

SpringboardNYC Introduces Aspiring Artists To New York

Wanted: Furnished apartment, secure job, and fabulous Broadway role.

The story is so familiar that many of today's Broadway shows depict the scene on stage.

A twenty-something college graduate, bright-faced and bushy-tailed, arrives in New York City with nothing more than a suitcase and the drive to "make it" as an artist in NYC's vibrant theatre industry. And while everything around them is unfamiliar and new, there is excitement in the air as they take their first steps toward independence and a fulfilling career as an actor. Certainly there are a few challenges that the young artist will face, such as finding

in law, medicine or business where graduates climb well defined, traditional "career ladders" to success, young artists must look for dimly lit and haphazard stairways, where just getting to the first landing can depend on what you look like, where you went to school, or even who you know. Additionally, the tight finances and the high costs associated with moving to NYC can make it all the more challenging.

As a result, many aspiring talents leave the industry and NYC entirely, not knowing how to find the satisfying theatre-related careers that await their unique skills, ideas, and drive. The unfamiliar surroundings and lack of support network make it easy to give



SpringboardNYC 2005 students at Mock Dance Call session

"A total orientation to the business of show business, as well as the fabulous New York City world."

***Sarah Sakaan
Emerson College***

an apartment (and furnishing it), securing a job (and keeping it), and auditioning for a part (and landing it). But of course, in the stage version, all will go as planned and the young artist will be hugely successful at managing all three!

In reality, it is not as straightforward. The reality is this.

Every year, thousands of young people – many recent college and university graduates – come to New York City dreaming of careers on Broadway. In the theatre industry, unlike professions

trains college theatre graduates to find long-term, fulfilling careers in New York City's theatre and arts industries. The innovative program ensures that students aspiring to theatre careers are better armed for the "real world" of NYC's theatre industry by offering career-oriented workshops, classes and mini-internships taught by working artists, directors, producers, casting directors, and other theatre, TV and film industry professionals. Through this concentrated pre-professional training course, SpringboardNYC students learn job-seeking skills, the business of theatre, and urban survival tools to translate their academic training into productive careers.

up their dream. But without such dreamers, the arts community suffers from a lack of diversity in people, talent, and the art form itself.

Enter SpringboardNYC—the American Theatre Wing's two-week college-to-career "boot camp".



Raúl Esparza (front, floor) with SpringboardNYC 2005 class

This year SpringboardNYC entered its fourth year, in its new home with the American Theatre Wing. The program ran from June 5 through June 17th, and offered 24 students from 12 different states access to an incomparable network of New York City working artists and creative professionals. Students learned practical tools for getting and keeping theatre jobs, gathered information about rewarding theatre-related career options offstage, and found out how to cope with city life's complex challenges while struggling to make it in show business. They attended theatre and events (starting with the rehearsal of The Tony Awards), and met cast and creative teams afterward. Over the course of two weeks, working with gifted professionals, students experienced business guidance and survival training to ease their sometimes overwhelming transition from school into professional theatre careers.



Billy Crudup and SpringboardNYC 2005 student, Ryan Walsh, at a Meet the Artist session.

And while they were exposed to the most up-to-date, practical preparation available toward pursuing New York City theatre-related careers, SpringboardNYC students were being introduced to the creative community, and invited to use them as valuable resources. SpringboardNYC mentors generously shared their expertise, and many of them continue to play a crucial role as friends, advisors, and partners in our growing community of artists who work to make this big city home.

“...the tools that I’ve been given in the last two weeks will serve as a road map, or compass or a guide.”

**Zack Friedman
Brandeis University**

Here is a sampling of some of the SpringboardNYC 2005 panels and events:

Focused workshops:

The Stuff You’re Made Of
NYC Out and About
Goal Setting and Motivational
Workshop
You Should Do Voice-Overs
Mock Dance Call Session
Be a Teaching Artist
Putting Your Book Together
Who’s Who in the Theatre
Monologue Workshop – Master
Class
On-Camera Workshop
Mock Open Call Audition

Five different Audition Workshops

including master classes in
monologue work, on-camera acting,
dance and singing.

Q & A sessions with:

feature film casting directors
commercial casting directors
agents
managers
working actors

Survival Guides on:

Basic Survival Skills for NYC
The Business Of Acting
Make Some Money
Owning the City

Plans are underway for SpringboardNYC 2006, which will take place from June 5th through June 16th, 2006. Next year’s program promises to deliver another two jam-packed weeks of information, master classes, and life lessons for the emerging artist looking to create a life in New York City.

For details and application information see the website at www.springboardNYC.org; email Randy Ellen Lutterman at randy@americantheatrewing.org; or call (212)765-0606 x307.

Meet the Artist Sessions with:

Billy Crudup
Raúl Esparza
Jessica Molaskey
Michael Stuhlbarg
Jennifer Van Dyck

Working sessions with:

directors
actors
returning SpringboardNYC alumni
members of the American Theatre
Wing Theatre Intern Group

Performances, rehearsals and tapings:

*The 25th Annual Putnam County
Spelling Bee*
American Theatre Wing *Working in
the Theatre* seminar
Broadway Chatterbox with Seth
Rudetsky
Brooklyn: The Musical
Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
Glengarry Glen Ross
Orson’s Shadow
Phantom of the Opera
Tony Awards Rehearsal
Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

many of these performances
included post-performance talks and
backstage tours

ATW in the Classroom

DVDs of ten American Theatre Wing *Working in the Theatre* Seminars are being distributed to New York City teachers this summer, as part of a package of supplemental teaching materials for the new performing arts curriculum developed by the NYC Department of Education (DOE).

Paul King, Director of Theatre Programs for the DOE, contacted ATW last spring about utilizing the seminars, and in collaboration with ATW’s program manager Stephen Abrams, reviewed shows from the last six years in order to arrive at the final 10 selections.

“Paul knew our seminars from their CUNY broadcasts and wanted to make the programs more easily available for teachers to use in their classrooms,” said Abrams. “The goal was to find a variety of programs which covered the many aspects of theatre. What was evident from the moment we began speaking about this was his recognition, and the recognition of his colleagues, that the seminars are a unique resource for providing insight into theatre, one of the very rare opportunities for students to hear about theatre from the people who create it.”

200 teachers in the five boroughs will each receive the ATW DVDs, along with such materials as DVDs of plays and musicals that are available as film adaptations and the recent PBS documentary, *Broadway: The American Musical*. The ATW seminars included in the collection are:

Exploring Tennessee Williams (with guests including Jessica Lange and Natasha Richardson, Spring 2005)

Off-Broadway (with artistic directors from The Atlantic Theatre, Pan-Asian Rep, INTAR, The Women’s Project and NY Theatre Workshop, Winter 2005)

The Not-for-Profits of Broadway (with the leadership of Lincoln Center Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club and Roundabout Theatre Company, Fall 2004)

Puppetry and Theatre (with guests including Basil Twist and Cheryl Henson, Fall 2004)

Playwrights (with Edward Albee, Harvey Fierstein, Paula Vogel and John Weidman, Fall 2004)

Playwright/Director/Choreographer (with guests including Moises Kaufman and Theresa Rebeck, Fall 2003)

World Theatre (with guests including Fiona Shaw and Anatoly Smeliansky, Winter 2003)

Design (with guests including William Ivey Long and Tony Walton, Fall 2001)

Composer/Lyricist (with guests including John Kander and Fred Ebb, Fall 2000)

Critics (with guests including Linda Winer and Charles Isherwood, Fall 1999)