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**VILLAGE PLAYERS TRAINING CENTER ANNOUNCES FALL INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS AND TEENS**

(OAK PARK, IL) Village Players Theater is proud to announce two new Educational Opportunities housed under the Village Players Training Center: Village Players Youth Training Center and Village Players Professional Training Center. This fall the Village Players Professional Training Center will be offering Weekend Intensive Workshops at Village Players Performing Arts Center on Sundays in November and December from 9am-2pm for Adults. There will also be accompanying Weekend Intensive Workshops for Teens offered through the Village Players Youth Training Center in "Mastering the Audition Process" and "Off of the Page and Onto the Stage: A Shakespeare Intensive". Cost is \$75 per Adult Intensive; \$50 per Teen Intensive.

The goal of the Village Players Professional Training Center is to offer professional actors the ability to train and further enhance their skill set and to offer beginning actors an exciting first step into the craft of theater. The Village Players Youth Training Center is focused on exciting children and teens about theater, while maintaining a professional setting and a high quality educational offering. "The Village Players Training Center is hoping to attract artists of all ages looking to discover, develop and hone their craft," states Village Players Education Director, Jacque Lueken.

The premiere workshop for adults will be "Mastering the Audition Process" on November 1st 2009, taught by Lawrence Keller who is directing *Mud* this season in Village Players Theater's Studio Series. Keller is also a member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and teaches Playwriting at Lyons Township High School in Lagrange. This workshop will cover topics such as what directors look for, choosing the right piece, presenting yourself, callbacks and cold readings. Students should bring two contrasting contemporary monologues and will be participating in a mock audition for a panel including Village Players Theater's Artistic Director, Dan Taube.

There will be a Teen Intensive of "Mastering the Audition Process" from 9am to 12pm, also at the Village Players Performing Arts Center on November 1st, 2009. The instructor, Nich Radcliffe, is the director of *Best Christmas Pageant Ever* this season with Village Players Youth Training Center and also served as Casting Director for American Girl Theatre from 2005 to 2008. This workshop provides students with the opportunity to polish a current audition piece or one selected for you by the instructor. Time will also be spent on the callback process and honing techniques for cold readings. This with countless other lessons will help set a student apart from the competition.

The next adult workshop is on Sunday, November 8th, called "Out of Your Head, Into the Truth: A Workshop on the Meisner Approach to Acting". The instructor, Andrew Gallant is 1 of 3 certified Meisner instructors in Chicago. Sanford Meisner, considered by many to be the greatest acting teacher of American theater, created a step-by-step series of exercises that train actors into being thoroughly responsive, emotionally alive, spontaneous and grounded in the reality of what is happening at any moment. This one-day workshop will introduce students to Meisner's foundational exercises and will get students out of their heads and into being truly present to the world around them.

On Sunday, November 15th 2009, the adult intensive will be "Making the Invisible Visible: A Pinter Intensive" taught by Nich Radcliffe (mentioned above). Through the

study of Harold Pinter's text, students will learn to use the clues he provides to make the invisible struggle for power vibrant. As one of the most autobiographical playwrights of all time, some exploration into his upbringing as a Jew during WWII and his adult relationships will also take place to provide further enlightenment towards the true intentions of his menacing characters. Do not miss this unique opportunity to spend a day immersed in the work and life of Nobel Prize Winner Harold Pinter.

The adult intensive on Sunday, November 22nd 2009, is "Self as Metaphor: Bringing Your Life To the Stage". It is taught by John Pierson, a Neo-Futurist ensemble member who has authored the book of plays titled "The Philosophy of Hope and Nothings". In this one day workshop students will learn tools for turning their own biographical material into metaphorically charged visuals; along with how silence, sound effects and actions can be used to express what words cannot.

Sunday, December 6th will have the adult intensive of "Off of the Page and Onto the Stage: A Shakespeare Intensive" with instructor Jeremy Lee Cudd, who has taught at Act One Studios, Penn State and Georgia Shakespeare Festival. This workshop will introduce actors to a set of tools that help them to personalize and *own* Shakespeare's language. Students will begin working on the opening Chorus speech from Henry V in a way that will allow students to free the body and voice to be more resonant and expressive. The verse will then be analyzed using scansion, antithesis and other rhetorical structures and activating imagery. These will also be applied to prepared pieces brought in by the students.

A Teen intensive of "Off the Page and Onto the Stage" for Shakespeare will be provided as well from 9am to noon on Sunday, December 6th. The instructor Eliza Hofman holds an MFA and a Master of Letters in Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature in Performance and also has extensive experience in multiple Shakespeare productions. This workshop, will help students approach Shakespeare from an "Original Practices" perspective. Students will gain insight and active skills for performing the plays of Shakespeare. The workshop will also give students tools to deconstruct and understand verse, taking the fear out of Shakespeare. Students will work scenes and monologues on their feet to leave the workshop with practical experience bringing Shakespeare off the page and onto the stage.

The last adult intensive will be on Sunday, Dec 13th 2009. "Outside In: A Physical Approach for the Actor" will be taught by Vanessa Passini, who is an Advanced Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors. In this workshop, students will be introduced to a physical approach to scene study that compliments the Stanislavsky tradition. This approach to physical acting will combine the techniques of Jacques Lecoq, Rudolph Laban, Michael Chekhov and Jerzy Grotowski. Starting with the actor's body, this workshop will show you how to read the messages that are being sent by the actor each time s/he walks on stage. Then, through physical explorations students will discover the visceral power of dynamics of scene work as well as begin to use image and counter image to analyze beat changes.

The Village Players Training Center is run by Jacque Lueken who has worked with Steppenwolf Theatre Co as the Assistant Coordinator for their summer acting intensive 'The School at Steppenwolf.' She has also served as a mentor with Redmoon Theatre Co's Dramagirls Program and is a director who's favorite shows include *The Giver* (TYA at Apple Tree Theatre) and *Bat Boy* (Village Players Theatre). You can see her work this Holiday Season with Noble Fool Theatricals Performing Arts Academy's *It's A Wonderful Life: A Radio Play* and in Village Players Studio Series production of *Savage in Limbo*.

All adult weekend intensive workshops are \$75 per person, and are from 9am to 2pm. Teen workshops are \$50 per person and are from 9am to noon. All classes will be held at the Village Players Performing Arts Center, 1010 Madison St., Oak Park. The theater is near the Harlem exit of I-290 and is also accessible by the CTA Green and Blue lines.

Plenty of parking is available on the street. The theater is handicapped accessible but please do call ahead to arrange for special seating. You can find more information by calling 866-764-1010 or visiting [www.village-players.org](http://www.village-players.org).

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**About Village Players Theater:**

Village Players Theater, a non-profit organization founded in 1961, promotes the arts through theatrical productions and educational programs that encourage cultural understanding and embrace diversity in the Village of Oak Park and the surrounding communities. With this strong foundation Village Players Theater plans on expanding the definition of the New American Classic to Oak Park, Chicago, and all the surrounding communities. Village Players Theater is a member of the League of Chicago Theatres and the West Suburban Theatre Connection.