

Looking for Lilith

Arts Programming Overview + Teaching Artist(s) Bio

Programming

All of our programs can be done during in-school, out-of-school and at community sites. Much of our program can also be adapted for adults or expanded to deepen the experience. LFL values long term partnership and is open to working with a partner to create a customized program.

GirlSpeak/YouthSpeak encourages youth to "speak it their way". LFL artists guide them in devising a play using ideas, issues and themes the participants themselves choose to explore. At a time in their lives when few take them seriously, young people get the chance to articulate who they are and what is important to them, in a safe and trusting environment. This program is available as an in-school residency, after-school drama club, workshop series and summer intensives. This program can also be adapted for adults or any marginalized community.

Interactive Theatre to Resist Bullying touring programming at LFL uses Theatre of the Oppressed's Forum Theatre techniques with audiences in grades K-12, and beyond. In our three age-specific offerings listed below, audience members participate to help the main character find solutions to their problems. Audiences are empowered to stop the action, talk about the problems, and explore strategies and solutions. In this way, they can safely think through and practice how to respond if they or someone they love is being bullied. Residencies can also be built around these performances. These programs can also be done in community sites and outside of school hours.

Even Puppets Have Problems: interactive drama for managing conflict (K-2nd)

Mac's World: an interactive play on resisting bullying and cyberbullying (3rd-5th)

CHOICES: an interactive play on cyberbullying and suicide (6th-12th)

The Ancestors Project is an evolving community art making and performance project, using workshops led by Looking for Lilith with community partners throughout the Commonwealth. In the workshops, LFL artists will lead participants in activities exploring stories of their personal ancestors who have inspired and guided them, and transforming these stories into pieces of visual and performance art that are shared with fellow participants. Scenes and visual art created in these workshops could be a part of a larger community-based performance.

Other In-School Drama Residencies - The following residencies could also be expanded if a partner wanted to explore this content further or use these residencies as a jumping off point for a performance. **Monsters Under the Bed: Coping with Fear and Anxiety (grades K-2)** - Join us for an adventure that works well in-person or virtually! Our teaching artist guides students in exploring their own environment

and discovering a friendly monster that lives there. This workshop and/or residency addresses issues of fear and anxiety, and introduces coping mechanisms through creating a character.

A Community Unites: The 1937 Flood (Grades 1-2) - In this one hour workshop or four-day residency, students look at photographs of and read letters by Louisville citizens during and after the 1937 Flood, then use physical theatre to create a “living timeline” of the flood recovery. Students use local history to reflect on ways a community can unite, survive, and thrive.

Exploring Perspectives: Native Americans Encounter Europeans (Grades 3-5) - This 3 day drama residency uses Jane Yolen’s book Encounter to explore perspective and foster empathy. Exploring Perspectives offers the Taino people's perspective of Christopher Columbus landing on the island of San Salvador in 1492. Custom Residencies can also be designed to fit the needs of the school or community partner.

Virtual offerings: We also have several pre-recorded offerings. See our website for more information.

After-School Drama Clubs: Grades K- 2 participate in story drama, using their actor tools to explore the characters and environments of folk tales and other children’s stories from around the world. Grades 3- 5 develop acting skills through improvisation, creating a character, working with a script and working with scene partners. All classes emphasize social emotional skills.

Summer Drama programs include dramatic play, story drama, devising and playbuilding, theatrical design, and theatrically sharing discoveries, in both one week and multi-week formats.

Teaching Artist(s) Bios(s)

Shannon Woolley Allison - she/her Shannon is a proud founding member of LFL. She served as Artistic Director from 2001 to 2014, and as Co-Artistic Director from 2015 to present. She holds a BFA in Acting from SMU, and an MA in Educational Theatre from NYU, where she studied Theatre of the Oppressed techniques with Chris Vine at the Gallatin School. Favorite LFL projects over the years include directing Erin Fitzgerald’s GOOD GRIEF and Diana Grisanti’s THE PATRON SAINT OF LOSING SLEEP, playing Jules in Allie Fireel’s NOTE, performing ALICE IN BLACK AND WHITE Off-Broadway, serving as Devising Director for CLASS OF ‘70, FABRIC FLAMES AND FERVOR and PREVAILING WINDS, and especially every fun and crazy touring adventure she’s been on with various ensembles in the last 20 years!

Jennifer Thalman Kepler - she/her - Jennifer is an LFL Co-founder and Co-Artistic Director, as well as actor, director, devising director and teaching artist. She has performed in CROSSING MOUNTAINS, WHAT MY HANDS HAVE TOUCHED, CLASS OF ‘70 (2004, 2013), FABRIC FLAMES AND FERVOR, BEYOND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, 10 YEARS, 7 STORIES, GETTING OUT, LUZ, CAREFULLY TAUGHT and JUST LIKE US. Jennifer originated the role of Alice Austin in ALICE IN BLACK AND WHITE in both Louisville and New

York. Jennifer has served as devising director for WHAT MY HANDS HAVE TOUCHED and WE. ARE. HERE. , and as devising/production director for CHOICES, BECOMING MOTHERS, and THE KENTUCKY SUFFRAGE PROJECT. She also directs the devising process with young people and develops curriculum through LFL's GirlSpeak program and in-school residencies.

Tiera Bowman - she/hers Louisville native Tiera was most recently seen in COMMON THREADS, and, previous to that, as Georgia Nugent in FROM BARDSTOWN TO BROADWAY: THE ROAD TO VOTES FOR WOMEN/THE SUFFRAGE DRIVING & WALKING TOUR, but has been working with Looking for Lilith Theatre Company since she was in high school. She joined the LFL team through one of their community outreach programs that was hosted at Fern Creek High School, called CHOICES: AN INTERACTIVE PLAY ON CYBERBULLYING AND SUICIDE. After high school, Tiera got her bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts at Northern Kentucky University and immediately found a home at Looking for Lilith. She has been a Devising team member & actor for THE KENTUCKY SUFFRAGE PROJECT and COMMON THREADS' "High School Reunion". She is also a teaching artist for various community outreach programs.

Clare Hagan - she/they Clarity Hagan is a theater artist and educator from Louisville, Kentucky, who is particularly interested in storytelling which lifts up under-heard voices and invites engagement, not only in its content, but also in the creative ways in which that work is produced and presented. Clare has been a Looking for Lilith company member since 2021, and has worked with them in a variety of roles on projects such as COMMON THREADS, THE KENTUCKY SUFFRAGE PROJECT, and MAC's WORLD. Clare has worked as Properties Director with Kentucky Shakespeare, a playwright with the Derby City Playwrights, and as an educator with Drama by George, Looking for Lilith Theatre Company, and Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Jill Marie Schierbaum - she/her, is a Louisville-based multimedia artist, designer, and creative. She is the creator behind Design Studio 749 (www.designstudio749.com) and works as Digital Marketing Manager with Looking For Lilith Theatre Company. Since 2006, she has worked almost every tech role theatre has to offer here in Louisville, besides hanging lights- terrified of heights. In her 7 years of teaching After & Summer Drama classes, she specializes in story drama and devising for grades K-12. She is currently a part of the K-2 Interactive Theatre to Resist Bullying EVEN PUPPETS HAVE PROBLEMS with LFL.

Morgan M. Younge - she/her (Productions include Aunt Franny in DON'T TELL ME I CAN'T FLY (Stage One Family Theatre); Truvy in STEEL MAGNOLIAS (Faith Works Studios) A Sista in SAY HER NAME: BREONNA TAYLOR (Berea College Theatre Laboratory); Maybelle in BEFORE IT HITS HOME (The Griot Project); and June in GOOD GRIEF (Looking for Lilith). Morgan is an LFL Company Member and considers herself a Theatre Professional also working as a costume designer, writer, director and teaching artist. Recently, Morgan was awarded a grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women to produce a summer camp of her original script HIP HOP HERC (August 2021). Please visit her website, morganMYoung.com.

Artistic Content of Programming

The artistic content varies by program and can be adapted to fit the needs of the program. Many of our programs focus on the creative process with a low stakes sharing but can have a fuller performative aspect if the partner desires.

The GirlSpeak/YouthSpeak Program and the Ancestors Project focus on collaborative play development through improvisation and character building. Through this process participants learn to develop basic acting skills as well as vocal and movement work. Participants can also build more advanced acting skills and can be introduced to theatrical design in longer versions of these programs where a play can be devised and produced.

Our Resisting Bullying programming uses Theatre of the Oppressed methodology, specifically Forum Theatre. Forum Theatre is a performance framework designed to unpack social issues and allow participants to “rehearse for life” by exploring solutions to social problems in a safe space. In Theater of the Oppressed work the audience becomes “spect-actors” and can become the main character and act out possible solutions to their problem.

In our K-12 in-school and out-of-school programming students use the tools of the actor (voice, body, imagination, concentration and cooperation) to explore the content of the residency or workshop. Through this process participants practice their actor tools as well as learning character development and beginning scene creation.

We assess the artistic skills gained by our participants through the sharing at the end of the program and progress made throughout the program. We also rely on student, parent and teacher feedback through debrief discussions and surveys.

Educational Content of Programming

In GirlSpeak/YouthSpeak and the Ancestor’s Project LFL teaching artists bring our devising (collaborative playwriting) structure and process and the participants provide the content based on the topic they choose for the play or the ancestors they choose to explore. In these programs students learn beginning devising skills. Because the specific content is dependent on the group, students can participate in the program multiple times, each time having a different experience and exploring different content, while continuing to build their devising skills and other theater skills such as acting and design. These programs also provide many opportunities to learn and practice social emotional skills such as collaboration, naming emotions, expressing needs, empathy and perspective taking.

The Resisting Bullying programs focus on social emotional skills. Even Puppets Have Problems focuses on anger management and emotional regulation. Both Mac’s World and CHOICES help Students identify different types of bullying, explore strategies for dealing with a bully and the feelings that come up in those situations. Both programs also teach digital citizenship and online safety. Additionally CHOICES

teaches students to identify the signs of suicide and offers strategies for getting help if you are having suicidal thoughts or you see the signs in a friend.

Our K-12 residencies are built around various educational content including dealing with fear and anxiety, discovering what being a community means through the lens of the 1937 flood and exploring perspectives in looking at the encounter between Columbus and Native Americans. These programs also provide opportunities for students to practice social emotional skills and basic drama skills.

Our afterschool and summer programs focus on building theatrical skills and particularly the actor tools of voice, body, imagination, concentration and cooperation. They also build social emotional skills and provide opportunities to practice literacy skills.

Process for hiring, training, and evaluating performance/effectiveness.

Our teaching artists are made of LFL company members who have teaching experience. We also hire outside contract artists when needed. In this case artists submit resumes and are interviewed.

New teaching artists or LFL company members new to a given program meet with one of the artistic directors to review and learn lesson plans. Further training sessions and rehearsals are held for more complex programs. New artists are paired with more experienced artists for classes and residencies to provide opportunities for modeling, skill-building and mentoring.

LFL provides 2-3 teaching artist PDs throughout the year. Teaching artists are observed by more experienced artists and given feedback for improvement.

How are participants of all backgrounds and abilities included in programming?

Looking for Lilith is committed to inclusivity, diversity and accessibility. Our mission is to lift up underheard stories. We are always looking for ways to include various perspectives across our programming. Inclusivity is embedded in all our teaching artist professional development and program development.

Programs like GirlSpeak/YouthSpeak and the Ancestors Project allow for participants to include the stories that are important to them. The content of plays and scenes created is totally driven by the participants.

Our Resisting Bullying programs and Monsters Under the Bed Residency shine a light on mental health and offer opportunities for students with depression, anxiety and who have been bullied to feel seen and find solutions.

LFL teaching artists come from our diverse ensemble and are skilled in working with students who are differently abled. We strive to work from a trauma informed lens and work to include training around trauma informed teaching into our teaching artist professional development opportunities. We are part of the Metro United Way Youth Development Network and attend the various training opportunities that network provides.

LFL will soon begin using the JCPS Racial Equity Analysis Protocol (REAP) to ensure our programs are as inclusive as possible.

How do we engage teachers and community center staff before, during, and after programming?

Collaboration is at the core of all that we do in LFL. Many of our programs can be adapted or expanded to meet the needs of a school or community center. When we begin working with the partner we often meet to discuss their goals and how our programs can help them meet their goals. We ensure we know all the essential logistics and understand the goals of the program. During the program, we check in to see if any adjustments need to be made and to address any challenges that may arise. After the program we like to hold a debrief session with the partner. We are always working to improve our programs and partner feedback is essential.

How do we engage participants in the creative and learning process?

We cultivate an environment based on group agreements to provide a place where the participants feel safe to move throughout the creative process (ie, storytelling, theatre games, etc). Engagement occurs within the act of doing, playing, and exploring content both physical and mentally.

All of our programs are in a workshop format in which participants are actively involved in the creative process. We use theater games, playbuilding activities, storytelling, story drama and physical movement in our programs.