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Features a Wine and Cheese Reception and a Post-Show After Glow. eFOLLOWSPOT August, 2016

All They Need is a Week

by Jeremy Schaefer

ITA Theatre for Young Audiences Division Representative



Compass Creative
Dramatics takes young
performers from
rehearsal to performance
of a fully produced
musical in a single week!
That's an incredible feat,

and CCD's Cathlyn Melvin took the time to talk to the ITA about how they do it.

How would you describe the work and mission of Compass Creative Dramatics?

We specialize in bringing week-long theatre experiences to places where kids already learn and play, which means we partner with schools and parent organizations, park districts, churches, scout troops. We travel across the USA, spending each week in a different community, taking that community's kids from audition to performance in just five days! We focus on stretching creativity and bravery muscles and developing social skills like responsibility, trust, respect, and empathy for all ages and types of learners. We can have up to 75 students each week, and they get to perform along with two professional actors from Chicago, which they always think is tons of fun!

How does theatrical experience help young people flex their 'bravery muscles'?

We focus on meeting the kids where they're at, and challenging them to grow from there. We see all levels of bravery on Monday - from students



who aren't afraid to be silly and loud and share all kinds of thoughts to kids who barely make eye contact and won't open their mouths to speak. For each student, we encourage an individual kind of growth throughout the week. Maybe that loud and silly kid feels self-conscious dancing or singing, so we help them gain confidence in those areas. The more reserved students often need support and encouragement to simply raise their hands, share their ideas, or speak within a group. And there are students who start the week at every level in between, and we encourage them to turn up their bravery just

November 4-6, 2016

ITA's 2nd Bi-Annual Statewide
Community Theatre Festival Illinois AACTFest - commUNITY
Theatre: One Heart, One Vision,
One Voice
Engle Lane Theatre
Streator

January 5-7, 2017 Illinois High School Theatre Festival 2017

"Find Your Truth: Discover, Uncover, Reveal" University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign

February, 2017

37th Annual Statewide Non-Equity Professional Theatre Auditions

Location TBA

EVENTS OF INTEREST FROM ITA MEMBERS

September 10, 2016

8:30a-5:00p

(This event is Co-sponsored with Grand Stage)

Flying Performers: Have You Thought About... Rockford HS, Rockford Michigan (Grand Rapids area)

Description: Tracy Nunnally of Vertigo will demonstrate necessary rigs, equipment, and all you should consider as far as safety, staffing and budgets.

Registration deadline Sept. 2 http://midwest.usitt.org/programs

September 24, 2016

9:30a-5:00p New Technologies and their Practical Application a little bit every day. By Friday, it's really spectacular how far they've come.

Putting up an entire musical in such a short time period must be an incredibly rewarding experience for everyone involved. What are some of the reactions that you typically hear from kids after the first performance? Students just beam after their shows. The same kids who were so quiet and so hesitant on Monday will run up to us after

their performance and say, "Cathlyn! Cathlyn! I did it! I sang the whole song and I remembered all of the dance!" Of course, we already know - we were on stage with them as their



fellow actors (and cheering them on as their teachers)! But it is so great to see their grins, to hear their amazing confidence after their show, and to sense the joy they have in reliving that moment with you backstage. Teachers and parents have told us,

"This is amazing! I can't believe this only took a week!" Since we provide all of the sets, props, costumes, make-up, administrative materials, and marketing materials for the week, one of the most common responses we have from teachers and parents is that they can't believe how organized the week was, and how little time and energy the PTO, or the park director, or whoever brought us in, had to put forth to provide a tremendous arts enrichment experience for their students.

Your shows are adaptations of familiar stories. What excites you about theatrical adaptations?

Our students love familiar titles. They get so excited about stories they've heard and recognize, and then, when they learn that our versions have new songs and scenes and characters, they are eager to learn more! Personally, I also love revisiting these stories from my childhood (in 2018, we'll be premiering *Beauty & the Beast*, and I'm especially excited for that one)!

Where can ITA members learn more about Compass Creative Dramatics?

We're always happy to chat! You can learn more about all of our programming on our website, www.ccdramatics.com. We're also on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@ccdramatics), so follow along on our adventures via our social media!

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Sounds like Change is Needed

Submitted by Kevin Long, ITA University/College Division Representative

For us in the theatre, June 12 was our Super Bowl - The Tony Awards. Each year I look forward to watching and celebrating the work produced during the most recent Broadway Season. However, since 2014, I have watched with a bit of bitterness as the American Theatre Wing eliminated the sound design categories from the Tony Awards. In the July/August 2016 edition of American Theatre magazine, an opinion article was

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

- * Projection/Video Design Demystified
- * Show Control lighting and Sound
- * Digitizing Historical Patterns
- * Study abroad

Registration deadline Sept. 16 http://midwest.usitt.org/programs

Grand Stage September 17, 2016

9:00a-2:00p

Electricity 101: Basics for the Stage Technician and ETC's "Layers of Light"

- * Basic electrical math and tools, safety, wiring, connectors, cables and lamps.
- * LED fixtures as tool for lighting.
- * How LED's compared with traditional fixtures on costumes, skin, scenery
- * How LED fixtures are dimmed

Registration deadline Sept. 9 http://grandstage.com/tsw.htm

JOB POSTINGS

ColorBox Theatrre is seeks a **Stage Manager** for *The Medium*.

ColorBox Theatre is seeks a **Light/Sound Designer** for *The Medium*.

Costumers needed for two shows at **Downers Grove North High School**.

Warren Township High

published entitled, "Tony, Can You Hear Me?" The article was written by Tony Award-winning sound designer John Gromada and eloquently describes what the Tony Award for sound design meant to him and what it means to then have the award eliminated.



Gromada, John. "Tony, Can You Hear Me?" American Theatre. July-Aug. 2016: 52-54. Print.

http://www.americantheatre.org/2016/06/06/tony-can-you-hear-me/

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Updated and Enhanced: ITA Statewide Auditions 2017 by Joan McGrath

ITA Professional Theatre Division Representative

"God, I hope I get it! I hope I get it!!!!!"

A Chorus Line laid bare the dreams, the terror, and the longing every actor experiences as inescapable aspects of the formidable audition process. Sure it can be scary. But auditioning is the way new talent gets seen and established talent gets seen in a new light.



ITA's Professional Division enables, demystifies, and makes success possible for aspiring and credentialed actors.

Since 1979, ITA has afforded performers the unparalleled opportunity to showcase their acting, singing and dance talent to an assembly of professional, storefront, summer stock and community theatre casting directors. The annual 2-day **ITA Statewide Auditions** are the largest combined professional theatre auditions in Illinois.

300 actors, singers, and dancers took part in the 2016 ITA Statewide Auditions last February at the <u>School of Theatre and Music</u>, <u>University of Illinois at Chicago</u>. Under bright lights with

School seeks a costumer for its upcoming production of Honus & Me.

their dreams center stage, they presented 90-seconds of their best work to 50 casting representatives from companies including Goodman Theatre, Metropolis Performing Arts Center, and Oak Park Festival Theatre.

The Actors Gymnasium seeks a marketing intern.

Plans are underway to make Audition 2017 even more productive for proven pros, new-to-Chicago talent, and starting out performers - and for the theatres that need their talent.

Click here to visit the ITA's Job Board for details and more postings!



ITA's professional division representatives, and I, are working powerhouse executive director Aimee-Lynn Newlan. We are in the process of putting together a "Think Tank" of theatrical professionals to make the auditions even more

AUDITION ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are no auditions posted at this time.

Click here to visit the ITA's Audition Announcements for more details.

FEATURED PERFORMANCES

No featured performances.

Need more information on the above shows? Want your performance to be featured here? Visit the ITA Performance Calendar for details.

Among our objectives, we seek to

of the ITA Auditions.

- expand the roster of actively participating casting directors.
- make it easier for theatre companies to use the ITA Auditions as their annual "General Auditions."

relevant for theatres and more accessible for performers. You

industry leaders have partnered with us to enhance the value

can look to this space over the next months to learn which

- recruit a more ethnic-, age- and experience-diverse pool of auditionees.
- be a more critical part of the professional development of Illinois actors through programs like our pragmatic Audition Clinics.

We are always open for suggestions - theatre people live by good direction! So if you have any thoughts how the ITA Statewide Auditions can more effectively be a professional launching pad for Illinois talent, we embrace your input.

"Next up....YOU!"

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For Children Who Want to Pursue an Acting Career by Stacy Deemar, ITA Member

Every year a few students and/or parents inquire about additional drama opportunities beyond the classroom. Most of us have a standard referral list of theatre programs that provide quality classes and performance opportunities for children. And on rare occasions, requests are made about how youngsters can pursue "the business." Overzealous parents tell us their child wants to be in the movies or is so funny she should be making commercials. Does your referral list include a theatre program that nurtures young talent for a professional career in acting?

For many theatre educators, teaching acting as a career is not part of our program's mission. Our curriculum and allotted contact time does not afford us the opportunity to cover cold

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Performance Calendar

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IHSTF Fan Page

College/University Group Discussion

Community Theatre Group Discussion

Creative Drama Group Discussion

Professional Theatre Group Discussion

Secondary School Theatre Group Discussion

Theatre for Young Audiences Group Discussion

FOLLOW OUR TWEETS:

Illinois Theatre Association

IHSTF



readings, head shots, acting for the camera, audition techniques, and how to obtain an agent. Where can children learn acting as a profession and be guaranteed a safe environment with professional and nurturing instructors?



The Actors Training Center in Wilmette is the ideal facility for young actors who want to pursue an acting career. ATC, a not-for-profit, opened in 2007 for the purpose of taking care of young actors and training

them for the industry. The Center offers a plethora of classes for elementary, middle school, and high school students, as well as a nice assortment for adults, too. Regardless of age or talent, there is a class suited for everyone at ATC.

For preschool through first grade students, these little actors can choose from Playtime, Acting Through Imagination, Play In a Day, Story Theatre, and Create a Play.

The youth classes are divided into two age groups. The classes specially designed for fourth through sixth graders include Actor Essentials, Scene Study, Improvisation, Acting For The Camera, Actors Boot Camp, Words and Music: The Disney Songbook, and The Art of the Disney/Nick Audition.

For seventh through twelfth grade actors, there is a wide variety of class offerings including The Power of "If," The Professional Actors Toolbox, Discovering the Inner Life of a Play, Improvisation, Sketch Comedy Writing, "No Explanation" Comedy Troupe, Acting for the Camera, The Commercial Audition, TV/Film Technique, Advanced on Camera, Acting on Song, Workshopping a Musical, and a musical theatre lab.

For those adults who are novices or honing their skills, ATC's class offerings include Building Trust, Love & Presence, Text & Subtext, discovering the Inner Life of a Play, Acting for the Camera, Advanced on Camera, Improv Boot Camp, and Stage to Screen Calibration.

And for actors with limited time, ATC also offers one and twoday workshops with first tier casting directors from Chicago, LA and NYC, writers, and actors.



At first glance, the 1905 building that houses the ATC on the second floor with its early modern architecture appears

The ITA is a network of dedicated theatre artists and educators advocating quality theatre throughout Illinois.

Please join us!

123 Mill Pond Dr.
Glendale Heights, IL 60139
312-265-5922 (office)
312-265-6101 (fax)
www.illinoistheatre.org

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simple. But make no mistake. What is occurring inside this center is creative mastery with the most modern equipment. The studio has state-of-the-art cameras, computers, lighting, and back drops. There are high definition televisions that are used for playbacks. The equipment utilized at ATC is equivalent and/or more advanced than what is currently being used in casting offices in Chicago.

Carole Dibo, the executive director of ATC, is a spunky and talented professional who has been actively working in the field for over thirty-five years. Carole enjoys teaching and working with actors because she finds the creative process exhilarating. She acknowledges that she has been incredibly blessed and lucky to have made a career for herself in the industry. In addition to her responsibilities at ATC, Carole owns Carole Dibo Talent Management, a boutique company that nurtures young talent.

What makes ATC programs special?

My teachers and administrative staff are passionate, enjoy working collaboratively, and are professionals in the industry. We are always bringing in new teachers and professionals from NY and LA. Each member of my team comes with his own experience and has a burning passion for educating people in the arts. My team understands that art is so important to a human's development. Art is empowering. It teaches people to think independently. Art allows people to be free to be themselves.

Why is ATC in the suburbs as opposed to the city?

I live in Wilmette. There are plenty of training centers in the city. There are young creatives in the suburbs whose parents do not need to be burdened to go into the city. All of my teachers are working actors from the city. When you open a business, you need to look at where the need is to be filled. I found that there was no professional training in the suburbs.

Her advice to young actors?

Be yourself. When the universe comes looking for you, you need to be available. Celebrate you and your type. Don't try to be anything else but yourself.

How she deals with overzealous parents?

Honestly. They usually listen. I relate the child's behavior in class to what would happen in the business.

What are the myths surrounding the business for children? "That it's easy. It's actually hard work that parents think is glamorous. It's anything but glamorous. If you don't have someone you can trust or guide you, you won't last long. You need to have someone guiding you. Be careful what you wish for. Parents want results now which may not always be the best choice for a long career. Parents want it sometimes more than the kids."

How she knows when a youth is mature enough to handle "the business"? "I look at how each student interacts with his peers and teachers. I see how a student is able to stay focused. I can see their enthusiasm. What goes on in the classroom is what will happen in the casting office."

Her thoughts about the business? "The people I work with at ATC and throughout the industry are very generous. It's not a cut throat business. I am lucky to be a part of the Chicago scene. I don't like to call it a business. It's more of a journey.

Music Makers Theatre





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a state agency.

ITA ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each week the ITA sends out "Friday Announcements" to its Listserve (currently comprised of more than 3,000 theatre artists and educators from throughout the state). If you'd like to submit an item for inclusion in the weekly announcements, please click here. [Suggestions for inclusion include: audition announcements, job postings, interesting theatre stories/experiences, lesson plans, community/life events, etc., theatre opportunities, etc.).

Also, please remember to submit your upcoming performances and/or events to the ITA's on-line performance calendar!!! Click here. If this is what you really want to do, you should do it. Empathy breeds creativity and confidence."

Scholarships? "We do not turn people away. We have scholarships available. We ask people to submit an application. We have a first time student discount of \$25 off your first class at ATC and we have a refer a friend \$25 credit to use towards another class.

Where she sees herself in five years from now? "I see myself watching the Tony Awards and seeing my students saying I got my start at ATC. I will continue to help generations of kids celebrate themselves whatever path they choose to take."

For more information about Carole Dibo and the Actors Training Center, you can visit www.actorstrainingcenter.org.

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Insights from BUSTI (Boston University Summer Theatre Institute): A College Theatre Artist's Perspective by Hannah Antman, Student,

Boston University School of Theatre

When I began my work as a teaching assistant for the <u>Boston University Summer Theatre Institute</u>, the prospect of teaching high-schoolers seemed at once daunting and ill-suited. As an incoming junior at BU's School of Theatre, I am only a few years older than these students; high school still feels all too recent, my own teenage blunders still freshly lingering. I wondered: How am I experienced enough to offer guidance to these students? What are the differences between teens in high school and teens in college, and what theatrical insight do I have to offer these younger teens as a college student?

As the program began, I was reminded of the outside expectations and academic obligations that held me back as a young theatremaker. While these hardworking students essentially matched my co-



workers and I in capability and maturity, our age gap was revealed in the way in which we perceived and approached our art. Most of the students entered the institute with a musical theatre background nurtured within their high-school theatre programs. BUSTI is an acting program that focuses on educating the whole storyteller through impulse work, movement-based technique, and a focus on technical design and non-linear/devised storytelling. We were asking many of them to dive into a world of artistry completely unknown to them, so the work that we observed at the beginning of the

summer was understandably presentational and selfconscious.

Coming from school, where their thoughts are qualified with a grade and their impulses are often suppressed to what is 'appropriate" for a classroom, they were all very concerned with doing the exercises "right." I recall an early class in which I had them complete an exercise called "the three circles." We do this frequently in my college program, and it involves standing, breathing, and making eye contact with every person in the room. Students then state their names and how they are feeling in the moment. When the students first stood up to go, most would glance back towards me, constantly checking in for my approval. They would often manufacture some sort of imposing voice or funny aside to impress their peers and displace their discomfort. When they were challenged to simply breathe and allow themselves to be seen without a social pretext, many of them began to weep with relief. I flashed back to when I first did this exercise on one of my first days of college: coming from high school, where vulnerability is often attacked under a legion of judgment and competition, being given the opportunity to be accepted without my "social mask" allowed me to, for the first time, be truthful as an artist. It was only as I witnessed them experience this newfound strength that I realized the opportunity to express vulnerability without judgment, something high-schoolers are so often denied, is what opens the door to artistic receptiveness.



Entering college from high school, my biggest revelation was that my creative identity was not only defined as an actor - I was an artist. Through working on their devised theatre pieces, I challenged my

students to expand their own artistic identities. They not only performed in their pieces, but also tried their hand at directing, writing, and designing. I encouraged them to take their opinions and ideas about things that were going on in the world and channel them into their pieces. As they adopted the identity of citizen artists, I watched their confidence soar. As they warmed to the idea that the stories they tell can affect real change, I watched them create their art with a significantly heightened urgency and commitment. As they called themselves artists, they became artists.

As my student's dramatic bemoaning and end-of-summer dread constantly reminded me, high school is hard. My high school theatre classroom was always a refuge for me amongst the academic tedium and social treachery. Observing first-hand the particular position of teenage artists reaffirmed the need for theatre classrooms as spaces for them to express and explore their most brave, vulnerable, and creative selves. High school theatre is a glowing opportunity for teenagers to own their identity as artists and to be awakened to the power and change that their art can create. Because if there is one thing that has not changed on my own journey from high

school to college, it is the enduring power of art as a timeless teacher of inspiration, confidence, and growth.

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ITA Member Spotlight: Allan Kimball, ITA President Elect by Judy Klingner, ITA Second Vice-President



What is your name? Allan Kimball

Please tell us about your career path.

I started teaching at <u>DuQuoin High School</u> in 1985. I was the Speech Coach and directed the plays and musicals. In 1998, I made the move to <u>Southeastern Illinois College</u> to serve as the Director of Theatre. I also serve as the Co-Chair for the Humanities Division.

The Kimball Family is full of artists. Fill us in!!

My wife, Pam was the Speech and Drama coach at Benton High School until she retired 3 years ago. Pam and I are active with our community theatre group (Pyramid Players). I was one of the founders of the group back in 1977 and have served as director and scenic designer for the past 40 years. Pam joined us when she auditioned for South Pacific in 1981 and has been on stage and/or directing our children's productions ever since. When our two boys came along they just joined us at rehearsals in their walkers and later graduated to being onstage. Justin is currently touring with *The Ned* Show (having just returned from a two week tour of Australia). He has also performed in Superman 2050 and other shows and dance concerts in the Chicago area. Joshua has a BFA in Music Theater from SIU-C. He has been a performer at Cedar Point and on the Carnival Cruise lines. He is currently working with the Light Opera in Chicago in the company of Mame.

You have had a long history of success at the Illinois High School Association's Drama / Group Interpretation Tournament. Please explain what it is and why you think it's important.

The IHSA Drama & Group Interp tournaments allow schools to showcase their actors. The IHSA is the same organization that governs high school sports. The Drama/GI tournaments allow students to perform/compete on the state level. This is an amazing experience for the students. Unlike other IHSA activities that are divided up by school size, Drama/GI has schools of all sizes competing together. While it may sound like a disadvantage for smaller schools, it offers schools the chance to see levels of performance that they might not otherwise see in their own areas of the state. I directed for DuQuoin and later for Benton (both small schools) and was fortunate enough to have some success at the state level. The nice thing about Drama/GI tournaments that it is NOT all about how much money you have, but how talented your students are.

Please share details about a theatre project/production with which you are currently involved.

I am just starting year 19 at SIC. We will be holding auditions next week for *Charlotte's Web: the Musical*. So many of the feeder schools in our area have limited (or no) theatre in their schools. I feel that SIC should be the place where those who love theatre can come and see and/or perform. All our shows are open to the public. *Charlotte's Web* will be our TYA production for the year. We combine the production with DramaCon Jr. DramaCon Jr. is a series of small workshops we will do with the grade school students that we bus in for the matinees. This will at least give them some exposure to the arts and performing.

Of what theatrical accomplishment are you most proud? I am extremely proud of our 40 year run with The Pyramid Players. This is our community theatre that my best friend Brian Summers and I started back in 1977. I had just finished my first year at SIU-C, and Brian had just graduated from Benton High School. We had been doing shows with our Junior High choir director Jim Owen. We went to him at the start of the summer and asked him what show he was going to do this year. He said that he was taking the summer off, but that Brian and I should do one ourselves. Being young and naive we thought, "Sure." And using money from my college fund (with my parents blessing) we put on the musical Godspell in the Cafetorium at Benton High School. We have come a long way in the past 40 years. But the thing that I am most proud of it that EVERYONE involved is a volunteer. No one has ever been paid for acting, building scenery, directing, or playing in our orchestras. This has been, and I hope will continue to be a labor of love.

Do you have a memory of a particular ITA event that you would care to share?

Long before I joined the ITA board, I would bring my students to the Illinois High School Theatre Festival. DuQuoin was even lucky enough to have students perform and be on the crews over the years. While every year was awesome, I have a very fond memory of a particular student in one of the shows. During the curtain call, he and I locked eyes. He was crying...I was crying...And I realized that for him and every student who has ever been fortunate enough to be a part of an All-State production, these are memories they will never forget.

Please describe your personal history with the Illinois High School Theatre Festival.

As I said, I have taken students to Festival since I started at DuQuoin. I had students in the shows and on the running crews. I have also presented workshops throughout the years. When I made the move to SIC, I did not want that connection to the Festival to stop. For the past 18 years, I have brought my theatre club officers to recruit and present workshops. I was fortunate enough to be asked to do makeup and wigs for the All-State production of Hairspray. Being involved with an All-State production had always been on my 'bucket list," so I was thrilled to be able to check that one off. But in an embarrassment of riches, I was allowed to be involved in 2 more All-States - Urinetown & Into the Woods. While doing an All-State production can be exhausting..., I would NOT trade these 3 experiences for anything in the world. Getting to work alongside such talented directors, designers, and students is a precious gift. In 2012, I was presented with the Award of Excellence in Secondary School Education. I was extremely honored to be remembered for my work in the high school so long after I had made the move to Community College. That was the year I was asked to join the ITA Board.

As the ITA President Elect, what do foresee as the biggest challenge for the organization in the future?

With the budget cuts being forced on so many schools and theatre organizations, it is essential that we all work together to help keep the footlights on and to assure that the artists have a place to share their talents. While ITA does not have the financial resources to help fund theatre across the state, we DO have the human resources to advocate for the arts. ITA must be the voice that the political machine hears. We must serve our members as resources when the money gets low - to lend, to share, to advise, and to keep each other going. Theatre in Illinois WILL NOT... CAN NOT be silenced.

What is a specific goal that you hope to accomplish during your tenure as the ITA President?

One of the things on my "to do" list is branding. As a Board we have discussed the best way(s) to get our name out there. I want to see us continue the work that Dinah Barthelmess and Aimee-Lynn have started along this path. We do a great job of being a presence at our events. I would like to look for ways for us to branch out even further. We need to explore other opportunities where the name ITA may not be as familiar. One opportunity I would like to explore is having an ITA representative at the IHSA Drama/GI state tournament to meet with the directors who are doing such great work. I want the ITA logo to become a familiar icon that reminds anyone who sees it that there is an organization for them.

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ITA UPDATES



Click Here to Register

Illinois Save The Date Saturday, October 8, 2016 Association THE ILLINOIS THEATRE ASSOCIATION **COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY DIVISION** INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR HAND TO GOD AT VICTORY GARDENS THEATRE 6:30 pm: Wine and Cheese Reception 7:30 pm: Performance of Hand to God directed by Gary Griffin Post show After Glow at a nearby bar T.B.A. Ticket Prices: \$45.00 for ITA Member; \$50.00 Non-Member JOIN US FOR A WONDERFUL EVENING OF THEATRE, NETWORKING, FELLOWSHIP AND FUN! For More Information http://victorygardens.org/our-season/2016-17-season

Click Here to Register

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Streator, IL
www.illinoistheatre.org

OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

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Association



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