



INVEST IN THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

At Silk Road Rising, we believe that storytelling is a healing art. All members of our society must participate in the act of telling our stories in order for us to get to know each other and overcome the biases that are so prevalent in today's society.

So that everyone can embrace this storytelling power, Silk Road Rising's professional teaching artists work with communities across the city to develop their creative skills. Ranging from working with youth to working with young professionals and retired individuals at places where they congregate (schools, churches, living facilities), we provide hands-on skills workshops so that each participant has the tools to help them tell their stories most effectively.

At the end of our training programs, each participant has created a ten-minute story expressing an issue that is meaningful to them. The power of our engagement comes from the fact that every participant is more skilled after our engagement. These playwriting skills stay with them so that over time, participants can develop more stories.

Visit our EPIC website at www.LearnPlaywriting.org

We invite you to join our efforts to share the power of storytelling across our city by making a gift today.

To make a gift online, visit www.silkroadrising.org/donate.

To donate by phone, call executive director Malik Gillani at 312-857-1234 x202.

To make a gift by mail, send to:
Silk Road Rising, 150 N Michigan Ave, Ste 1970, Chicago, IL 60601



FEATURING PLAYS FROM SPRING 2019 RESIDENCIES

EPIC (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course) is a year round arts learning program with Chicago Public School classrooms and older adult communities.

Learn more at www.LearnPlaywriting.org

EPIC TEAM

Director of Education | Tracy Strimple

Teaching Artists | Tali Ariav, Levi Holloway, Lindsay Hopkins,
Jarrett King, TJ Simba-Medel, and Steph Vondell

Teaching Artist Assistant | Janyce Caraballo and Victor Marañá

Executive Director | **Malik Gillani**

Artistic Director | **Jamil Houry**

SILK ROAD RISING

Performance Venue | 77 W Washington St, Lower Level, Chicago, IL 60602

Administrative Offices | 150 N Michigan Ave, Ste 1970, Chicago, IL 60601

312-857-1234 | www.SilkRoadRising.org

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully recognize the Potawatomi, Miami, and Peoria People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We acknowledge that we are on occupied land that was forcibly taken from its original owners. And we affirm that while we cannot change history, we can work for justice, and that justice begins with recognition and acknowledgement.

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Director | **Corey Pond**

Assistant Director | **Tracy Strimple**

Cast | **Dominick Alesia, Deveon Bromby, Gordon Chow, Victor Maraña, Flavia Pallozzi, and Shaina Toledo**

Stage Manager | **Lucille M. Schuh**

Box Office Manager | **Al Gillani**

House Manager | **Christian Walker**

Production Manager | **Andy Lynn**

GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

The following donors make it possible for us to bring EPIC to Chicago Public Schools and older adult communities:

Aroha Philanthropies

Robert and Isabelle Bass Foundation, Inc.

Lloyd A. Fry Foundation

Polk Bros. Foundation

Siragusa Family Foundation

TODAY'S SHOWCASE

Good afternoon and welcome to the spring EPIC Showcase! For seven years Silk Road Rising has been working with 6th-12th grade Chicago Public School (CPS) students in the EPIC (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course). This year we have expanded our reach to the older adult community and, for the first time, offered EPIC+ at Brookdale Lake Shore Drive, Senior Living. From 6th grade to lifelong learners, EPIC is helping people tell their stories citywide.

This year we want to take the opportunity to highlight some of the creative, brilliant, and savvy CPS students and lifelong learners we have the pleasure of working with from February to now. Over the course of twenty sessions, EPIC students work with a Silk Road Rising teaching artist to discover how to tell stories and practice empathy by writing a short play or monologue. The students make connections and build trust through theatre games and activities that encourage them to think beyond themselves and look at the world through other perspectives.

Many of our CPS students have limited exposure to theatre and almost no exposure to playwriting, while our lifelong learners have so many stories to tell and need a unique way to share them. We guide students to self-empowerment by giving them the tools to become confident storytellers and creative problem solvers through the act of writing a play or monologue. Underestimating student voice is common among our communities and sometimes their stories get stifled and go unheard. Similarly, the older adult voice is all too often ignored or not taken seriously. However, we believe these voices are sometimes the most important and enlightening voices in the room. Come with us on a journey of community fellowship as we give space for these voices to rise.

We would like to thank the more than 500 students who participate in EPIC annually and to our first EPIC+ class at Brookdale. We congratulate our playwrights who have been selected for the EPIC Showcase. They are proudly representing Brookdale Lake Shore Drive, Columbia Explorers Academy, Galileo Scholastic Academy, Skinner West Elementary, Solorio High School, Wells Community Academy High School, and Westcott Elementary.

FEATURED PLAYS

1. *Untitled*

By **Ingrid Mares**

Columbia Explorers Academy

6th Grade SEL and Art

Community | **Brighton Park**

Teaching Artist | **Steph Vondell**

Classroom Teacher | **Monika Rauba and Chelsea Clementz**

2. *Untitled*

By **Zacharie Hadj Mohamed**

Skinner West Elementary School

7th Grade ELA

Community | **West Loop**

Teaching Artist | **Jarrett King**

Classroom Teacher | **Jennifer Christiansen**

3. *Memory Play*

By **Doris Wolff**

Brookdale Lake Shore Drive-Senior Living

Community | **Lincoln Park**

Teaching Artist | **Tali Ariav**

Program Coordinator | **Savannah Hoppe and Megan Chillemi**

4. *Chad*

By **Melanie Molina**

Galileo Scholastic Academy of Math and Science

8th Grade ELA

Community | **Little Italy**

Teaching Artist | **Jarrett King**

Classroom Teacher | **Diana Zurawski**

5. *The Power of Secrets*

By **Tyriana Jones**

Westcott Elementary School

7th Grade English Language Arts

Community | **Auburn Gresham**

Teaching Artist | **Levi Holloway**

Classroom Teacher | **Angela Williams**

6. *Untitled*

By **Grace Neely**

Skinner West Elementary School

7th Grade ELA

Community | **West Loop**

Teaching Artist | **Levi Holloway**

Classroom Teacher | **Jennifer Christiansen**

7. *Let's Face Reality*

By **Briseyda Torres**

Columbia Explorers Academy

8th Grade SEL and Art

Community | **Brighton Park**

Teaching Artist | **Steph Vondell**

Classroom Teacher | **Monika Rauba and Chelsea Clementz**

8. *My Name is Melissa*

By **Olivia Shumaker**

Skinner West Elementary School

7th Grade ELA

Community | **West Loop**

Teaching Artist | **Levi Holloway**

Classroom Teacher | **Jennifer Christiansen**

9. *Untitled*

By **TBA**

Wells Community Academy High School

9th-12th Grade ELL

Community | **West Town**

Teaching Artist | **Steph Vondell**

Classroom Teacher | **Caitlin Scheib**

10. *My Fate*

By **Jacqueline Corral**

Galileo Scholastic Academy of Math and Science

8th Grade ELA

Community | **Little Italy**

Teaching Artist | **Jarrett King**

Classroom Teacher | **Diana Zurawski**

11. *Untitled*

By **Francisco Gonzalez**

Solorio Academy High School

10th Grade English

Community | **Gage Park**

Teaching Artist | **Lindsay Hopkins**

Teaching Artist Assistant | **Victor Maraña**

Classroom Teacher | **Jennifer Westfallen**

12. *Untitled*

By **Mary Yoon**

Skinner West Elementary School

7th Grade ELA

Community | **West Loop**

Teaching Artist | **Jarrett King**

Classroom Teacher | **Lauren McKenna**

13. *Dropout*

By **Jesus Vicente Ramos**

Solorio Academy High School

10th Grade English

Community | **Gage Park**

Teaching Artist | **Lindsay Hopkins**

Teaching Artist Assistant | **Victor Maraña**

Classroom Teacher | **Jennifer Westfallen**

ELA - English Language Arts
ELL - English Language Learner
SEL - Social-Emotional Learning