

YPT Wire



The Newsletter of Young Playwrights' Theater

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Support YPT!

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Calling All Federal Employees!

YPT is thrilled to be a Combined Federal Campaign charity again this year! Please remember us when you make your CFC contributions.

YPT's CFC number is 64148.



[Click here](#) to learn more about the Combined Federal Campaign, and how you can participate.

Become a YPT Community Ambassador!

Issue: # 62

December 2011

Happy Holidays (and *New Play Festival* Sneak Preview)

Happy holidays, everyone!

With our students' winter break fast approaching, YPT is still busy at work preparing for all the exciting programs and performances we have in store for you this spring.

This week, members of the YPT Reading Committee received the first round of student-written plays to consider for professional production in the [New Play Festival](#) this April. Our amazing elementary, middle and high school students wrote an unprecedented 700 new plays this year! Out of these plays, 70 have been selected for review by the Reading Committee, and 26 will become finalists.

On April 23 and 24, 2012, YPT will present 10-12 of these plays in our annual two-day ***New Play Festival*** at GALA Hispanic Theatre. Professional actors, dramaturges and directors will collaborate with our student writers to create a thrilling evening of fresh, dynamic theater.

The 2012 YPT Reading Committee consists of 29 [YPT Company](#) members, including YPT staff, professional artists and students. We are particularly excited to include students in our Reading Committee, as their voices and thoughts about their peers' plays are especially valuable.

According to YPT Program Manager Nicole Jost, "The Reading Committee is looking for plays and students that have great potential. We're more interested in that potential than in the plays being highly polished. If a student is on to something, but hasn't



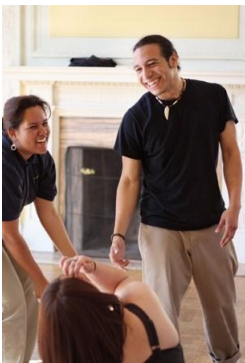
Get involved with YPT in a fun, easy way!



Community Ambassadors are advocates for YPT, adult volunteers from a variety of backgrounds committed to supporting the work of the company. Ambassadors help us build a lasting community of support, using their specific skills and interests to get others involved.

[Click here](#) to learn more!

Join The *Young Playwrights' Workshop!*



Calling all students! There's still time to join the (award-winning) [Young Playwrights' Workshop!](#) The Workshop meets every Wednesday at 4:00pm, in YPT's studio space (2437 15th Street NW). See you there!

Email njost@yptdc.org for more info.

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quite zeroed in, that's exciting. Our dramaturges are eager to help students craft their plays and really discover the power of their artistic voices."



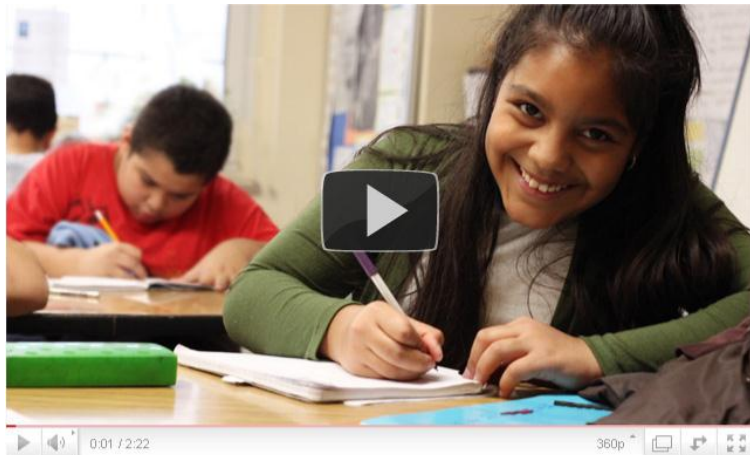
We can't wait to share these bold new student voices with you this spring.

In the meantime, we wish you all a warm and happy holiday season, and a wonderful New Year!

Don't Forget to Invest in YPT

A huge thank you to everyone who has made a donation to invest in YPT students this holiday season!

In case you missed our inspiring campaign video, be sure to click the screen shot below.



Remember, when you invest in YPT between now and December 31, you have the chance to double your donation!

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCA) has awarded YPT an UPSTART grant, a unique grant designed to increase the impact of our organization. Through this grant, DCCA will match new and increased donations, which means that your gift between now and the New Year will literally double in size and impact. So \$100 becomes \$200, \$250 becomes \$500 and \$500 becomes \$1,000 of support for our amazing students. Take advantage of this special opportunity to double your impact, double your donation and double your investment in the future of our community.

This year, we will continue to show thousands of students that their ideas matter, their voices count and their dreams are achievable.

But only with your help.

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Please click the donate button below and make your tax deductible gift today!

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Meet the winner of the YPT-shirt Design Contest!

We recently sat down with Alex Vernon, new YPT Company member and winner of our recent [YPT-shirt Design Contest](#), and talked to him about his artistic inspiration, and his dreams for YPT.



YPT: What's your connection to YPT? How did you get involved?

Alex: I'm an actor with YPT. I first got connected with YPT a few years ago when I met Karen Zacarias at a playwriting festival at the Kennedy Center. She was teaching one of the workshops and talked a bit about YPT. I thought it sounded really interesting, and when I moved to DC I started doing acting gigs in their workshops.

YPT: What was the inspiration for your YPT-shirt design? Had you ever done design work before?

Alex: My inspiration for the t-shirt design was the students and their words. I knew that needed to be the focus of the image since that was the focus of the company. I spent a while sketching up different ideas and I finally landed on this one. I actually used to work as a screen printer in a t-shirt shop, and I'd help out with the design jobs when we got busy. I have a soft spot in my heart for vector graphics.

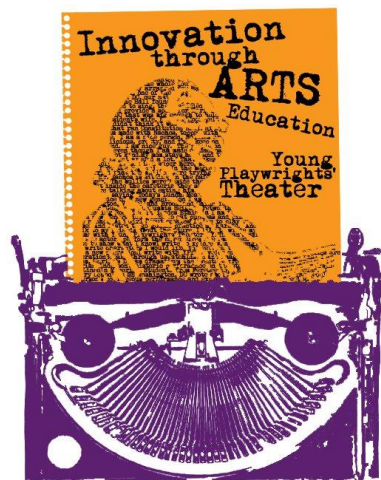
YPT: Have you been wearing your t-shirt?

Alex: Have I been wearing my t-shirt? Have I been wearing my t-shirt? It has not left my body since I first put it on. If you ever see me on the street, and I don't appear to be wearing my YPT shirt, know that it is indeed under whatever lesser shirt is exposed. You'd think that the shirt would get disgusting from non-stop wearing, but you're forgetting that I also keep it on in the shower.

YPT: 20% of the proceeds from the sale of your t-shirt go directly to support YPT's work in the classroom. What impact do you hope your design will have on YPT students?

Alex: 20% of my shirt sales will go to YPT's classroom workshops? Just a second. Okay, I'm back. Sorry, I just had to buy another dozen shirts. Where do I want the 20% to go? When I go in to help with the workshops, I'm always happy to see other teachers bring their students in to watch the plays being read. Theater teachers, English teachers, random kids walking by. The students who aren't in the workshop always talk about how they wished they could have been part of it. I'd love to see that money go to expanding the number of workshops YPT can do each semester. Hold on a minute. Ok. Just bought another 10 shirts.

Love Alex's t-shirt? You can buy one of your own in YPT's new store on [CafePress](#). (Could make a great holiday gift!)



YPT Creative Giving Tip

Do you love exploring new restaurants? What if you could make a donation to your favorite charity simply by eating out? With GoodDining, it's easy! This month, we are profiling [GoodDining.com](#), a fun site where members can sign up to get up to 6% of their total bill donated to a charity of their choice when they dine out at participating restaurants, at no additional cost to them.

It's safe, easy and completely free to participate. Just sign up at [GoodDining.com](#) with a valid email address, designate YPT as your charity and dive into the long list of restaurants in your area that will donate a portion of your total bill to your charity each time you visit. You must register a credit card with GoodDining and use this card when paying to receive the donation, but your card will not be charged anything extra.

So during this busy holiday season, if you're looking for a fun, easy way to contribute to your favorite charitable organization (like YPT!), check out [GoodDining.com](#), and start dining!

Ubochioma Obi Ukaegbu

Promising Playwright

"Initially, I thought we were going to perform our play for little kids, so I wrote a fantasy, but once I realized we could do whatever we wanted, I decided to make it a comedy/adventure, though a fantasy at the same time," shares Ubochioma Obi Ukaegbu, or Obi, a senior at Benjamin Banneker Academic High School.



"There are three main characters. Michael and Jason are brothers whose father recently died, and Lisa is a friend of Jason's," Obi explains. "The play is centered around this Rubix cube they find that takes them to an alternate world - similar to Narnia, I suppose. They have to use their intelligence to decipher signs throughout the play and figure out how to escape."

Even though the world Obi creates is full of wizards and magical symbols, the play is really about relationships. "I want people to see that whenever you have a problem with somebody, you should talk it out and see if you can get that problem solved instead of keeping it inside of you," he says. "The longer you keep it bundled inside, the worse you're going to get emotionally and mentally. You see that in my play between Michael and Jason."

When he isn't writing, Obi plays basketball, soccer and chess, acts in school plays, volunteers with Teens Against the Spread of AIDS and is a member of his school's Men of Strength Club, an advocacy program for the prevention of violence against women. Next year, he will be studying business administration at NYU.

For more Promising Playwrights [click here](#).

Young Playwrights' Theater
2437 15th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
[202-387-9173](tel:202-387-9173)
www.yptdc.org