

# Take 1: MediaBridge Screenwriter's Lab Gears Up to Work with the Pros

Press Release

## It's ShowTime for MediaBridge

August 4 - 8, 2008

**CHICAGO, IL - August 4, 2008** - For every Harry Potter, Frodo Baggins, and Luke Skywalker, there has been a Dumbledore, a Gandalf and an Obi Wan Kenobi. And for every budding screenwriter, there are mentors who help steer them on their way. At Facets Multi-Media's third annual MediaBridge Screenwriters' Lab, held August 4-8 at the Harold Washington Cultural Center (4701 S. King Drive), a team of "creative advisors," will read and critique the MediaBridge screenwriters' scripts. Five professional actors will apply their talents to bring six youth-produced scripts to life.

Eight youth ambassadors from five different countries, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Portugal, Russia, and India, have produced these fascinating original screenplays in collaboration with ten Illinois teens during a university-level screenwriting course. After three intense weeks of writing screenplays, it's time to cast a spotlight on their work.

This year's panel of creative advisors includes professionals from all over the entertainment industry: TV/film writer/producer, Gary Sherman who has directed the horror films *Poltergeist III* and *Dead & Buried*; co-founder of Chicago's acclaimed improvisational comedy troupe The Second City, Bernie Sahlins; Milken Award winning teacher and recipient of nine Mid-America Emmy Awards, Craig Lindvahl; Managing Director of the Illinois Film Office who is responsible for attracting filmmaking project to Illinois, Betsy Steinberg; author of *Murder in Winnetka*, Sharee Pemberton who has worked for six years with John Hughes in film production; and film producer and head of Screenwriting at Columbia College in Chicago, Joe Steiff.

"I can't wait to hear what they've come up with," Lindvahl said. "These youth from all over the world and from Illinois have such different experiences and

ideas to contribute, yet they are bound to discover some profound humanistic similarities too. It should be very interesting. I'm excited to be a part of it."

After receiving the recommendations and points made by the creative advisors, the students have one day to revise before an ensemble of professional actors perform the original screenplays.

With the help of the Lookingglass Theatre Company and the Victory Gardens Theater, actors Derek Garza, Erica Cruz Hernandez, Brian Kilborn, Lanise Shelley, and Ebony Wimbs will perform the screenplays.

"The MediaBridge participants have worked so hard on these screenplays and they're thrilled to see their work pay off," said Jenny Gribble, MediaBridge Program Manager. "The quality of the creative ideas they share and their unfaltering enthusiasm are a great combination and is sure to produce real works of art."

The actors will review the scripts and provide professional input and critiques, along with the film professionals who will advise the MediaBridge writers on character development, plot, and other elements of screenplay writing.

"It is essential to give feedback, guidance, and support to young talent," says Nicole Dreiske, Facets Multi-Media Artistic Director. "Every year, our creative advisors do a phenomenal job in bringing out deeper meanings and insights from these screenplays."

The culmination of the MediaBridge Screenwriters' Lab will be a public reading of all six final scripts, performed by actors from the Lookingglass Theatre Company and the Victory Gardens Theater, at Facets Multi-Media (1517 W. Fullerton Ave.) on Friday, August 8 from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.



MediaBridge will run July 7-August 10 and the MediaBridge Screenwriters' Lab will run August 4-8. For more information, please contact Kathleen Beckman at 773-281-9075 or [kidsfest@facets.org](mailto:kidsfest@facets.org).

**MEDIABRIDGE**

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