



CONTACT:

new42@rubenstein.com

SPEAK UP, ACT OUT: INSPIRED BY THE LORRAINE HANSBERRY INITIATIVE DRAMATIC WRITING SHOWCASE NOW ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS FROM MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



Project is a part of a partnership between New Victory and The Lillys and The 24 Hour Plays

October 6, 2021 - [New Victory](#) is partnering with [The Lillys](#) and [The 24 Hour Plays](#) for *Speak Up, Act Out: Inspired By [The Lorraine Hansberry Initiative](#)* Dramatic Writing Showcase. This project, an exciting creative writing opportunity for New York City middle and high school students, kicks off at the top of the 2021-22 school year and culminates with a virtual performance featuring professional actors in early February 2022.

Middle and high school students are invited to create and submit a monologue or short two-person scene inspired by the life and creative work of celebrated playwright and civil rights activist, Lorraine Hansberry (*A Raisin in the Sun*).

"New Victory is thrilled to partner with The Lillys and The 24 Hour Plays to amplify student voices and inspire young people to channel their creativity as a way to express how they want to see change in the world. New York City teens are so passionate, and like the incomparable Lorraine Hansberry, could be the next generation of writers, playwrights and journalists whose words create ripples of change," says Courtney J. Boddie, New 42 Vice President, Education & School Engagement.

"Words matter, and young people should be encouraged to express themselves as freely as possible, just as Lorraine did," says Julia Jordan, Executive Director of The Lillys.

To support students' creative writing processes, schools will also have access to comprehensive resources that provide more context about Lorraine Hansberry's creative and dramatic writing, journalism and activism as well as tip sheets for promising practices in writing like a playwright.

The submission portal - which includes these additional materials - is now open at NewVictory.org/Schools/Lorraine-Hansberry-Dramatic-Writing-Showcase. Official submissions from individual students must include a teacher, educator or administrator and parent or guardian contact information. They are **due no later than Monday, November 15, 2021 at 11:59pm ET**.

Dramatic works submitted for consideration will be adjudicated by a select committee to be featured in a virtual showcase with professional actors. In early January 2022, student finalists will be an active part of the creative team, collaborating in the process to shape and curate their original submission into a final dynamic piece! The virtual showcase will air in early February.

About New Victory Theater

The New Victory opens new worlds to young people and families through extraordinary performances, education and engagement programs. Bringing kids to the arts and the arts to kids since 1995, this nonprofit theater has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the United States. Reflecting and serving the multicultural city it calls home, The New Victory is committed to arts access for all communities of New York to experience and engage with the exemplary international shows on its stages. A global leader in arts education, youth development and audience engagement, the New Victory Theater has been honored by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, by Americans for the Arts with a national Arts Education Award, and by the Drama Desk for "providing enchanting, sophisticated children's theater that appeals to the child in all of us, and for nurturing a love of theater in young people."

About New 42

Under the leadership of President & CEO Russell Granet, New 42 is a cultural nonprofit whose mission is to make extraordinary performing arts a vital part of everyone's life from the earliest years onward. Driven by a deep commitment to performing arts access, New 42 connects people to world-class performances, essential education and employment programs, and creative communities that push culture forward. Through New Victory and New 42 Studios, the nonprofit serves artists, educators and New Yorkers of all ages with invaluable arts engagement and resources in and beyond the performing arts. Together with our supporters, New 42 opens new perspectives, incubates new works and creates new opportunities to move us all.

About The Lillys

The Lillys have been honoring, supporting, and advocating for women in theater for the past twelve years. The Lilly Awards ceremony is a joyous affair, devoted to shining a light on the women who have mightily contributed to the theater world and have remained under-celebrated. Each year, we present over \$100,000 to female and non-binary playwrights, composers, directors, and designers in various stages of careers. To date, all of The Lillys' financial awards in direction and design, and fifty percent in playwriting, have been given to artists of color. The Count, created by the Lillys in association with The Dramatists Guild, consists of 10 years of data documenting who and what is produced on American stages. This work has made it clear that the surest way to gender parity and racial parity is to raise the number of female playwrights of color who receive professional productions. The Lillys also founded The Family Residency at SPACE on Ryder Farm, one of the first programs to address the specific needs of parent artists that left unaddressed were hampering women's full participation in the field. The Lillys have long worked to raise awareness and to put in safeguards against sexual harassment in theaters, many of which, post-Me Too, have now finally been implemented. The Lorraine Hansberry Initiative is The Lillys' largest project to date and has been in the works for six years. It will debut in 2022.

About The 24 Hour Plays®

The 24 Hour Plays® bring together creative communities to produce plays and musicals that are written, rehearsed and performed in 24 hours. Flagship events include The 24 Hour Plays on Broadway and The 24 Hour Musicals in New York City, as well as productions in London, Los Angeles, Dublin, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Germany, Athens, Finland, Mexico City, Florence, Denmark and more. Around the world, stars of stage and screen have gathered since 1995 to create time-limited theater and raised millions of dollars for charity. Since March 2020, *The 24 Hour Plays: Viral Monologues* have generated over 400 new free-to-view theater pieces that have been viewed millions of times. Each summer, The 24 Hour Plays bring together the best young actors, directors, playwrights, producers and composers for a free professional intensive that culminates in their own production of The 24 Hour Plays: Nationals. Over ten years, this program has introduced audiences and collaborators to the next generation of artists who are changing the game in theater, television and film. Partner organizations have produced their own productions of The 24 Hour Plays in regional and professional theaters, colleges and universities, and just about everywhere you can find a curtain and a stage, touching everyone from celebrities to students.