

The Washington State Arts Commission and Seattle Repertory Theatre, in collaboration with the Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, 4Culture, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the National Endowment for the Arts, present:

Teaching Artist Training Lab 2012-2013

An eight-month professional development program for Washington State teaching artists.

“TAT Lab gave me new perspectives on the learning process, on what it is exactly that I do in a classroom, how to quantify it and how to communicate it effectively to others.”

~ TAT Lab graduate, 2012

“It was incredibly re-charging for me as a teaching artist. “

~ TAT Lab graduate, 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Teaching Artist Training (TAT) Lab is a professional development initiative originally developed in 2005 by education professionals and teaching artists from several leading arts organizations around the country, including Seattle Repertory Theatre. At the core of the TAT Lab is the belief that reflective practice and thoughtful planning are essential to effective educational experiences—and a key building block for partnering with schools and classroom teachers. The guiding question for the program: “How do we help teaching artists provide quality educational experiences for all students?”

While the TAT Lab originally focused on theatre practitioners, beginning in March 2008, the Rep began working with Puget Sound area dance and visual artists, to expand the program’s focus. Through funding from the Washington State Arts Commission (WSAC) and the Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, more than 120 teaching artists experienced a two-day version of the training between 2008 and 2011. The consistent request from those participants was to extend the training program to allow for time to apply new approaches, and then come back together for on-going reflection and professional development. This goal, combined with WSAC’s interest in advancing the quality and capacity of teaching artist work around the entire state, led to the development of the 2011-12 statewide, eight-month TAT Lab, which attracted funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as twice as many applications as there were program slots. Building on the success of the pilot year, we are thrilled to launch TAT Lab 2012-2013.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The eight-month experience will include six days of in-person training, six teleconferences, reading assignments, expectations of practical application of the workshop learning, and ongoing support and follow-up provided by program facilitators. The TAT Lab cohort will include up to 40 teaching artists from various artistic disciplines and regions of the state.

We define teaching artists as individuals who are both artists and educators; they are professional artists who are dedicated to arts education as an integral part of their professional practice, and who cultivate skills as educators in concert with their skills as artists. Teaching artists work in a variety of settings, for a variety of purposes – they work in and out of schools, for professional arts organizations, and in specialized settings such as prisons or hospitals. The curriculum for the TAT Lab supports teaching practice in all types of settings, but has a particular focus on supporting work in K-12 public schools, and addressing the particular challenges and opportunities involved in partnering with K-12 students and teachers.

An essential component to these partnerships is the spark that a teaching artist brings by demonstrating their own passion and artistry, and allowing students to experience that art form firsthand. With this in mind, the curriculum for the TAT Lab is informed by several key questions:

- What are the unique talents and approaches that teaching artists bring to a classroom?
- What are “reflective practice” and “thoughtful planning” and why are they important?
- How can we be mindful of arts learning standards along with higher order thinking skills and habits of mind?
- How do we create safe, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all students?

With these questions in mind, the TAT Lab will address both philosophical and nuts-and-bolts aspects of teaching artist practice, with a core focus on developing and articulating clear student learning objectives and assessment strategies. We are interested in helping to develop teaching artists’ abilities to:

- Create strong and effective learning plans
- Work as collaborative partners with K-12 schools and teachers
- Articulate the values of arts learning, and their role as an arts educator
- Plan, assess, and reflect on their work and the work of their students and partners

The program is led by Andrea Allen, the Rep’s director of education, Lisa Jaret, arts in education program manager at WSAC, and Gail Sehlhorst, arts education assessment consultant and director of education at Book-It Repertory Theatre. The faculty includes Kayti Bouljon, Pacific Northwest Ballet’s manager of community education programs, Scott Koh, the Rep’s school programs manager, Tina LaPadula, education director at Arts Corps, and Darwin Nordin, master visual teaching artist.

This training is appropriate for professional teaching artists with a variety of levels of experience, including those with a minimum of one-year paid experience looking for foundational knowledge; as well as experienced teaching artists looking to enhance or refresh their work, particularly in the areas of assessment strategies and articulating lesson plans. All participants will benefit from the peer learning and reflection which can be rare in this profession.

A key element of the program is the application of TAT Lab concepts in the classroom. Therefore, each participant will develop a learning plan based on concepts covered in the TAT Lab and then implement that learning plan in a K-12 classroom during one of their own workshops or residencies. The final phase of the training will use these learning plans and real-life reflections to deepen participants’ understanding of the work.

“TAT clarified and brought into focus the reasons that I teach the way I do, and the benefits of TAs to education as a whole. It made me more intentional on why I do what I do, which in turn, amplifies the rewards.”

~ TAT Lab graduate, 2012

SCHEDULE

Participants are expected to attend all of the in-person sessions which will be held in Seattle. Travel and lodging reimbursements are available (see below). The dates are as follows:

Fall 2012: Weekend Training

- Thursday, September 13, 4-7pm
- Friday, September 14, 9am-5pm
- Saturday, September 15, 9am-3pm

Late Fall 2012: Two-Day Training

- Monday, November 12, 2-6pm
- Tuesday, November 13, 9am-4pm

Spring 2013: Weekend Training

- Thursday, April 11, 3-7pm
- Friday, April 12, 9am-5pm
- Saturday, April 13, 9am-3pm

In addition to attending these sessions, participants will be assigned to a smaller group for monthly teleconferences with a teaching artist mentor. Participants will be expected to participate in all teleconferences and to complete reading assignments assigned as preparation for both in-person and teleconference sessions.

TUITION & TRAVEL

The TAT Lab is a fee-based program, subsidized in part by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, 4Culture, and WSAC. The 2012-2013 TAT Lab includes in-person workshops, teleconferences, and direct communications with a teaching artist mentor. Additionally, all participants will receive a notebook of curriculum planning materials and related resources. Meals will be provided at the training days in Seattle. All participants will be expected to commit to the full program, and will be responsible for writing, implementing, and refining a lesson plan, with the support of their mentor.

The tuition for this program is \$600. We have built in a sliding scale for tuition, recognizing that scholarship assistance will be necessary for many participants. We ask that you consider the value of this training for your work and assess your ability to pay. We will make scholarship decisions based on a combination of factors, including the demographic variables that we are looking to balance, the applicant's suitability for this program based on their level of experience, and the applicant's indicated ability to pay. Note that we will not provide any full scholarships; we expect all participants will pay between \$200 and \$600 towards tuition. Also, we encourage arts organizations to support the professional development of their teaching artists by covering a portion of their TAT Lab tuition; sponsorship forms are available on the Rep's website.

Support for travel-related expenses will be available for all TAT Lab participants from outside of Seattle. Travel-related expenses include lodging and all forms of transportation (mileage reimbursement, airplane, ferry, bridge/road tolls, bus, shuttle, etc.) as well as parking. Participants will be responsible for all travel expenses up front, and then will be reimbursed after receipts are submitted. For those who will need lodging in Seattle for the in-person workshops, we will coordinate hotel reservations. While we have budgeted to support travel from all parts of the state, we also endeavor to put as much money as possible into programming, so we will look to keep expenses at a minimum by matching people up with roommates for the hotel rooms, encouraging carpooling, etc.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Teaching Artists interested in applying should complete the *online information form* at <http://www.seattlerep.org/Interact/ForTeachers/TAT/TAT.aspx> which collects name, address, email and artistic discipline. Applicants will then receive an email with a link to the full online application.

The *full online application* includes questions about teaching artist background and experience, questions about tuition and travel support, and three short-answer narrative questions. You may wish to consider these questions in advance of filling out the survey:

- Briefly describe your history and current practice as a Teaching Artist. How/why did you become a TA? Why do you pursue this work?
- What age groups and teaching/learning environments are you most drawn to, and why?
- Why are you drawn to this professional development opportunity at this time? What do you hope to get out of it?

Responses to these questions should be about 100-200 words long.

In addition to the online application form, applicants must submit a *resume* and a *sample lesson plan*. The resume should address training and experience both as an artist and as a teaching artist. The lesson plan (no more than 2-3 pages) should reflect a typical workshop or residency for a K-12 public school. Lesson plans should include arts learning goals, the age group, length of time, and how you incorporate reflection and/or assessment strategies. These items must be emailed as attachments, either as a Word document or as a PDF, to TATLab@seattlerep.org with the subject line "TAT Lab Application."

Application deadline is Monday, July 16, 2012. All application elements (online application, resume, and sample lesson plan) must be received by this date. Participants will be notified by August 1 of their status. First tuition payment will be due by August 20.

In reviewing the applications, the following factors will be taken into consideration for building a diverse and dynamic cohort:

- Geographic diversity (seeking teaching artists from outside Puget Sound region);
- Diversity of experience, including emerging Teaching Artists (1 to 2 years paid experience), early career (2 to 8 years) and experienced (9+ years);
- Varied artistic disciplines;
- Overall teaching artist background, experience, and lesson planning abilities
- Teaching artist's clarity of purpose around their practice and this professional development program

Basic eligibility requirements: applicants must be a resident of Washington State, at least 18 years of age, and have at least one full year of paid experience as a teaching artist.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact Lisa Jaret (lisa.jaret@arts.wa.gov; 360-586-2418) or Scott Koh (scottk@seattlerep.org; 206-443-2210) with any questions about the TAT Lab program or the application process.

"I am more grounded, confident and proud to be a teaching artist."

~ TAT Lab graduate, 2012

Program funding and support provided by The Washington State Arts Commission and Seattle Repertory Theatre, in collaboration with the Seattle Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, 4Culture, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the National Endowment for the Arts.