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YOUTH SPEAKS ANNOUNCES COLLABORATION
WITH ANNA DEAVERE SMITH'S NOTES FROM THE FIELD:
DOING TIME IN EDUCATION, THE CALIFORNIA CHAPTER AT BERKELEY REP

A one-woman show featuring stories about the nation’s school-to-prison pipeline
With special musical guest Marcus Shelby

July 8, 2015 – Berkeley, CA – Youth Speaks is proud to announce they have been invited to participate in Anna Deavere Smith’s Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter, a special presentation about the nation’s school-to-prison pipeline. Directed by Obie Award-winner Leah C. Gardiner and featuring music by Bay Area favorite, jazz musician Marcus Shelby, this limited engagement starts previews Saturday, July 11, and runs through Sunday, August 2, 2015, at Berkeley Rep’s, Roda Theatre. Individual tickets start at $50 and can be purchased by phone at (510) 647-2949 or online at berkeleyrep.org.

In act one, Smith performs striking portraits culled from interviews she conducted with nearly 150 individuals in Northern California and elsewhere in the nation affected by the pipeline’s devastating policies, capturing the dynamics of a rapidly shifting social issue through her trademark performance technique. For act two, Smith has invited Youth Speaks Founder and Executive Director James Kass and Emerging Artists Program Artistic Director Sean San José to use their unique pedagogy to develop with her a facilitated conversation for the audience. Kass and José will train selected individuals to facilitate these sessions, which will engage the audience in conversation to actively work toward change. With the compelling and inspiring Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter, Smith believes that we all have the imagination, the wit, and the heart to make a difference.

“James Kass and Youth Speaks have an exceptional training methodology that has been impactful in driving conversations forward and affecting change,” says Smith. “The school-to-prison pipeline is a national crisis and we are in desperate need of a solution. No solution will be possible without the public will. The theatre is a convening place. This is a time when theatergoers will have a chance to share ideas with one another. By inviting James and Youth Speaks to train the facilitators, it is my hope that these guided discussions will raise consciousness and inspire action.”

“We’re honored to be a part of such an important project with such a fantastic thinker and artist like Anna Deavere Smith. At Youth Speaks, we excel at conversation, and we’re privileged to be in this one,” adds Kass.

MORE
Anna Deavere Smith is an actress and playwright and has appeared at Berkeley Rep in Let Me Down Easy, Fires in the Mirror, and Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992. She is said to have created a new form of theatre. She has created more than 18 one-person shows based on hundreds of interviews, most of which deal with social issues. Twilight: Los Angeles, about the Los Angeles race riots of 1992, was performed around the country and on Broadway. PBS is currently streaming that play due to its relevance to current events. Her most recent one-person show, Let Me Down Easy, focused on health care in the U.S. Three of her plays have been broadcast on American Playhouse and Great Performances (PBS). In popular culture you have seen her in Nurse Jackie, Blackish, Madame Secretary, The West Wing, The American President, Rachel Getting Married, Philadelphia, and others. Books include Letters to a Young Artist and Talk to Me: Listening Between the Lines. She is founder and director of the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at New York University where she is a University Professor. Recently she was named the 2015 Jefferson Lecturer by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The lecture, established in 1972, is the highest honor the federal government confers for distinguished intellectual achievement in the humanities. Prizes include the National Humanities Medal presented by President Obama, a MacArthur fellowship, the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Award, two Tony nominations, and two Obies. She was runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize for her play Fires in the Mirror. She has received several honorary degrees, among them from Yale University, Juilliard, the University of Pennsylvania, Spelman, Williams, Northwestern, and Radcliffe. She serves on the boards of the Museum of Modern Art, the Aspen Institute, the American Museum of Natural History, and Grace Cathedral-San Francisco. She is a University Professor at New York University.

About Youth Speaks
Founded in 1996, Youth Speaks is a multi-faceted organization that understands and believes that the power, insight, creativity, and passion of young artists can change the world. Through the intersection of arts education and youth development practices, civic engagement strategies and high quality artistic presentation, Youth Speaks creates safe spaces that challenge young people to find, develop, publicly present, and apply their voices as creators of societal change. Youth Speaks exists to shift the perception of youth by combating illiteracy, alienation, and silence, creating a global movement of brave new voices bringing the noise from the margins to the core. For more information, visit www.youthspeaks.org

The Emerging Artists Program will include a newly inaugurated three-year fellowship program comprised of alumni of Youth Speaks and Brave New Voices Network partners. The fellowship will provide its participants with training and mentorship on presenting, producing, managing and marketing new works and performance pieces. Program participants will be able to learn all aspects of performance, participate in workshops led by diverse Bay Area companies, and develop their own work. The goal of the Emerging Artists Program is to launch a new theater company running, devising, producing, presenting, and creating new works within three years.

About Berkeley Rep
Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its core values of imagination and excellence, as well as its educated and adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep. These shows have gone on to win five Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, and many other honors. Its bustling facilities – the 600-seat Roda Theatre, the 400-seat Thrust Stage, the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, the Osher Studio, and a spacious new campus in West Berkeley – are helping revitalize a renowned city. For more information, visit www.berkeleyrep.org.

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ATTENTION CALENDAR EDITORS
Youth Speaks Announces Collaboration with Anna Deavere Smith’s Notes From The Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter at Berkeley Repertory Theatre

WHO:
A one-woman show created, written, and performed by Anna Deavere Smith, featuring stories about the nation’s school-to-prison pipeline with special musical guest Marcus Shelby. Directed by Leah C. Gardiner. Youth Speaks will lead facilitated discussions in Act II.

WHAT:
Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, The California Chapter
MacArthur Award winner Anna Deavere Smith turns her attention to the school-to-prison pipeline and performs striking portraits culled from interviews she conducted with nearly 150 individuals in Northern California and elsewhere in the nation affected by the pipeline’s devastating policies – capturing the dynamics of a rapidly shifting social issue through her trademark performance technique. In Act II, Smith invites the audience to engage in dynamic conversations and be active agents to help dissolve the school-to-prison pipeline and inequities in the education system.

THREE WEEKS ONLY! Saturday, July 11 – Sunday, August 2, 2015
- Tuesdays and Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 8:00 PM on 7/15 and @ 7:00 PM on 7/29
- Thursday @ 8:00 PM
- Saturdays @ 2:00 & 8:00 PM and @ 8:00 PM on 7/11
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM and @ 7:00 PM on 7/12 & @ 2:00 PM 7/19
- No performance on Mondays & 7/21 & 7/22

HOW MUCH: Premium: $77-89· Section A: $63-73· Section B: $50-60 (subject to change). Reduced priced tickets for those under 30, only $25 each; Groups of 15 or more receive a 20 percent discount; call (510) 647-2918 for more information; to reach the Box Office, call (510) 647-2949 or visit berkeleyrep.org

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