New Theatrical Work Uses Queen Memory Submissions to Tell Pandemic Stories

On April 22, Queens Theatre hosts the digital premiere of a new play, "I See You and I See You Too." The work is based on stories collected through the Queens Memory Project, a community-driven oral history initiative that has invited residents of Queens to share their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project, which is funded by the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, has been a platform for individuals to express their feelings and memories of this challenging time.

The play, written by Sarah Pousty, is a collaboration between Queens Theatre and the Queens Memory Project. It features a diverse ensemble cast that includes Zendaya, a rising star known for her roles in "Euphoria" and "The Politician," and Rob Morgan, who is known for his work in films like "A Quiet Place" and "American Gods." The performance, directed by Annie Tummino, is a testament to the power of storytelling and the resilience of the human spirit.

"I See You and I See You Too" is inspired by the stories of over 100 residents of Queens who shared their experiences of the pandemic. The play explores themes of perseverance, compassion, and the importance of community during times of crisis.

The production's digital premiere is part of a broader initiative to promote community through art. Queens Theatre, in partnership with the Queens Memory Project, plans to produce several more works based on community submissions in the future. This collaboration between arts organizations and community programs demonstrates the potential for creative expression as a tool for healing and understanding.

Upcoming Virtual Events

○ May 13: Queens Memory Community Coordinator Meral Agish will virtually present "Be the Museum of 2020 May Look Like." This talk explores how museums and cultural institutions are adapting to the changing landscape of the arts and culture. A discussion panel with community members will also be part of the event. To register for this program, go to the Queens Memory Facebook page or visit queenslibrary.org/e both 26.

○ May 18: Thursday, May 18, at 1 pm EDT. Register for upcoming dates (all at 1 pm EDT):

○ May 1, 8 and 15: Stories Through Photographs: South Asian American Experience. Participants will learn about the community of South Asian Americans and how they have contributed to the cultural fabric of Queens. The workshop will be led by photographer Mahnoor Nasir Khan. Humans are storytelling creatures: joy, beauty, pain and grief are part of everyone's experience, but our individual stories matter. Attendees meet twice a week as a group and also have time to collaborate creatively while also sharing family stories. Using objects from the participants' home, each participant will research a family story and create a personal narrative using photography and writing. These will be shown through our digital gallery.

○ May 28: "Sticks and Stones: Creating a Cultural Memory for the Future." A project run by Queens Memory in collaboration with the New York Public Library. The project aims to document the impact of the pandemic on Queens communities. The event will be a discussion of how we worked remotely and individually yet in community with students at LaGuardia Community College. The event will culminate in oral history interviews that will be preserved in our collection and made available to the public. The program is being funded by the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation.

○ June 25: Queens Memory Community Coordinator Meral Agish will participate in a Family Arts Workshop. The workshop will be led by Magin Schantz of Supermoon Art Space. The workshop will be aimed at ages 6-12 and will explore the idea of "art as a collective memory." Participants will create a project that reflects their family history, whether related to immigration, family history or other themes that resonate. The workshop is open to all families and includes free art supplies.

○ July 30: More information about signing up, and view our promotional video below!