

MOTHER TONGUE by First Generation



Mother Tongue is an original multilingual physical theater performance, created by the Performance Project's First Generation Ensemble. *Mother Tongue* is inspired by the experiences of the ensemble members, their families and communities who are from Congo/Tanzania, Bhutan/Nepal, South Sudan/Darfur, Puerto Rico, Holyoke, and Springfield, Massachusetts.

The 90 minute performance weaves together movement, music, dance, and stories in Arabic, Swahili, Nepali, Spanish, and English. The piece incorporates themes of language, culture, identity, diaspora, hypermasculinity, transphobia, racism, the school to prison pipeline and revolution.

Sixty and thirty-five minute versions of *Mother Tongue* are also available. Performances are followed by post-show discussions with the ensemble, who are trained in facilitation.

Appropriate for ages 12 and up.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE PROJECT AND FIRST GENERATION

Mother Tongue was created by the Performance Project's First Generation, an ensemble of young artists who identify as "first generation," who come together for intensive artistic training, creating multilingual physical theater performances based on their experiences, those of their families and communities, with a focus on social justice.

First Generation members may be the first in their family to grow up in the United States, the first to speak English, to graduate high school, go to college, to be openly LGBTQ+, be an activist, a feminist, break a silence, or many other firsts. Participants include young adults recently arrived in this country.

In First Generation, we talk about the complexity of embracing individuality while honoring one's family and community cultures. The Ensemble creates powerful, high-quality performances that engage the public in dialog about social, cultural, and generational issues.



"Physical and poetic... connecting and courageous... global stories that give birth to personal revolution."



IN ADDITION TO *MOTHER TONGUE*, THE PERFORMANCE PROJECT OFFERS WORKSHOPS IN BOTH CREATIVE PROCESS AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

- **Devised Theater:** Learning tools to collaboratively create original performances
- **Physical Theater:** Using movement in addition to text to create performances that transcend language
- **Masculinity and Raising Healthy Boys and Men:** An experiential training that unpacks social norms that inform how we raise boys and men, examines hypermasculinity and gender- based violence, in order to support raising healthy boys. The workshop is taught through conversation and group activity and games. (1 three hour workshop or up to a 5-day training)
- **Community Building, Healthy Relationships, Mentoring, and Social Justice:** Learn and practice active listening, respectful dialogue, and community solidarity through games, learning structures, and dialogue. (1 three hour workshop or up to 6 weeks/twice weekly)
- **Building Community and Amplifying Youth Voice:** A workshop combining dialogue, community building games, and learning strategies to build group solidarity designed to uplift and amplify youth voices. (4-6 weeks/once or twice weekly)

FIRST GENERATION PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS REACH BETWEEN 2000-3000 PEOPLE EACH YEAR. WE HAVE APPEARED AT:

ASHTAR International Youth Theater Festival, Palestine
Ko Festival of Performance, Amherst, MA
Northampton Center for the Arts
City Stage, Springfield, MA
New Africa House, U/Mass Amherst
Hampshire College Social Justice Conference
Evolve Without Borders: An Intergenerational Gathering of Global Theater Artists

Revolutions International Theater Festival, Albuquerque, NM
Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival
Academy of Music, Northampton, MA
Shea Theater, Turners Falls, MA
Social Justice Education Conference at U/Mass Amherst
Hampshire Jail and House of Corrections
NAMEN International "Intersectionality and Decolonization" Conference

Plus numerous universities, colleges and high schools

THE PERFORMANCE PROJECT

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