



News Release

For Immediate Release

Gang Violence: From the Streets to the Stage

Toronto, July 27, 2009 - Mixed Company Theatre partners with the **Toronto Police Service** to create theatre for social change with youth affected by gang violence.

"The Toronto Police Service's partnership with Mixed Company Theatre creates an excellent opportunity to engage communities through the use of theatre arts and assists our ongoing efforts to enhance relationships with citizens of Toronto. Positive community relations improve our effectiveness in keeping our community safe," said Staff Superintendent Glenn De Caire, Central Field, Toronto Police Service.

For the next four weeks, youth will meet at York Memorial Collegiate Institute, collaborating with professional theatre, dance and music artists, including Chalmers Award Winning script-writer, Rex Deverell. They will participate in intensive workshops, covering hip-hop, rap, and script-development, learning to express their voices to make their communities safer.

"With support from the Toronto Police Service, Mixed Company Theatre has had the opportunity to connect with many community groups across Toronto, hearing the voices of those who have experienced gang violence. This new interactive performance incorporates these experiences, focusing on gang presence in our neighbourhoods and the pressures youth face finding social connection and identity," remarked Simon Malbogot, Artistic Director, Mixed Company Theatre.

With the help of the Toronto Police Service, Mixed Company Theatre has been reaching out to young people through the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS), the Youth in Policing Initiative and other community-based programs such as Project PEACE, Breaking the Cycle and L.O.V.E.. The end result, a forum theatre production addressing gang violence, will debut August 14 and August 16 at York Memorial CI. The presentation will tour to communities within 12 and 31 Divisions plus many more between August 17 - 21.

Mixed Company Theatre produces innovative, socially relevant drama as a tool to educate, engage and empower for positive change.

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