

CROW to present 'My Heart, From The Page To The Stage' this weekend

Eleven nervous teenagers entered the CROW Center for the Performing Arts at 9:55 a.m. Aug. 5.

Chairs were set in a circle and the kids quickly selected their seats. Within minutes, uneasy giggles and banter was replaced with a creative writing prompt in their shiny new Advanced Acting Program journals.

"You don't want to marry a person," said director, Melanie Heard. "Come up with five different ways to get it through his/her head. How can you tell someone that you are finally done?"

Pens immediately took to

paper.

Within minutes, the kids were asked to share aloud their journal entries, followed by a rough draft of their first original monologues for the stage.

The concept behind "My Heart, From The Page To The Stage" came as an epiphany in last year's camp. While producing a pair of one-act plays that CROW had licensed, Heard noticed that "the students' original works were marvelously fresh," she said.

Through reading aloud their daily writing prompts, the idea was born. What if

these students wrote their own monologues, which could be compiled, published and made accessible for fellow theatre students across the nation?

What if the powerful, passionate, hilarious and unique thoughts of our small town kids were made available to any theatre educator, director, producer or organization that wanted to produce them?

What if our local kids could make history by sharing a little piece of their hearts? And what if the Florence community could be the very first to witness the incredible work from these young playwrights?

Over the remaining few days of camp, students will spend time self-editing, peer-editing, testing, pol-



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of CROW's Advanced Acting Program will present self-written and performed, one-act plays this Friday and Saturday at the CROW Center.

ishing and performing two original monologues each. The result will be an approximately one-hour One Act, performed live by the

playwrights themselves.

The ultimate goal will be to publish their writing.

"Our students are breaking through self-perceived

barriers," said Heard. "Many of them think that they don't know how to write for the stage. We're here to show them that they can do anything they set their minds to."

The "we" Heard refers to is her co-director, Diane David.

David is visiting from Southern Calif., where she works as a professional stage manager and musical director.

David brings with her an incredible arts resume spanning decades and work in many different genres with top-notch artists. Heard met David back in the early 1990s, when a 16-year-old Heard auditioned and was cast as "Frenchy" in a production of "Grease" that David musical-directed. Over the years, the two have remained good friends.

CROW invites the public to celebrate the Advanced Acting students' hard work on Friday, Aug. 16 or Saturday, Aug. 17, at 7 p.m. at the CROW Center for the Performing Arts (3120 Highway 101 in Florence).

Tickets for "My Heart, From The Page To The Stage" are \$12 per person, cash only, and will be available at the door. Tickets are first come, first served, and doors open at 6:30 p.m.

The show is not recommended for small children due to some mature content.

"Topics include love, loss, family, friends, passion, pain, normalcy, healing and so much more ... the themes are universal, and applicable to people of all ages," Heard said. "Please come and show your support. Our kids deserve a full house."

For more information about the CROW program, visit www.crowkids.com. or contact Heard at 541-999-8641.

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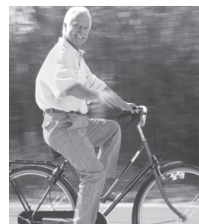
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