

# AUBURN PHOENIX PLAYERS

The Auburn Phoenix Players are a group of self organized prisoners who are committed to working within the field of Theater, acting and play writing as a necessary extension of our existing efforts at personal development, and reform. Presently, there is no Theater program within Auburn Prison. WE would like to change this! With the help of members of the local central New York community we can achieve this end.

Below is an 'outline' of the type of program that we would like to see established, including descriptions of necessities that will be needed to make it possible.

## GOAL

Our ultimate goal is to be able to do a full theater production for the prison population, and approved members of society. We would like for this to be in three different forms: All incarcerated people, A community / incarcerated people collaboration, and a community performance.

(Note: Auburn prison has a large Auditorium, historically, and stage that is intended to accommodate a full theater production.)

As a secondary goal, and essentially, a fundamental prerequisite, we would like to establish a workshop forum where incarcerated people engage with, learn from, and are influenced by the Art of theater.

## Categories of programming

We have categorized this workshop into three main areas of study. Listing is not intended to be exhaustive. We welcome ideas about things that should be included.

### Theater production:

- \* directing:
- \* stage management
- \* set design

Play Writing: The reading of theater literature, and have participants work at writing their own short scripts for theater enactment. Building 'personal narratives', Journal writing, composing poems. With hopes of producing plays, monologues, and performance pieces.

Acting:

- \* public speaking
- \* improvisation
- \* the craft of 'Acting'

INVOLVED PARTIES TO THIS PROJECT

- \* Auburn Prison Administration °
- \* Auburn Phoenix Players
- \* Community volunteers (participants)
- \* Theater & play writing professionals

(°) this role will be defined for you by our community liaison.

task description

Below are task descriptions for community volunteers who are interested in taking part in this project. The tasks are identified my areas of assistance that we would like to have as a dynamic of this program.

For the sake of informing yourself, read each task, then consider those that you are interested in filling.


PLAY WRITING professionals: We are in need of volunteers who are able to conduct a workshop that will include, teaching participants the discipline of script writing, monologues, poems, etc. Encourage participants to journal, and more.

We are open to receiving an 'outline' of a workshop or class curriculum that develops these types of skills. This includes a description of the material that will be needed to facilitate the teaching of your curriculum.

**THEATER professionals:** Someone who is willing to teach a curriculum that develops acting skills.

**NON-PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS:** We recognize that there are non-professionals that are within the theater net work and have much to offer this project. Our invitation includes college students. Our plan is to have students assist professionals in administering lessons, and possibly carry out their agenda when situation requires such. Additionally, we seek volunteers to participate as 'participants' at the level of student.

**GROUP LEADERS:** The positions for group leaders are:

 \* Administrative liaison: The duty of this office is to handle public relations (media), and matters dealing with the prison administration (presenting proposals, volunteer applications, meetings, etc.)

\* Project Management: This office manages both 'MEDIA': A.P.P publication, & visual art presentation of group, and PROGRAMS: Organize scheduling and planning for Theater & Writing professionals who will conduct workshop at prison; including student assistance assigned to work with professionals.

\* Resource Management: This office manages our funding needs, and donations received. Also, is involved in active recruitment of volunteers for each aspect of our program.

(Note: Each office can be made up of a mixture of insider/outsider, this way we maximize participation and production.)

**DONATIONS:** in our efforts to get started we will be in need of resources, and the future may likely reveal areas that require continued funding. We welcome donations of money, books, supplies, etc.

(°) donations can be made to our program community & project liaison.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: As prisoners it is one of our biggest concerns to assure the preservation, authenticity of publicity and information that is intended to reflect who we are, and what we are doing to reform ourselves. In this role, we anticipate that you will identify avenues, and venues through which the work that is being done within this program can be exposed to the community local and abroad. To make appearances within the prison to stay abreast of the programs development. Finally, in collaboration with other members of project, to contribute to a 'newsletter' publication that can be circulated by us.

SERVING ON THE 'PRISON ARTS COALITION COMMITTEE': We seek members on the committee who are able to commit time to the maintenance of this program. (i.e., planning, meeting, traveling, inter community, etc.) Also, people who will write grant proposals.

#### WORKSHOP TIME SCHEDULE

location: Auburn Prison, 135 State Street, P.O. Box 618, Auburn, New York 13021

Time: 7:00 pm - 9:20 pm . (note: all volunteers must be at the prison gate at 6:15 pm to be processed in)

Osborn School: The prison has a school building where all evening activities are held.

Workshop cycle: On going indefinitely.

workshop size: 20 - 25 students, 10 ± volunteers

Syracuse Theatre  
 Community  
 Cayuga County  
 Arts Community  
 Syracuse University?  
 Playball Theatre

Cornell Theatre  
 Arts  
 Ithaca College  
 - Cynthia Henderson  
 Performing Arts  
 for Social Change  
 (CTA partner)  
 Cornell Interactive  
 Theatre Ensemble

umbrella  
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AYERS

MAC CAB  
 Horticulture  
 TC3 online

App

PE

\* public  
 \* prison  
 Administration

MANAGEMENT  
 \* Funding Needs  
 \* DONATIONS  
 \* Volunteer  
 RECRUITMENT

Volunteer  
 liaison  
 Volunteer app  
 Gate passes

Theater  
 Interview  
 Committee  
 Advisory  
 Board

Committ  
interview

PROGRAM  
 INSTRUCTORS  
 +  
 student  
 ASSISTANT

II  
 Fundraising  
 PR

I  
 Recruitment \$5000  
 of comm. ~~its~~  
 Partners

INCARCERATED  
people

\* Programming  
 participants

Community  
volunteers

We don't come to you as beggars but as men with hopeful hearts, along with the vision of changing this dark, dank world into a kaleidoscope of hope, where the diseases of idleness and worthlessness are banished forever.

The boon we request of you is this! Would you be willing to support us in our endeavor to create and sustain a drama program at this prison?

Olivetrees@ligcomputer.com Please mention inmate project in your reply e-mail.

Flames  
by Michael Rhynes

We who are the Phoenix Players of Auburn believe in the redemptive flame of rehabilitation. We affirm that we live in the dark age of prison expansion and the warehousing of souls.

While our legislators and the courts debate how many souls can be stuffed into a single prison cell, we have embarked on a quest to become better human beings and productive citizens.

We seek atonement for catering to our baser nature, because we acknowledged that the choice to do right or wrong has always been within our power. We wish to atone to those human beings for whom we've caused so much pain and suffering. We wish to atone to society for not living up to our organic contract by loving and caring for our neighbors. We wish to atone to our families for failing to reach our potential and their dreams for us.

We who are the Phoenix Players make a conscious decision to walk into the flames of your pain, suffering suspicions of our motives, disbelief in our goodness, your downright anger, and your grief, in hopes of being recreated in your loving, compassionate, and empathetic images.

Higher education is a myth behind these walls. In order to resurrect our souls, we have decided to grasp the Holy Grail that is the arts. If the arts can transform mud-baked villages into metropolises of light, why can't it transform us who live in hovels of despair?

We would rather have men writing plays than conceiving how to deprive innocent people of their lives and property. We would rather listen to men in this prison eulogize Caesar from the stage than hear it from the mouths of the clergy about how innocent people's lives were shattered by violence. We would rather have twelve men acting angry on stage than facing a jury of their peers.

Based on the polling of the men in this prison, we've drawn the astounding conclusion that drama courses with the hope of putting on a production would make a successful reintegration tool for us.

We seek not to make everyman in this prison a professional dramatist, but to reconnect us to society, our communities, and our families, by learning through drama how to love, what it feels like to be compassionate, to forgive and be forgiven, to reach into the depths of our beings and bring forth our humanity.