

SARASVATI SHARES STORIES OF NEWCOMER YOUTH IN CLASSROOMS

Winnipeg, Sept 28, 2018 – *Home 2.0* is a powerful, interactive theatrical journey, showcasing the stories of newcomer youth in Canada. Based on experiences of immigrant and refugee youth who have resettled in Canada, this exciting performance is an entertaining way to explore how schools and the community can be more compassionate and inclusive.

Home 2.0 is a Forum Theatre piece created through extensive interviews with community members about displacement and resettlement. Although dozens of stories are incorporated in to the performance, three main characters are followed. Michael is 12-years old and has arrived from El Salvador. Rosa has come from the Philippines and wants nothing more than to go back home to her friends and old life. Adnan has arrived from Syria, after years in a refugee camp he has to catch up on schooling. The play ends with a worst-case-scenario for these characters, but students have a chance to intervene. At the end of the performance, the actors invite students on stage to step in to the shoes of a character and try out positive solutions to the problems addressed. It provides a chance for those watching to consider the questions: How can we be more compassionate and promote acceptance? What resources and supports are available?

For the past two years, Sarasvati Productions has conducted interviews with newcomers from all over the world, listening to their stories and compiling them for this project. The show features a diverse ensemble of actors including Reena Jolly, Melissa Langdon, Manuel Ortega, Matthew Paris-Irvine, Joanne Roberts, and Denisse Samaniego. “I think as a Canadian that came as a refugee with their family, it’s something that hits, you know, hits really close to home,” says actor Manuel Ortega. Joanne Roberts agrees: “This project means a lot to me, especially as a first generation Canadian that grew up watching my parents going through similar struggles after their immigration.”

For many youth, this might be the first time they are seeing their own ethnic background represented in the arts. For others, it might be the first time they’ve been able to really experience what it is like to be forced to leave your home and start again halfway across the world. What makes *Home 2.0* so unique is that it allows students to share their thoughts and suggestions about situations that are played out in front of them on stage.

Home 2.0 will tour from October 15th to December 7th to schools in Winnipeg and surrounding areas. In addition, there will be a **public preview at Graffiti Gallery on October 11th at 7pm**. Admission is by donation. There will also be a showing just for teens at the **Millennium Library on October 20th at 2pm**; registration is required. More information is available at www.sarasvati.ca or 204-586-2236.

About Sarasvati Productions: Sarasvati Dramatic Theatre Productions and Repertory Inc. (founded in Winnipeg in 2000) seeks to inspire artists and audiences through the use of theatre and to provide a space where artists can develop, showcase their skills and celebrate their creativity.