sarah Crowell
Artistic Director, Destiny Arts Center
Co-Artistic Director, Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company
sarah@destinyarts.org



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ABOUT DESTINY ARTS CENTER

Destiny Arts Center is an Oakland-based nonprofit violence prevention and arts education organization that has been serving youth for over 23 years, through after-school, weekend and summer programs in dance, theater, martial arts, conflict resolution, self-defense, performance and youth leadership at our Oakland center and in up to 45 East Bay public schools.

MISSION

Destiny exists to end isolation, prejudice and violence in the lives of young people.

We Accomplish Our Mission By...

- Offering skills training to youth, ages 3-18, in after-school, weekend and summer programs in performing and martial arts, youth leadership, and violence prevention at our main site, and in outreach programs at local schools and community centers.
- Providing youth with caring adult mentors.
- Supporting youth in developing an individualized sense of artistic expression.
- Giving youth opportunities to share a message of peace and empowerment through performances, events, and workshops.
- Nurturing the physical, emotional and spiritual development of young people.

VISION

When Destiny has succeeded in its work, young people will value themselves and others - ever mindful of the ways their words, actions, and attitudes affect their communities, as well as the world. They will: respond rather than react to situations; teach and practice love rather than violence; honor people from different backgrounds and experiences equally; and, be connected to, and active participants in, the life of their communities.

VALUES & BELIEFS

We value...

- the principles of love, respect, care, responsibility, honor, and peace as embodied in Destiny's Warrior's Code.
- building and sustaining a diverse and inclusive community.
- being able to provide services to youth, regardless of their families' ability to pay.

We believe...

- that youth are inherently good.
- that based on the social and political climate of today, young people experience isolation, violence and/or prejudice in their lives.
- that youth respond favorably to love and positive reinforcement.
- that everyone has a unique voice, and they are equally important.
- that when communities take active responsibility for the struggles, as well as the successes of all its young people, youth and thus communities are more likely to thrive.

ABOUT THE DESTINY ARTS YOUTH PERFORMANCE COMPANY & THE DESTINY JUNIOR COMPANY

The **Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company** (DAYPC) is a multicultural group of teens who create original performance art pieces, in collaboration with professional artists, that combine hip hop, modern, and aerial dance, theater, martial arts, song and rap. The productions are a dynamic, creative forum for the young people to express their fears, hopes and strategies for confronting challenging personal and social issues. The company has performed locally and nationally since 1993, for over 20,000 audience members annually.

The company was the subject of a documentary film (2000) called "A Place Named Destiny" that was shown nationally at film festivals. Last year Studio B Films, an academy award nominated film company under the direction of David Collier, filmed another documentary about the company that will premiere some time this year. A 171-page curriculum guide called *Youth On The Move: A Teacher's Guide to Co-Creating Original Movement/Theater Performances with Teens* was created in 2002 (funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts) to chronicle the process of the group's creation of original productions.

The **Destiny Junior Company** (DJC) is modeled after the teen company and gives the 9-12 year old members opportunities to develop dance and theater skills and perform at an intermediate level.



ABOUT THE COMPANY DIRECTORS



SARAH CROWELL has taught dance, theater and violence prevention to youth and adults for over 20 years. She has run programs at Destiny Arts Center since 1990. She has served as dance teacher, workshop facilitator, program director and executive director. She currently serves as the organization's artistic director.

Sarah co-founded the **Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company** in 1993, a troupe for teens to co-create original movement/theater productions based on their own experiences. The company now performs for over 20,000 audience members a year at conferences, festivals and other community events. Sarah received 9 California Arts Council Artist in Residency grants for her work at Destiny and a National Endowment for the Arts grant to author a curriculum guide for artists

working with teens called *Youth on the Move: A Teacher's Guidebook To Co-Creating Original Movement/Theater Performances With Teens*. Sarah is the recipient of the 2007 KPFA Radio Peace Award, the 2006 Purple Moon Dream Speakers Award and the 2011 KQED Women's History Month Community Leader Award.

Between 1984 and 2000, Sarah performed and toured nationally with modern, jazz and dance/theater companies based in Boston and the Bay Area, including *Impulse Jazz Dance Company* and the *Dance Brigade*. She also directed and performed with the dance/theater company *i am! Productions* between 1994 and 2002, which featured a two-woman show called *Portrait of a Girl from Nowhere... an urban fairy tale*. The piece explored issues of bi-racial identity through modern and hip-hop dance, theater, poetry and song.



RASHIDI OMARI came to the stage through his passion for all forms of dance. Hip Hop, B-Boying, Popping, Locking and House, modern and jazz dance are integral parts of his extensive repertoire. He has been performing professionally since 1998 and has been teaching dance since 2000. He has performed with DREAM Dance Company, Avatar Flux Dance Company, Adia Whittaker Dance Company, among others and is an MC for Hip Hop crew Company of Prophets as well as live bands Loco Bloco and The Unsmokables.

In addition to dance, Rashidi teaches workshops in lyricism, Hip Hop history, violence prevention and conflict resolution as a way to teach confidence, violence prevention skills and community building among youth. Rashidi has been working with Destiny since 1999 and has been the co-artistic director of the **Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company** since 2009. His Destiny directorial collaboration with the Balinese music and dance group Gamelan Sekar Jaya, to create the show *Tjak Box*, garnered critical acclaim.



NATASHA JACOBS has been dancing professionally since 2000 with Mystic Flava, a Buddhist dance collective and Six Times Crazy, an adult hip-hop dance collective, performing at the Palace of Fine Arts, Masonic Auditorium, Pride Parade, Hip Hop Festival III and IV, the Jon Sims Center for the Arts, among others. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from California State University, East Bay. Natasha has been a hip hop dance teacher at Destiny Arts Center since 2003 and has directed the **Destiny Junior Company** for 3 years.

PRE PERFORMANCE

Introduction: About Raw

Raw features 32 youth between the ages of 9 and 18. The story that they tell in the show was created out of their own experiences. The teen company co-writes the entire script in collaboration with their directors over a period of three months of intensive scriptwriting sessions, rehearsals and a company retreat, where the group brainstorms important personal and political themes and possible characters and storylines, all based on the experiences, feelings and passions of the company members.

This year's story is about three unlikely "heroes" who dare to take a **hero's journey** (see information about the hero's journey in resource guide below) into a mysterious, difficult world that reminds them that courage, truth and hope are the elements of their journey that will bring them home.

Each hero lands in the world of their own exaggerated reality and faces their own challenges. Camille deals with middle school bullying and lack of confidence and self esteem. Jalena deals with the pressures of choosing her path after high school. Jahslyn deals with witnessing all kinds of violence in her community. All of them struggle with ways that they can make a difference in their own lives and in a world that feels out of control.

Discussion Suggestions

- Have you seen a Destiny show before? If so, what were your general thoughts and feelings about the show(s)? If not, what are you expecting?
- How do you define "beauty"?
- What are your thoughts about gun violence?
- What communities are you a part of? (family, school, neighborhood, faith communities etc.)
- What do you love about your communities?
- What is challenging for you about your communities?
- What would you like to change about your communities?
- How are you responsible for making those changes?

Writing Prompts/Ideas

- Write about a time that you wanted to run away from your own problems.
- Write about a time that you stood up for what you believed in even though it took a lot of courage.
- Write a poem starting with: I am beautiful...

POST PERFORMANCE

1. Discussion Suggestions: Gather general, initial reactions

The following discussion questions can be used as a basis for general discussion after watching the performance or as free-writes. Discussing these issues with the class can help the students understand the show on a deeper level as well as help them process the information that they received. Many of the scenes and monologues from the show are included in this packet so feel free to review them with the students before discussing them.

- What stood out in the show for you?
- Do you believe the playwrights intended the audience to walk away with a particular message or idea? If so, what do you think is the main message?
- How does this performance impact its audience? What are you left with at the end of the performance?
- Why do you think the show's title, RAW? What do you think it means as it pertains to the show content?
- Can you relate to any of the characters' challenges? If so, which ones and how?
- Write a critique of the play, commenting on acting values, dance choreography and technique, style, genre, design, and theme.
- What did you think about the combination of the different types of dance and theater together? Do you think it was an effective way to speak about the issues that the show brought up?

2. Exercises: Getting to Know Each Other

These following group exercises are used in the process of creating Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company scripts.

What's In A Name?

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY: 15-20 minutes

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: None

SET-UP: Students get into partners with someone they don't know or don't know well. They sit cross-legged facing their partners, knee to knee. The atmosphere is quiet.

DESCRIPTION: Each student needs their partner the following questions:

- What is your full given name?
- What do you like to be called?
- Are you named after somebody?
- What does your name mean?
- Do you know why you were given this name?
- What is its origin/history?
- Do you like your name? Why or why not?
- Do you have any nicknames? Where did they come from?

- o If you had a child what would you name him/her? Why?

After everyone has asked and answered the questions, they get into a circle and present his/her partner to the group, using the information they have just learned about him/her.

NOTE: Be aware that this may be a sensitive topic to some people. If some group members prefer not to be introduced with a great deal of detail, that's okay.

Follow-up/Discussion Questions: Did you learn anything about yourself or your peers from this activity? Why are our names important? What do names mean to us? Do you know anyone that may have changed his/her name? Why do you think he/she did it? Do you think that pronouncing a name correctly is important? Why or why not?

If You Really Knew Me

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY: 5-10 minutes

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: None

SET-UP: Students are sitting cross-legged in a circle with their knees touching or almost touching.

DESCRIPTION: The instructor begins this exercise by giving an example of a completion of the sentence "If you really knew me you would know that...". For example: "If you really knew me, you would know that I graduated from Northern Hills High School." Each person in turn finishes the sentence. In the second round, the instructor invites students to go a little deeper in the information that they share. The instructor models this by saying something like: "If you really know me you would know that my father is Caucasian and my mother is African American." Each person finishes the sentence again in turn. This can go for two or three more rounds. Each time, the instructor role models the type of information he/she wants to get from the students, and models attentive listening as the group goes around again.

NOTE: It is especially important in the first few weeks of the program to keep this exercise light. This game has a tendency to get really intimate really quickly. Students do not need to give too much information right away or they end up feeling shy and vulnerable with each other. This exercise is good to do when the students are new to the group and then to repeat after the students know each other better. If the atmosphere feels safe to the students, they are likely to share intimate pieces of information. Be sure that you remind the students about the importance of confidentiality.

NOTE: It's always a little tricky when you do "If you really knew me..." early in the year with a group. You want them to get to know each other and begin sharing deeper information about themselves, but you don't want them to go too far. When I start this exercise I begin by saying something like, "If you really knew me, you would know that blue is my favorite color." On the second round I will say something like, "If you really knew me, you would know I'm biracial," to model revealing somewhat deeper information. One year a student revealed in the first session that she had

been anorexic the year before. The group was touched by her honesty and responded by giving very intimate details about themselves. By the third round of the exercise everyone was crying. At the time the group was willing to go to that level, but because the safety of the group hadn't been established yet, they were left feeling vulnerable and shy with each other for many weeks afterward. I now take the exercise much more slowly and repeat it throughout the year, getting to deeper information each time. This enhances, rather than compromises, the safety of the group.

3. Discussion/Study Suggestions: Related to Show Content

What is gender-based violence? How does it effect both men and women? Study the hero's journey (see resource list below).

Study the effects of gun violence and create a debate format around whether or not gun control could help reduce gun violence.

Study the facts and statistics in the Inside My Brain scene (see below in script excerpts) and expand on them.

Study the hero's journey. Discuss stories that follow the format of the hero's journey - Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz, Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings etc.

Talk about how RAW is a hero's journey.

Write your own hero's journey, either fictional or nonfictional.

Study the Navajo prayer about beauty (see below in script excerpts) and talk about what is meant by beauty in this context.

4. Discussion Suggestions: Violence Prevention

This topic is also very broad and at Destiny Arts Center youth spend many hours discussing the issues of violence and violence prevention and practicing ways to prevent violence in different ways. The following questions are the beginning of deeper study, discussion and practice.

Discussion and/or Writing Questions

Read Destiny Arts Center's Warrior's Code on page 25. Discuss examples of ways that you live each of these values in your daily life.

Read the synopsis of Destiny Arts Center's Five Fingers of Violence Prevention on page 26.

What is violence?

In what ways have you witnessed violence?

In what ways have you experienced violence?

In what ways have you perpetrated violence?

How do you prevent violence in your life?

How do you think the Five Fingers of Violence Prevention could be useful to you?

5. Project Ideas: Creative Writing Ideas

Found Poetry/Borrowed Text

- Have students choose a line from the play, such as the first line of a poem, and then continue writing; or have students highlight powerful words from the play and turn them into a “found” poem, where they right a poem from the play’s words in their own words.

Writing A Monologue

- Read over the monologues in the excerpts from the show section below. To warm up you can begin by having the students write a short monologue about themselves, sort of like an introduction. They can then choose a topic that they want to write about and a character from whose perspective to write. The character does not have to be human. Just make sure that the monologues have a clear beginning, middle and end.

6. Project Ideas: Researching Show-Related Material

Take a look at the resource guide below that gives information about show-related material. Get your students to research and write about the issues themselves!

Excerpts from RAW

SCENE: WHERE DO YOU FIND YOUR BEAUTY?

By Nekhi Foster

Where do you find your beauty?
I want to know
Is it something you shout? What color is it?
how does it feel?
And who had it, last you checked?
Is it something you whisper?
Does it leap in a silent pirouette from your tongue?
Spidery and thin, twirling in silence
Where do you find your beauty?
I want to know
Is it something you snarl?
something you scream?
Does it come flaming and shrieking from your throat like hell's own chariot?
Tearing and shredding vocal chords in its wake
And after it explodes from the seat of your soul like a storm
breaking
and trembling
and stammering
and sweating
Do you look ugly wearing your beauty?
Do you look beautiful wearing your rage?
Are you quiet, soft?
Do your eyes sparkle
just right when they are filled
with tears?
When I close my eyes I can feel beauty in the dark
It speaks to me
And I listen as beauty drips and blends like paint drops in my soul,
Blooming in my mind like a neon rose
The most breathtaking, magnificent thing I have ever seen
Where do you find your beauty?
I want to know
In a baby's eyes, in the grey light of early morning,
We all must be touched somehow,
We all must find beauty one day
And in our own ways,
in our own worlds,
We all must search

SCENE: THE CALL TO ADVENTURE

TRUTH:

Where do you find your truth?

I want to know

When you have no idea of the lies that keep you hypnotized in “not enough”

Not pretty enough

Not smart enough

You’ve been seduced by the lies that compromise the essence of who you are

The lies seduce us all

Not enough money

Not enough time

Not enough love

You are leaning on these lies to survive

But they keep you up at night

Crying in the darkness

Where do you find your truth?

COURAGE:

Where do you find your courage?

I want to know

How can you be courageous and go on when you know so much about the world?

You’ve studied it

You hold images of injustice, war, disease, corruption, and destruction

Spinning out of control, in your mind

Pictures as clear as memories from your childhood

And it seems like no one can really make a difference

No matter how they try

Where do you find your courage?

HOPE:

Where do you find your hope?

I want to know

When the violence is all around you

Violence wants to take your light and put it out

Just like the boy’s life that was taken that day

Right in front of you in the street

We both witnessed

the shooter’s empty eyes

the gun clenched in his hands

The boy’s life being wrenched away like stolen memories

From ancestors screaming no

Not your brother, not again, never again

Where do you find your hope?

SCENE: CONFUSION AND LIES

Camille: *(gasps and looks around)* Where am I?

Group enters and scene happens all around Camille as if she's not there

Sai: They're being hecka fake to me.

Chyna: Shoot. They fake wit' everybody!

Makhissa: Did she just say we were being fake?

Dorianna: Ooh, she better watch out.

Naia: You know what? I'm gonna deal with her right now.

Camille: Whoa!

Sai: I'm not scared of her. Just 'cause I'm small doesn't mean I can't beat her up.

Taylor: She ain't scared of you.

Makhissa: Ooh!

Naia: If she wasn't scared she would have said it to me face!

Chyna: Say it to her face.

Camille: What is going on?

Sai: Let's do this!

Makhissa: Ooh. This girl don't know.

Naia: She really don't. How about you come hit me then?

Group chants: Fight fight fight fight...

Camille: Stop.

Action freezes

Camille: How did I drop into all this drama? It's like what goes on at my school every day, only worse. I should never have opened that stupid virus. I should never have walked through that door.

TT: Sometimes things have to get worse before they get better.

All lines in the next scene are directed to Camille

Naia: I saw you talking to her boyfriend.

Camille: What?

Chyna: I saw the way you looked at him. Nasty.

Dorianna: You know that's not right.

Camille: What are you talking about?

Sai: Stop trying to deny it.

Isis: I know you wanna get with him.

Camille: This is just a misunderstanding, I don't...

Makhissa: Don't even try to defend yourself.

Camille: But I never...

Taylor: We know how girls like you are.

MONOLOGUE: THE WORD
By Camille Schmitt

The word
The word was laughing at me, mocking me
The word was a demon swimming through my veins.
The thought of the word let loose an ocean out of my eyes.
I was broken.
Shattered.
Like glass after being thrown against a rock.
I was naked.
Flesh.
Meat.
Spoiled for them to see.
The word.
It took me over.
Splattered me like the filling of a jelly donut.
Preventing me from seeing myself.
It devoured my inner being,
And would not stop.
The word
Group: Slut.
I was incapable of being myself,
When what was seen was somebody else.
Slut.
I was lost.

In a dark alley of words and labels.

Group: Slut

SCENE: INSIDE MY BRAIN

By Jalena Keane-Lee

Jalena: (gasps) Oh my God. Where am I?

Dorianna: Don't forget that test tomorrow morning at 9:30.

Naia: Don't forget China owns the majority of our debt

Makhissa: Don't forget that 12 scholarship applications are due next week.

Dorianna: Don't forget you have rehearsal tonight, tomorrow night and Saturday.

Jalena: What?!!

Jahslyn: Don't forget there are millions of child soldiers fighting all over the world

Taylor: Don't forget about your future.

Camille: Don't forget that one in 3 women

Malcolm: ...and one in six men

Camille: ...are raped or sexually assaulted in their lifetime

Jalena: Whoa!

Sai: Don't forget that obesity is a national disease

Isis: Don't forget that one out of every five kids in America

Sai: ...goes hungry every day

Chyna: Don't forget you have the power to make a difference.

Jalena: Where am I? Who are these people?

Dorianna: Don't forget you are what you eat

Naia: Don't forget that climate change is destroying our planet

Makhissa: Don't forget to copy your math homework

Jahslyn: Don't forget about the increasing equity gap,

Taylor: achievement gap,

Camille: and socio-economic divide

Sai: Don't forget that 50% of youth in public high schools

Malcolm: ...drop out before graduating

Chyna: Don't forget that you're gonna graduate

Isis: ...and go to college

Dorianna: Don't forget you're lucky

Naia: Don't forget about your future

Makhissa: Don't forget that the choices you make now will determine your entire life

Jahslyn: Don't forget that artists don't make any money.

Taylor: Don't forget you need to get a REAL job.

Group talks all at once at Jalena

Jalena: Stop.

Group freezes

Jalena: I think I just landed in my own brain.

Group nods robotically and leans in menacingly

Jalena: Yup. Definitely landed in my own brain. How do I get out of here?

SCENE: FORGET EVERYTHING!

Jalena: It's so chaotic in my brain. I feel paralyzed by all this information, all these horrible facts. I wish I could just turn it off.

Phoebe: Are you tired of hopeless causes?

Ayame: ...of trying to make a difference?

Erica: ...of feeling powerless over all the world's problems?

Aman: Are you tired of those nagging passions that get in the way of a successful future?

Taylor: ...like dance and theater and social activism?

Rocio: Don't you wish you could just forget it all?

Lila: Well now you can!

Hadley: From the makers of Naps Be Gone, Energy Plus and Who Cares

Nataya: ...comes a revolutionary new product.

Lila: Drum roll please!

All: "Forget Everything"

Ayame: Taking just one pill helps you forget that you have any responsibility

Mya: ...to yourself, your loved ones, your community or the world.

Justine: What could be better than that?

Phoebe: Side effects may include but are not limited to

Grace: Self pity, lack of motivation

Anna: ...choking back emotions, suicidal thoughts,

Ruby: ...laziness, boredom and indifference

Mariama: And in some cases, premature death

Taylor: The little pill with the big promise

Lael: A new perspective on the world's woes

Aman: A blank slate

Isha: A new beginning!

Ayame holds a pill container in her hand and presents it to Jalena

Ayame: Take it and...

Group: "Forget Everything"

SCENE: WALKING & TALKING & LAUGHING ABOUT DEATH
By Jahslyn Chensee

Jahslyn (gasps): Where am I?

Dope fiend (Taylor): Spare some change? I just need one more hit today and I'll be okay. Just one more hit. Come on now. I know you got something in that purse.

Jahslyn: I'm sorry. I don't have anything for you today.

Dope fiend (Taylor): Yeah, you are sorry. You think you better than me? You ain't better than me. Forget you!

Heckler (Nekhi): Ooh girl, lookin' mighty thick in them tights. You probably a dancer, huh? Come over here, let me talk to you for a minute.

Jahslyn: Nah. I'm cool. I got things to do.

Heckler (Nekhi): Oh, I see how it is. You must not like guys. You ain't that cute anyway. Ain't nobody wanna talk to you.

Jahslyn: Wait a minute.

Jahslyn: Did I go through that mystical door or not? This just seems like my regular walk home every day.

Anisah: Things are not always what they seem.

Jahslyn: I know that voice.

Anisah: Everything has a purpose.

Jahslyn: Oh my God. It's you. The voice from the "Raw" virus.

Anisah: At the root of everything lies the truth.

Jahslyn: What are you talking about? Why am I here? What is this place? What am I supposed to do?

Anisah: Just keep going and trust that the answer lies before you.

Jahslyn: I still don't understand.

Anisah: Remember what happened that day. You know what I'm talking about.

Jahslyn: I was unsure about going to First Friday that night. But, I went. We went. Three of my lovely friends and me. Once there, the people were like ants, thousands of them. Every type of person gathered together. Later, my friends and I commented on the vibrations in the air, it was lively, crowded... but mostly tense. But hey, it was Friday night. Four girls out and about to socialize, mingle, enjoy the art and enjoy one another. Then it happened. I saw the whole thing. A fight suddenly broke out and it seemed like everybody was jumping in. Then I saw him.

A hoodie concealed his identity and the weapon he held. I saw him take out the gun. I saw him point and aim and fire.

Four, five, maybe a whole clip of shots went off. People scattered. Me and my friends all instinctively fled and hid, shaken to the core. Blank expressions came over our faces, and then tears. My heart pounded in my ears while my throat clenched up making it hard to breathe and think.

To make things worse, once people fled to safety or realized the shooting had stopped, they just kept on going like nothing had happened at all.

They were talking about killing and laughing about death. Someone just died. But the party didn't die, even though ambulances and cop cars were flashing lights. I was shaking under my skin, desperately trying to process what had just happened. It could have been anyone, it could have been my friend, it could have been me. I wanted to scream. Why are my people are killing each other? Why are we too numb to care? Why can't we just put the guns down!

SCENE: GUN VIOLENCE STATISTICS

Chyna: The US has an estimated 283 million guns in people's hands

Taylor: More than 30,000 people are killed by guns every year in this country

Naia: 1/2 of them are between the ages of 18 and 35

Chyna: 1/3 of them are under the age of 20

Taylor: Homicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-24 year-olds

Naia: And the primary cause of death among African Americans of that same age group

MONOLOGUE: WOUNDED WARRIORS **By Anisah Abdullah**

Facts

They sting like bullets, in flesh

Like roots of racism

like infection in our youth

Home is redefined when the streets become the battleground

How do we hold these wounded warriors

Lost in a broken system?

And being broken is all that can be seen?

And hopelessness is an all-too-familiar weight

heavy around our necks
We have an obligation to truth
and to take oath to gaze thru truth's eyes with purpose
and to give thanks for the struggle
for we can touch one another
with a spirit so powerful
We will no longer search oblivion for the origin of our souls
For we are beauty
scratched into recycled paint
on stolen detour signs
We are love
whispered beneath the moonlight
We are power
Expanding the cranks in the pavement
We are hope
Because we are our vision of the peace we wish to cultivate
in place of hearts shattering and memories being stolen on the frontlines
In our home, the violent dance of outrage carries on
and empty eyes wash away blood on corners
and hopes are prayed to be carried in the wind
Yes
our people are coming
I feel their rhythmic footsteps in my chest as I pound my fist against smiling
ignorance
against the mask of fear
against the seduction
away from placing life upon sacred ground
and bearing no compromise
and no longer allowing love to hide behind the barrel of a gun
Facts sting
when Truth is misspelled
when intentions are forgotten with watered-down dreams
and yet, every morning when the first ray of hope is presented at dawn
the infectious light allows us to see

SCENE: Defining Fear & Raw

Makhissa: Fear

Sai: Noun

Isis: an unpleasant, often strong emotion

Makhissa: caused by anticipation or awareness of danger

Sai: Fear

Isis: Noun

Makhissa: an emotion induced by a real or perceived threat

Sai: frequently followed by the specific behaviors of escape and avoidance

Isis: We fear that we will fail

Makhissa: We fear that we will succeed

Sai: We fear that someone will see us and not approve

Isis: The blame takes over
Makhissa: The accusations fly
Sai: The gun comes out
Isis: And you forget why you pulled the trigger
Makhissa: Fear
Sai: Creates victims and perpetrators
Isis: Blame and shame
Makhissa: The need to numb out
Sai: Check out
Isis: Hide

Naia: Raw
Chyna: Raw
Taylor: Raw
Chyna: Adjective
Taylor: Being in a natural condition
Naia: not processed or refined
All: Raw
Taylor: Adjective
Naia: Powerfully impressive; stark
All: Raw
Taylor: The truth comes out
Chyna: The inside is exposed. And you don't care what other people say about you
Taylor: It feels dangerous
Naia: It takes courage
Chyna: Being raw is being genuine
Taylor: It's being real and knowing that who you are is enough
Naia: Even though you struggle with the parts of yourself that try to tell you
All: you're not enough
All: Raw

MONOLOGUE: LOVE LIKE WATER **By Jahslyn Chensee**

Here I stand Raw Open
Calling out to the ones who went before me to answer my question
How do I find hope in a hopeless world?
Sweet grandmothers and grandfathers
Beloved ancestors
Hear my prayer
And then I hear a faint voice answering me somewhere deep in my mind

Imagine that love is water...

Imagine that the love is flowing from the highest peaks, closest to the sky, closest to the universe, down to your broken bodies all the way through the soles of your feet. Gently cooling the gunfire, gently cooling the hateful words, gently cooling the heartache. The water that flows through you is the water that flows through me which is the water that will flow through us for all time.

I want that
I want to taste love in the air like water vapor
I want to breath love with every single breath

The voice gets louder

Imagine that love is water...

And remember that we are all going to the same place; we are all searching for the same thing, to be home once again, to be a part of this vast eternal sea of love.

And so I begin to imagine

MONOLOGUE: ART LIBERATION ARMY

By Krissy Keefer, Artistic Director, Dance Brigade

www.dancebrigade.org

Edited by Jalena Keane-Lee

We are the art liberation army
Our Manifesto is to liberate all beings
By any means necessary
Our tactics?
To translate dumbfounding problems
Into the universal language of art
We work slick and fast
And we don't negotiate
Hey
we are the art liberation army
A group of young people that live underground
We banded together to make sense of this world we inherited
The new Economy
But new economy old economy
It's always the same old money
And its always confiscated budgeted and hoarded
At our generation's expense
We...We watch carefully what happens everywhere
We like to settle all our disputes with a handshake and a smile but you know what?
Sometimes that doesn't work
So we study Kung Fu
We take our inspiration from Ai Wei Wei and MLK
We study kung fu
I am young let me soar in numbers too big to ignore
We study Kung Fu
We live in a society that glorifies artists but never wants to
Pay us to do our work
We've trained to be artists since we were children
But were always told it wasn't a "real" career path
Go be a doctor a lawyer an accountant etc. etc. etc.

As an artist you'll get paid less than babysitters waitresses & housekeepers etc. etc.
etc.

who speaking of which

Don't get paid either

You know a business Man works from sun to sun

An artist's work is never done

But you know what really bugs us

Reality TV, lying politicians

Child Labor

The gender wage gap

People who tell us to follow our dreams...

As long as our dreams make money

You know what really bugs us

Mad cow disease

But if we were cows we would be furious too

Liberate all beings

By any means necessary

Liberate all starving models

Liberate all starving children

Liberate all victims and bullies

Liberate all wounded warriors

Liberate everyone forced to give up their passions

Long live the art army

Long live courage

Long live truth

Long live hope

Power to all the people

All power to the people

Make art not war (chant 4 X)

MONOLOGUE: Finally Found
By Camille Schmitt

when you look at me now,

do you see beauty?

do you see truth?

I do

I was lost in the lies for so long.

the lies covered me like plastic breath.

I couldn't breath truth.

I only breathed in lies

the lies of not enough

the lies that told me to question who I am

the lies that said whoever that was, wasn't enough

and that I would never be enough

but now the lies are a river.

I am the rock.

strong.

powerful.

solid.
immovable.
the lies stream past me.
my roots are deep.
raw.
genuine.
my branches stretch long
not fearing the path ahead.
taking each inch of growth,
step by step.
when you see me,
do you see beauty?
do you see truth?
do you see through the closed eyes, that hid me from myself?
I was lost in the lies for so long.
I am finally found.
who found me, you may ask?
myself.

NAVAJO PRAYER: Walk in Beauty

There is beauty above you,
There is beauty below you,
There is beauty all around you.
May you always walk in beauty.

Resource Guide

- The Hero's Journey
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monomyth>
<http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/smc/journey/ref/summary.html>
- One Billion Rising
<http://onebillionrising.org/>
- Information about gender-based violence around the world

http://www.unifem.org/materials/item_detail86d2.html

- Statistics about Gun Violence

-

<http://www.heedinggodscall.org/content/pfctoolkit-10>

THE WARRIOR'S CODE

LOVE

A Warrior is skilled in body and kind in heart.

RESPECT

A Warrior respects him or herself and all living things.

CARE

A Warrior believes that caring for him or herself means caring for our world.

RESPONSIBILITY

A Warrior takes responsibility for her or his own actions and makes a superior effort in every situation.

HONOR

A Warrior uses fighting skills honorably only to protect self and loved ones.

A Warrior never raises a fist in anger.

PEACE

A True Warrior lives by this code and firmly believes that the greatest warrior of all is the one that stands for peace.

THE FIVE FINGERS OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION

1. USE YOUR HEAD

Students learn to...

- Identify their natural senses
- Understand what awareness means
- Develop keen observation skills
- Understand the concept of intuition as a way to receive information
- Understand how to breath and relax

2. USE YOUR MOUTH

Students learn to...

- Develop their voice as a powerful tool for communication
- Understand nonverbal communication
- Understand boundary setting
- Differentiate between passive, aggressive and assertive behavior
- Develop positive communication and problem solving strategies
- Develop the capacity to use the 7 Steps to Conflict Resolution in conflict situations

3. USE YOUR FEET

Students learn to...

- Understand the concept of safe spaces
- Develop decision-making skills
- Practice physical agility in escape techniques
- Understand the social pressures related to walking away from conflicts or using verbal skills to resolve differences

4. USE YOUR FIGHTING SKILLS, BUT ONLY IF YOU HAVE TO

Students learn...

- Basic self-defense skills and an understanding of the difference between an “anger situation” and a “danger situation”

5. TELL SOMEBODY WHAT HAPPENED

Students learn to...

- Identify a trusted adult to whom they can report tough situations or any time they had to employ any of the first four fingers