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CAPITAL REGION FESTIVAL OF THEATRE CAPS OFF INAUGURAL FESTIVAL WEEKEND WITH FULL DAY OF DRAMATIC FUN AT UALBANY

CR★FT is taking over the UALBANY Campus Center on Sunday, June 15, 2025, and filling it up to the brim with workshops, panel discussions, performances and more.

ALBANY, NY – The Capital Region Festival of Theatre, (CR★FT), takes a bow on its inaugural weekend Sunday, June 15, 2025, but not before it fills the UAlbany campus center with workshops, panel discussions, and performances showcasing everything that Capital Region Theatre has to offer. Programming will be running from 10am - 6pm, and change every 50 minutes, in the Campus Center West board room, multi-purpose room, studio and auditorium, plus check out the theatrical vendor fair and exhibits in the Great Hall.

The multi-purpose room will be the location for workshops covering topics ranging from improv to stage management and lots in between. Starting the day off at 10am with a workshop on vocal techniques, **Lisa Franklin**, Broadway voice teacher, will be exploring warmups, breathing, posture, and diction, plus audition tips to refine technique and repertoire. At 11am **Olivia Szczurko-Walton** will present Improv Beyond the Stage. This improv workshop is open to all ages, as you are welcome to discover the essence of improv through games and exercises, building listening, support, and confidence. Next up, hone your audition techniques with **Aaron Joshua Moore** from 12pm – 1pm. Master audition techniques, gain confidence and perform mock auditions and get feedback to refine your skills for classical and contemporary roles.

At 1pm, everyone will gather in the Campus Center West Auditorium for our Keynote Presentation. Playwright **Sharr White** will deliver an address and engage in a conversation with **Paul Grondahl**, Opalka Endowed Director of the NYS Writer's Institute. Festival-goers also have the opportunity to see one of White's one act plays, *A Sunrise in Times Square*, directed by CR★FT President Patrick White, as part of the One Act Festival taking place all day in the auditorium.

Workshops reconvene at 2pm, with ACTORS AT ARMS: UNARMED STAGE COMBAT presented by **Molly Waters** and **Siobahn Shea**. Practice safe techniques to enhance scene realism, build confidence, and bring action to life—plus, enjoy a thrilling sword demo finale. At 3pm, **Diana Chabai-Booker** teaches a workshop on stage

management essentials – organization, blocking, props, and pro tips for actors and directors alike. Then at 4pm attend the INTRODUCTION TO LIGHTING DESIGN FOR THE STAGE workshop presented by **Laura Darling & David Zweirankin**. Explore lighting design fundamentals (color, intensity, texture, and effects) to enhance storytelling, mood, and tone. Lastly, at 5pm **Dr. Krysta Dennis** teaches an INTRODUCTION TO THE MARGOLIS METHOD FOR ACTORS. The Margolis Method melds instinct, intellect, and physics—to refine emotional expression, expand creativity, and enhance drama.

Over the course of the day, there are 7 different panel discussions on a wide range of topics happening in the Campus Center West Boardroom. At 10am moderator **Bill Kellert** leads a discussion among Artistic Director panelists **Jarel Davidow, Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill, Carol Max, Jean-Remy Monnay, John Saunders, Owen Smith & John Sowle**. Next at 11am, moderator **Sarah LaDuke** leads panelists **Ari Edelson, Joanna Palladino & Howard Sherman** in a discussion on Fighting Censorship Today. Enjoy a SET DESIGN BEGINNINGS discussion at 12pm with panelists **Adam M. Coons, Laura Darling, Michael McDermott, Jennie Sinnott & David Zweirankin**, also expertly moderated by **Bill Kellert**. After our keynote address, the discussions start again, this time led by moderator Aaron Joshua Moore. Moore will lead a PLAYWRIGHTS OF COLOR panel including **D. Colin, Carol L. Durant** and **Morgan Elizabeth Heyward**. Moderator **Kevin McGuire** leads a YOUNG SCHOLARS panel at 3pm, where CR★FT is happy to welcome **Aaliyah Al-Fuhaid, Keith Dubois, Annabelle Duffy, Jake Goodman, Hassan Laing, Rachael Montilla & Gabriella Pizzolo** into the discussion. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSIVE CASTING is the topic for moderator **Eunice S. Ferreira** with panelists **Hettie Vyrine Barnhill, Jean-Remy Monnay & Angelique Powell** at 4pm. Then at 5pm THEATRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE concludes our panel discussion lineup. This discussion is moderated once again by **Eunice S. Ferreira** and includes panelists **Hettie Vyrine Barnhill, D. Colin, Kristoph Di Maria & Michael Kennedy**.

In the Campus Center West's Studio West, you'll find puppets and playwrights. At 10am and then again at 12pm, join **Electric City Puppets** for LOCAL GHOSTS, a hilarious, ghostly adventure where local legends come to life! Then from 2pm to 6pm, join us for the CR★FT Satellite **Playwright's Jam**, where new plays come to life—cast straight from the audience! Playwrights from the Capital District showcase their latest works, spanning comedy, drama, the absurd, and the mysterious. Feel like acting? Step up and take a role on the spot! Whether you're a writer, actor, or theatre lover, bring your energy and imagination for this spontaneous afternoon of storytelling.

All day long, stop by the Campus Center West Auditorium and check out the CR★FT One Act Play Festival. With pieces 30 minutes long, to as short as 7 minutes, there is no shortage of drama. For more details on the One Acts, and all CR★FT events, please download our complete program of events for Sunday, and the entire Festival at **my.yapp.us/CRFT** our mobile app for all things CR★FT.

As you are selecting your day's events from our theatrical menu, keep your energy up by grabbing some complimentary breakfast and a free box lunch.

For more detailed information on this and all CR★FT events, please visit the CR★FT website at www.craftinc.org, and follow CRFT on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

Members of the media are encouraged to contact Jillian Becker, CRFT Vice President, with further inquiries at jillianbecker1025@gmail.com or 518-210-8090.

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