

America Too:



Each year, Trinity Rep creates a special theatrical event, America Too, with and for its community about an issue affecting our lives. Each year the topic and performance are different, but the goal remains the same: catalyzing conversation and action by putting the actual stories of our community at the center of the work.

This year's America Too will examine personal health and wellbeing in partnership with the Business Innovation Factory's (BIF) Personalized Medicine by Design project Design — a self-organized purposeful network transforming healthcare with individuals and families at the core.

ABOUT AMERICA TOO

America Too is a Trinity Rep initiative that seeks to reflect on the times in which we live and catalyze community conversation. The genesis of the project was Trinity Rep's participation in The Every 28 Hours Plays in 2015, a theatrical response to the events in Ferguson, Missouri. In addition to the community's relationship to policing and racism, America Too events have also looked at the impact of the repeal of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and Providence's housing crisis. The culminating event of America Too each year is a staged reading of short or full-length plays that illuminate the topic, followed by a robust audience discussion. This event is free and open to the public.

THE INSPIRATION

For BIF, the event will be a culmination of a year-long national series of immersive conversations, part of its Personalized Medicine by Design project, which seeks to understand how individuals and families experience the current healthcare system and to explore the opportunity for transformational new business models that empower them to improve their own health and wellbeing.

"We need to transform healthcare with the experience of individuals and families at the core of new models that unleash personal agency to improve health and wellbeing outcomes. What better way to build an actionable foundation for design than to engage our local community to create, share, and deliver powerful stories of personal health and wellbeing," said BIF founder and Chief Catalyst Saul Kaplan.

America Too is one of Trinity Rep's community engagement projects that is part of the company's Center for Activism and Performance, led by Joe Wilson, Jr., who is also a member of Trinity Rep's Resident Acting Company.

"Health and wellbeing are at their heart social justice issues. Healthcare is a human right and far too many people are

being left behind by today's healthcare system. It's time for that to change," says Joe Wilson, Jr. "By bringing artists into the conversation with the community, we can help facilitate raising up these voices on the stage, where they belong. Transforming healthcare starts with personal storytelling, empathy and engagement because IT'S OUR HEALTH."

THE PROCESS AND THE ARTISTS

The project commences with four Story Sharing Workshops, where community members gather to share their personal stories of health and wellbeing. BIF and Trinity Rep will work to identify and partner with community organizations throughout Rhode Island to participate in these four workshops. Ideal partners will serve communities whose voices are traditionally not heard. Participating community members will have the opportunity to work with professional playwrights and storytellers to develop their narrative into a piece to be shared on stage by area actors during a culminating event at Trinity Rep. Each of the workshops will be facilitated by a Lead Artist.

- **Dominic D'Andrea:** Director of Community Engagement at Queens Theatre; Founder and Outgoing Artistic Director of the One-Minute Play Festival
- **Val Tutson:** Rhode Island Black Storytellers; Winner of the 2019 Rhode Island Pell Award for Excellence in the Arts
- **Meg Sullivan:** Artistic Director for the Manton Avenue Project in Olneyville
- **Sokeo Ros:** Dancer, Storyteller, Performer, Teacher and Advisor at Case Closed; Program Director at Everett Company

THE EVENT

America Too: It's Our Health will culminate with a free event on Monday, October 21 and Tuesday, October 22 at 7:00 pm at Trinity Rep. Each event will feature staged readings of the plays and performance pieces that emerge from the Story Sharing Workshops. Following the performances, the audience will be invited to consider what we can do in Rhode Island to design a healthcare system that puts individuals and families at the core, with access to the information, tools, and resources to improve their own health and well-being. RSVP's

are recommended for the free event, as seating is limited, and will be taken through the Trinity Rep box office beginning in September.

ABOUT TRINITY REP AND THE CENTER FOR ACTIVISM AND PERFORMANCE

Rhode Island's Tony Award-winning theater, Trinity Rep has created unparalleled professional theater for and with its community since its founding in 1963. Trinity Rep strives to facilitate human connection and has been a driving force behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region for more than 50 years. Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally-stimulating live productions that range from classical to contemporary and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities.

The Center for Activism and Performance at Trinity Rep (CAP) is committed to strengthening the connections between art-making, best civic practice, and social activism. CAP trains performers and performance-makers to use their unique skill sets to solve or mitigate civic problems, while expanding how the public views the utility of performance in addressing challenges in our community. CAP also trains community organizers and activists to use the tools of performance to deepen their practice of social and policy change with new methodologies that prioritize creativity, storytelling, and physical and vocal awareness.

ABOUT BIF

BIF is a purpose-driven network, enabling the design, prototype, and commercialization of human-centered business models that better serve our most vulnerable populations in healthcare, education, and public services.

CONTACT

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For more information on Personalized Medicine by Design, call or email Tori Drew (401) 270-7906, tori@bif.is, or visit BIF's website at PersonalizedMedicineByDesign.com.