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## ***Stargate Theatre: A Defining Act* Explores Theater Arts Program for Court-Involved Youth on THIRTEEN and WLIW21 in February**

### **Special follows young men from audition till final performance through Manhattan Theatre Club initiative**

Founded by the Manhattan Theatre Club, the Stargate Theatre Company immerses court-involved youth in the theater arts as a mechanism for coping with and overcoming negative factors in their lives. During the summer of 2015, company members composed, rehearsed, and performed an original play, *Deeper Than Skin*.

***Stargate Theatre: A Defining Act*** – premiering on Saturday, February 6 at 4 p.m. on WLIW21 and Friday, February 19 at 10 p.m. on THIRTEEN – follows these young men from auditions to the final performance of their play at Manhattan Theater Club’s Off-Broadway home at New York City Center’s Stage II theater.

Through interviews with the company members, all of whom have experienced varying degrees of involvement with the juvenile justice system, as well as the teaching artists and professionals who lead them, ***Stargate Theatre: A Defining Act*** chronicles the company members as they build strong relationships and become witnesses to each other’s stories and lives.

The film also highlights how the company members’ personal writings become the basis for their play, which tackles issues such as identity, family, community, racism, and injustice, as well as their attitudes toward law enforcement and their dreams for the future.

***Stargate Theatre: A Defining Act*** is presented as part of the “Chasing the Dream” multi-platform public media initiative on poverty and opportunity in America.

After the initial broadcast, the full film will be available for online streaming at [wliw.org](http://wliw.org) and [thirteen.org](http://thirteen.org).

***Stargate Theatre: A Defining Act*** is a production of WLIW LLC in association with WNET. WNET is the parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21, New York's public television stations and operator of NJTV.

Ally Gimbel is producer. Mary Lockhart is director. Diane Masciale is executive producer. John Servidio is executive in charge.

Major funding for ***Stargate Theatre: A Defining Act*** is provided by Sharon R. Sullivan, with additional funding from Jean Dubinsky Appleton Estate, the JPB Foundation and the Ford Foundation.

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#### **About WNET**

As New York's flagship public media provider and the parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21 and operator of NJTV, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than 5 million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. Pioneers in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Reel 13](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the [THIRTEEN Explore App](#) where users can stream PBS content for free.

#### **About Manhattan Theatre Club**

**Manhattan Theatre Club**, under the leadership of Artistic Director **Lynne Meadow** and Executive Producer **Barry Grove**, has become one of the country's most prominent and prestigious theatre companies. Over the past four and a half decades, MTC productions have earned numerous awards including six Pulitzer Prizes and 19 Tony Awards. MTC has a Broadway home at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre (261 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street) and two Off-Broadway theatres at New York City Center (131 West 55<sup>th</sup> Street). Renowned MTC productions include *Fool For Love* by Sam Shepard; *Airline Highway* by Lisa D'Amour; *Casa Valentina* by Harvey Fierstein; *Outside Mullingar* and *Doubt* by John Patrick Stanley; *The Commons of Pensacola* by Amanda Peet; *Murder Ballad* by Julia Jordan and Juliana Nash; *Choir Boy* by Tarell Alvin McCraney; *The Assembled Parties* by Richard Greenberg; *Wit* by Margaret Edson; *Venus in Fur* by David Ives; *Good People* and *Rabbit Hole* by David Lindsay-Abaire; *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez; *Time Stands Still* by Donald Margulies; *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage; *Proof* by David Auburn; *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife* by Charles Busch; *Love! Valour! Compassion!* by Terrence McNally; *The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson; *Crimes of the Heart* by Beth Henley; and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, the Fats Waller musical to name just a few. For more information on MTC, please visit [www.ManhattanTheatreClub.com](http://www.ManhattanTheatreClub.com).