

Chile Pod Brings In Younger Audiences

The new kid-oriented show, *Chile Pod*, explores a young person's journey of self-discovery within their heritage. It is the story of Carmen, a young girl of Oaxacan descent, whose family moves from Mexico to San Diego for a better life. While at first frustrated by this new adjustment, Carmen learns to embrace her own culture while still learning to make home in another. Author Rhiana

Yazzie wrote the piece hoping to keep it relatable to young people, as the problems faced by the main character of the play are ones faced by kids everywhere.

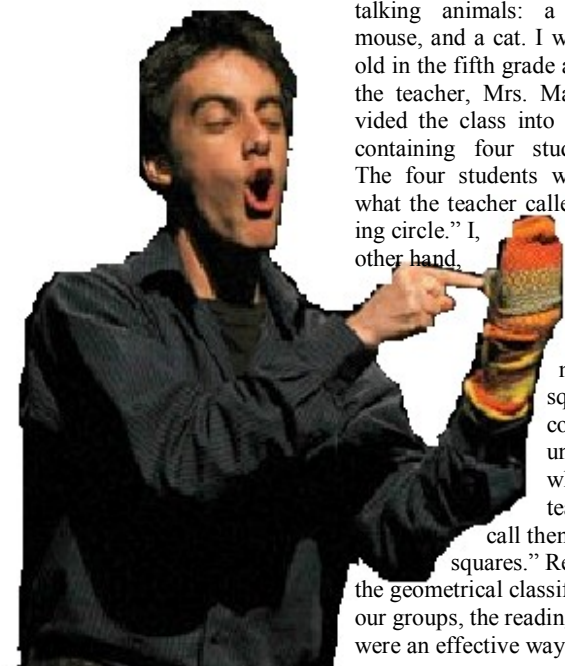
The show brings up the issues of diversity and culture, which the Native-American author explains as being important due to it being a part of one's identity, as well as giving one a certain perspective on his or her past and present.

However, at the same time, there is a comedic aspect to the show. Yazzie explains, "if you can laugh and sing about your problems it makes it that much easier to get past them." The show weaves together the difficult experiences faced by Carmen, some of which come from Yazzie's own childhood experiences, with comedy and

music, creating a fun and easily relatable experience for young audiences. *Chile-Pod* was written with young people in mind, hoping to entertain, but also to influence and inspire, making it perfect for all ages.

- Rachel Sather from Eastlake High School

Thespian Obsession: Why We Live and Breathe Theatre



One of my early revelations came in the form of three talking animals: a cricket, a mouse, and a cat. I was 10 years old in the fifth grade and one day the teacher, Mrs. Matthews, divided the class into five groups containing four students each. The four students would sit in what the teacher called a "reading circle." I, on the other hand, was a firm believer that four students made up a square so I couldn't understand why the teacher didn't call them "reading squares." Regardless of the geometrical classification of our groups, the reading circles were an effective way to read and

discuss our new class novel *The Cricket in Times Square*. This story, written by George Selden, is about a cricket named Chester and his New York City adventures with his friends Tucker the mouse, Harry the cat, and Mario the human boy.

It was then that a key moment occurred that would forever change the course of my life. It was my turn to read aloud and the page I was given was full of dialogue between the cricket, the mouse, and the cat. After the first few seconds of my traditional monotonic recitation, I decided it would be fun to see if I could get a laugh or two by reading each character's lines with different voices. I began to read the dialogue with distinct, zany, and eccentric voices for each character. To me, it seemed as though my vocal "performances"

breathed life into the characters. The story was no longer just a tedious class assignment. No. It became an opportunity to have fun and bring these talking animals to life. Mrs. Matthews then remarked to the class, "Well, it looks like we're just going to have to have Michael read everything else out loud for the rest of the year, won't we?" And that's when it hit me; this "reading aloud" was something I enjoyed very much. What seemed like a small, insignificant experience actually became my first major step in the direction of acting and performing arts.

- Michael Silberblatt, Senior from Coronado School of the Arts

Pictured to the left: the author, Michael Silberblatt, mid-performance

UPCOMING AT THE PLAYHOUSE

APRIL 9: La Jolla Playhouse Conservatory Application Due

Young actors who wish to improve their craft should visit www.lajollaplayhouse.org/education-and-outreach/programs-for-youth/conservatory to submit their application

JUNE 15: *Surf Report* opens

Annie Weisman, author of the 2001 Playhouse hit *Be Aggressive*, once again captures our Southern California coastal vibe in this funny and poignant play that examines the sacrifices we make — or avoid — for our family.



JULY 5—JULY 23: *Young Performers' Workshop*. In these workshops, expert teaching artists inspire the voices of young actors and provide a safe place for young performers to reach for the stars. Get your applica-

Conservatory Returns to the Playhouse

The summer of 2008 I was fortunate enough to be accepted into La Jolla Playhouse Conservatory. I'm not going to lie, I was terrified. I was giving up almost all of my summer to dedicate to Conservatory and I was worried that I wouldn't have fun, or that I wouldn't make good friends. I soon realized later that day that I was insane to ever think that. On the first day alone our small group of eighteen began to bond quickly and learn so much from all of our classes which consisted of classical and contemporary scene-study, Shakespearian monologues and scenes, *commedia dell'arte*, voice, and finally movement. I have never grown or learned so much about the craft of acting in six-weeks. As we worked with each other in all of our classes and listened to our instructors intently, we began to realize how important acting was to us and how theater is so important in our lives as well as many others kids like us. During the intensive program we also had the opportunity to

talk to people in the theater world such as Broadway actress Charlayne Woodard as well the cast of "Memphis", which premiered at the Playhouse that summer and is now currently on Broadway.

The training that we were exposed allowed all of us to grow as actors, as well as people. Although it was an emotional time for us as Conservatory ended, we found that the lessons we learned and the memories we shared would be close to our hearts forever. In reflection of my Conservatory experience, I know that I wouldn't be the actress I am today without this intensive training. After auditioning for prestigious theater schools and even being accepted into a few already, I know that I could not have done it without

the Playhouse. With that, I encourage you to check the La Jolla Playhouse's website to find out about auditioning for the program this summer. If you have the dream to become an actor or if you are even a bit curious, auditions will be held in mid April to possibly experience one of the best summers of your life.

- Erica Dawson, Senior from
La Jolla Country Day



Pictured above: young actors play onstage during their

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