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WOTM Springs To The Stage



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Woodside On The Move Springs To The Stage

On Tuesday, April 3rd, 2012 Woodside on the Move's afterschool program at P.S. 11Q ushered in the spring with a theatrical performance. The short play called April's fool—a simple story of a girl, April, and her search for the perfect practical joke—was directed by Nicola Iervasi & Kevin Albert of Mare Nostrum Elements, who volunteered their time to keep the performing arts vital in to the lives of Woodside's young people. The April's Fool cast was a combination of students from P.S. 11Q's fourth grade and students from the nearby St. Sebastian School. The rehearsals and performance were held in the auditorium at P.S. 11Q. April's Fool was made possible (in part) by the Queens Council on the Arts with public funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs as well as the Decentralization Program, a grant program of the New York State Council on the Arts, administered by the Queens Council on the Arts.

The Young Wave! is Mare Nostrum Elements' outreach program that aims to provide children and teens with an exciting introduction in how to use movement and performance to tell stories and express feelings through exercises and explorations appropriate for their age group. The method merges the knowledge and experience of actor/director Kevin Albert (Boston Conservatory graduate) and performer Nicola Iervasi (former Martha Graham Ensemble member) and provides a balanced mix of acting and dance techniques.

The self-created performance April's Fool was the culmination of an 8-session rehearsal process during which 20 children ages 8-10 explored and created original

movement, developed concepts, interactions and scenes through the multidisciplinary approach of The Young Wave! movement theater for children. Originally proposed for 15 students the program was extended to accommodate 20 participants thanks to the availability of the Auditorium at PS 11 in Woodside.

During the process, students were introduced to theater games, dance and voice exercises, music explorations and fitness concepts. They were asked to write scene ideas, create original movements, rehearse the sketches in small groups and ultimately - with the help of Nicola Iervasi and Kevin Albert - staged a 15-minute performance.

The performance was seamless and concise, all performers were very focused, connected and delivered the best of their skills practiced during the rehearsal process. With almost one hundred people in attendance, including participants' families and friends; members of Woodside on the Move, St. Sebastian School and P.S. 11Q's staff; as well as Mare Nostrum Elements' board of directors and supporters, these young performers brought down the house.

Following the performance the audience was briefed by the instructors about the various steps of the creative process and the participants were thrilled and empowered by the extremely positive response of the audience to their performance. When asked to comment on the experience during a final Q&A with the audience, the participants responded very enthusiastically and shared their point of view on the value and personal benefits they discovered during the 8-week session.



Instructors: Nicola Iervasi & Kevin Albert, Photography: Gisella Sorrentino