

MOTHER TONGUE

by First Generation



Mother Tongue is an original multilingual physical theater performance, created by the Performance Project's First Generation Ensemble. *Mother Tongue* is inspired by the experiences of the ensemble members, their families and communities who are from Congo/Tanzania, Bhutan/Nepal, South Sudan/Darfur, Puerto Rico, Holyoke, and Springfield, Massachusetts.

The 90 minute performance weaves together theater, movement, music, dance, and stories in Arabic, Swahili, Nepali, Spanish, and English. The piece incorporates themes of language, culture, identity, diaspora, hypermasculinity, transphobia, racism, the school to prison pipeline and revolution.

Performances are followed by post-show discussions with the ensemble, who are trained in facilitation. Sixty and thirty-five minute versions of *Mother Tongue* are also available.

Appropriate for ages 12 and up.

Mother Tongue was created by the Performance Project's First Generation, an ensemble of young artists who identify as "first generation," who come together to create multilingual physical theater performances based on their experiences, and those of their families and communities, with a focus on social justice.

First Generation members may be the first in their family to grow up in the United States, the first to speak English, to graduate high school, go to college, to be openly LGBTQ+, be an activist, a feminist, break a silence, or many other firsts.

In First Generation, we talk about the complexity of embracing individuality while honoring one's family and community cultures. The Ensemble creates powerful, high-quality performances that engage the public in dialog about social, cultural, and generational issues.



"Physical and poetic... connecting and courageous. global stories that give birth to personal revolution."



IN ADDITION TO MOTHER TONGUE, THE PERFORMANCE PROJECT OFFERS WORKSHOPS IN BOTH CREATIVE PROCESS AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

- **Mother Tongue in Dialogue:** A facilitated conversation led by youth and Performance Project artistic co-directors sharing First Generation's group and creative process, and discussing the stories and themes raised the *Mother Tongue* performance.
- **Building Community and Amplifying Youth Voice:** A workshop combining dialogue, community building games, and learning strategies to build group solidarity and uplift and amplify youth voices. (1 three hour workshop, or up to 6 weeks/twice weekly)
- **Community Building, Healthy Relationships, Mentoring, and Social Justice:** Learn and practice active listening, respectful dialogue, and community solidarity through games, learning structures, and dialogue. (1 three hour workshop or up to 6 weeks/twice weekly)
- **Masculinity and Raising Healthy Boys and Men:** An experiential training that unpacks social norms that inform how we raise boys and men, examines hypermasculinity and gender-based violence, in order to support healthy masculinity and raising healthy boys. The workshop is taught through conversation, group activity and games. (1 three hour workshop or up to a 3 or 5-day training)
- **Devised Theater:** An introduction to collaboratively creating original performances.
- **Physical Theater:** An introduction to using movement, images, and text to create performances.

FIRST GENERATION PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS REACH BETWEEN 2000-3000 PEOPLE EACH YEAR. WE HAVE APPEARED AT:

Bowker Auditorium, UMass Amherst
 Ko Festival of Performance, Amherst, MA
 Hampshire College Social Justice Conference
 Evolve Without Borders: An Intergenerational Gathering of
 Global Theater Artists, Albuquerque, NM
 ASHTAR International Youth Theater Festival, Palestine
 UMASS Center for Racial Justice & Youth Engaged Research
 Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival

Revolutions International Theater Festival, Albuquerque, NM
 Academy of Music, Northampton, MA
 Shea Theater, Turners Falls, MA
 New Africa House, UMass Amherst
 Social Justice Education Conference at UMass Amherst
 Hampshire Jail and House of Corrections
 NAMEN International "Intersectionality and Decolonization"
 Conference

Plus numerous universities, colleges and high schools

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