



Metropolitan Community College
40 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

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**Great Plains Theatre Conference kicks off May 24
with free readings, evening productions**

OMAHA, Neb. — Metropolitan Community College is pleased to announce the ninth annual Great Plains Theatre Conference, May 24-31. Free and open to the public, daily activities include PlayLab and MainStage readings, workshops and evening PlayFest performances.

PlayLab and MainStage readings

Thirty-one plays were selected from more than 613 submissions from around the world and will be performed in staged readings by local and national directors and actors. Playwrights receive feedback about their work from theatre scholars, directors, master playwrights and the public in a guided-response setting. All readings are held at MCC's Fort Omaha Campus, 30th and Fort streets. Check mccneb.edu/gptc for exact times and locations.

Luncheon panels

Throughout the conference, featured artists and theatre scholars share their expertise with an audience of actors, directors, technicians and the general public during luncheon panels. Lunch for the general public may be purchased on-site. Check mccneb.edu/gptc for exact times and locations.

Design Wing

During the conference, national theatre designer Justin Townsend leads five emerging design artists from across the country in an exploration of the creative process. Guided by Townsend, each designer is assigned to work with a MainStage playwright. The designers spend seven days in Omaha immersed in GPTC events, workshops and readings, as well as intense script analysis and close collaboration with their assigned playwright.

Theatre WorkShops

One of the most popular and compelling aspects of the conference is the opportunity to attend the Theatre WorkShop series offered by visiting artists. Attendees can choose from a variety of

special interest offerings, including movement, writing and acting. All Theatre WorkShops are free and open to the public. Email theatreconference@mccneb.edu to register for a workshop.

PlayFest

PlayFest, an evening theatre festival, travels each night to a unique location and features performances by both local and national artists.

WE'RE ALMOST HERE: HIGH VISCOSITY will kick off the festival Tuesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m., at KANEKO, 11th and Jones streets in the Old Market. A local contemporary performance troupe — ætherplough — collaborates with New York-based director Jeanette Plourde in this theatre movement piece created throughout May.

The Malcolm X Memorial Foundation, 34th and Evans streets, will host *Voices at the Center* Thursday, May 28, at 7:30 p.m. Directed by Denise Chapman, the outdoor performance will feature GPTC's honored playwright Kia Corthron reading excerpts from her own work. Corthron, an internationally renowned writer for theatre and television, will read from plays that are grounded in current socio-political issues. The evening will also include performances by local music and spoken word artists, highlighting some of North Omaha's most vibrant artistry.

The Florence Mill, 30th and McKinley streets, will host the third night of PlayFest on Friday, May 30, at 7:30 p.m. In *Wood Music* New York-based director Elena Araoz brings the historic landmark to life with the work of playwrights Jack Frederick and John Gasper and a host of local and national performers. The evening will transport the audience to different times and immerse them in places in Omaha history. Attendees will have an opportunity to dance at a lively hoedown with local bluegrass musicians following the play.

While not part of the official PlayFest lineup, the GPTC has added bonuses for audiences who are ready for the unexpected. The third annual GPTC FringeFest will take over MCC's Fort Omaha Campus Monday, May 26, at 7:30 p.m. Coordinated by San Francisco theatre artist Andrea Hart, the Fringe will move audiences through a series of locations where GPTC regulars and local artists deliver up delicious morsels of performance.

PlayFest productions are free and open to the public. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis and may be limited, so plan to arrive early.

PlayFest is sponsored in part by Mutual of Omaha and HDR.

Support for PlayFest is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

For more information on GPTC events, plays, playwrights and participants, visit the conference website at mccneb.edu/gptc.



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Metropolitan Community College, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, is a comprehensive, public community college that offers affordable and quality education to all residents of Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington counties. Founded in 1974, MCC has the largest enrollment out of six community colleges in Nebraska and is the second largest postsecondary institution in the state. MCC serves more than 40,000 students annually.