



*New in 2015*  
*Forum Theater Comes to Fairfield County!*

PFF Grantee Partners are invited to experience this exciting, interactive tool used to transform how we approach injustices in our communities. It will prepare teams to facilitate deeper dialogue & collectively examine issues/solutions. *\*The 3 Day Training is offered at no cost to Youth (ages 14+) & Adult teams\**

*February 6-8<sup>th</sup>*  
*Neighborhood Studios of Fairfield County*  
*391 E. Washington Avenue*  
*Bridgeport, CT*  
*(Lunch and parking are provided)*

*What is Forum Theater?* It's a fun, transformative tool that brings youth & adults together to investigate community problems and brainstorm solutions through the use of critical thinking games and activities. Participants create a play based on their own experiences with oppression and injustices. During the Sunday performance, the public audience is invited to come up on stage and change the outcomes by acting out their own approach to finding solutions for these real life problems.

*The Schedule:* 3 days, you will love this life changing experience. Commitment necessary!

- Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm
- Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 9:30 am - 6:00 pm
- Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> 9:30 am - 5:00 pm
- **Performance, Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

*Performance Free and Open to the Public:* Invite your friends & family to join us for our interactive performance on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:00-7:00 pm.

*Sign Up:* No theater experience is necessary. Email [kweldon@perrinfamilyfoundation](mailto:kweldon@perrinfamilyfoundation) to register your team. \*Your team may consist of 2-5 participants. Space is limited to 25 on a first come first serve basis with a team commitment to attend all three sessions.

*Facilitated by:* New Haven Joker's League and Theatre of the Oppressed NYC



Theatre of the Oppressed is an interactive, physical and playful tool used to investigate situations in which we are denied our basic rights, personally and collectively. We use theatrical debate, through games and scenes, to uncover the many possible alternatives to these real-life challenges. By imagining and rehearsing solutions together onstage, we prepare ourselves to take action offstage. This program is designed to empower the participants to become catalysts for change in their own lives and communities. Every person is an actor in his or her own life: absolutely no theatre experience necessary.

Our workshops include a syllabus of games, exercises and improvisations that make up the core tools of Theatre



of the Oppressed, inspired by Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire's work. These theatre games encourage "de-mechanization" of the body and the mind: when we are stuck in patterns of action and thought that we have been taught by society, or into which we are forced without choice, we cannot freely be ourselves, secure our human rights, follow our own dreams, and be true leaders in our communities. Discussions and scenes will focus on the experiences of the participants in the group. Every exercise will also encourage the participants to take risks, express themselves freely, be physical, imaginative and silly, and have fun. Theatre of the Oppressed is used around the world as a vehicle for community organizing. The participants get an opportunity to examine the social problems that they are facing and

brainstorm alternatives to those very problems. Instead of an "expert" telling people how to overcome the problems in their lives and communities, ordinary people get a chance to tell their own stories and act out alternatives to the status quo using a technique called Forum Theatre. They also get a chance to tell their stories to policy experts and lawmakers and create real legislative changes using a technique called Legislative Theatre.

**About the New Haven Joker's League / New Haven Leon Sister City Project** -The New Haven Joker's League is a group of Theatre of the Oppressed facilitators from the greater New Haven, Connecticut area. Facilitators are neutral mediators who do not take sides in the debate, hence the name "joker," which refers to the joker in a deck of cards who does not belong to any suit. The Joker's League is a collective made up of volunteers who meet once per month to practice their facilitation skills. It is part of the New Haven Leon Sister City Project, a non-profit organization established in 1984 that fosters sustainable community development and social justice in greater New Haven and Leon, Nicaragua. Our members have led Theatre of the Oppressed workshops and created Forum Theater plays with adults and youth at Connecticut Mental Health Center, Breakthru Youth, Yale University, Educational Center for the Arts (ECA) high school, Wilbur Cross High School, Unidad Latina en Accion and more. We have co-facilitated workshops with Theatre of the Oppressed NYC in Leon, Nicaragua.

**About Theatre of the Oppressed NYC** -Theatre of the Oppressed NYC works with local communities including the homeless, immigrants, prisoners, teenagers and teachers to establish "popular theatre troupes" all over New York City. These ensembles create and tour original, interactive plays inspired by real-life struggles, in order to engage peers in theatrical problem- solving and incite transformative action.

**The Theatre of the Oppressed NYC Joker Team**- Theatre of the Oppressed NYC Jokers have facilitated Forum Theatre workshops and performances in dozens of NYC public schools, with both students and teachers; with young women at the Sadie Nash Leadership Institute, the Eileen Fisher Foundation and Headquarters and the Bella Abzug Leadership Institute; students at Yale University, Columbia University, The New School; and with Jan Hus Homeless Outreach and Advocacy Program, and many more. Katy Rubin, Artistic Director, trained with Augusto Boal, the founder of the technique, at the Center for Theatre of the Oppressed—Rio de Janeiro, where she co- facilitated TO in Brazil's psychiatric hospitals, prisons, etc. She has also trained with Jana Sanskriti, India's national Theatre of the Oppressed organization.