

The Cloud Foundation and Opera Boston present...

The Opera Factory: an original operatic performance based on Bizet's *Carmen* with an all-teen cast and crew

The Opera Factory Tour will be presented at Cloud Place, located at 647 Boylston Street in Boston August 15 & 16 at 7:00 pm (for directions to Cloud Place visit www.cloudfoundation.org/about/directions.html or call 617.262.2949)

The Opera Factory show and exhibition are free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

The Cloud Foundation and Opera Boston present the Opera Factory's *Carmen: the Remix*, a three-floor, interactive exhibit and performance by teen musicians and artists. The Opera Factory, an intensive opera workshop offered free of charge to Boston-area public high school students, is a collaboration between the Cloud Foundation and Opera Boston. With guidance from seasoned stage professionals, this program offers urban teens an opportunity to experience the process of creating a complex, multimedia show while fostering a new generation of musicians, artists, and opera aficionados.

In April 2008 four of the Cloud's Teen Spoken Word Curators participated in a weeklong writing workshop with acclaimed Boston poet Iyeoka Okoawo. Using selected songs from *Carmen* as source material, the poets created an original, collaborative script, recasting the story of *Carmen* on the streets of Boston in 2008. From this creative re-imagining of *Carmen*, the Opera Factory further adapted music and storyline, creating a multi-disciplinary performance and visual art/ design opportunity for young people.

From neighborhoods all over Boston and beyond the Opera Factory's 16 teen musicians, singers, set designers, and costumers congregate at Cloud Place daily for four weeks of intense work in August to create a complex and sophisticated final show. Teen singers study music and choreography with Director Alexandra Borrie and Music Director Bill Geha, and take turns constructing sets and fitting costumes under the supervision of the teen stage crew who have learned the principles of construction, lighting, and garment design working with set designer Jeremy Barnett and costumer Rachel Padula Shufelt. Together the crew and performers attended Boston Midsummer Opera's production of Peter Brooks' *Carmen*, exploring backstage and analyzing the production from technical and artistic points of view.

During an intense "tech week" from August 11th – 14th the entire cast and crew will work feverishly in Cloud Place's performance space to complete lighting designs; put the finishing touches on a modular, multi-level set; practice cues and choreography; and of course, sing! At the end of the week the Opera Factory opens to the public, presenting two evening "Factory Tours" on August 15th and 16th at 7:00. Visitors will have a chance to read the Teen Spoken Word Curators' original script, see sketches that inspired the show's costumes; and learn how the puzzle pieces of the set fit together. After the show teen cast and crewmembers will moderate "talkbacks" with the audience to answer questions about the process of putting on the show from shopping for costume materials to debating the French-to-English translation of the opera's score.

The Opera Factory is supported in part by a grant from an Anonymous Foundation.

About the Cloud Foundation (www.cloudfoundation.org)

The Cloud Foundation supports innovative programs that build confidence, ambition, and hope in Boston's youth through artistic creation and cross-cultural communication. The Cloud Foundation's art, media, and performance workshops offer teens opportunities to work with professional artists while exploring new artistic media in a professional setting. The Cloud's programming focuses on advanced and specialized artistic exploration while supporting young artists to make connections to adult mentors and present their work to the public.

About Opera Boston (www.operaboston.org)

Opera Boston is Boston's most innovative opera company. Founded in 1980, the company has presented more than 70 operas, including 34 regional and two world premieres. In addition to its critically acclaimed, award-winning mainstage productions, Opera Boston offers a range of programs, including an occasional chamber opera festival, a popular informal cabaret series and an extensive educational program in Boston's schools.