

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE ELLIS ISLAND IMMIGRATION MUSEUM
And
CITY LIGHTS YOUTH THEATRE
Present

SOMEBODY IN AMERICA: A NEW ELLIS ISLAND
MUSICAL

Written and performed by the students of The Origins Project, 2009
Under the guidance of Playwright and Lyricist Dana Leslie Goldstein

Directed by Robert Bruce McIntosh

Composition and Musical Direction by John Bronston

Friday, August 7 at 11:30 AM and 2 PM

Saturday, August 8 at 11:30 AM and 2 PM

Ellis Island Immigration Museum

Performance tickets are free,

Tickets to Ellis Island can be purchased at statuecruises.com

FOR RESERVATIONS, call 212.262.0200.

New York, NY, August 3, 2009 -- The Ellis Island Immigration Museum and City Lights Youth Theatre are proud to host the 14th season of The Origins Project presenting **Somebody in America: A New Ellis Island Musical**, written and performed by New York City students ages 12-17. **Somebody in America** tells the interwoven stories of immigrants upon their arrival at Ellis Island. Executive Director Melissa Fenton Herrod remarks that "this unique collaboration with Ellis Island has provided a rich hands-on experience with both the Museum and the Save Ellis Island Foundation, both of which reclaim the importance of immigrants' contribution to New York City's culture." Through this partnership, City Lights was honored to be a part of the historic re-opening of the Statue of Liberty's crown this past July 4th, with various officials and dignitaries including N.Y. Mayor Bloomberg, N.J. Mayor Corzine, and Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

This collaboration between the Ellis Island Immigration Museum and City Lights Youth Theatre provides an opportunity for junior high and high school students to develop a deeper understanding of New York City history. Last year, students, ages 12-17 took investigative field trips on Ellis Island, analyzed primary source material, and used improvisation and character work to bring the material to life. This year a new group of students incorporated songwriting into the original play to create an adaptation in musical form.

Originally conceived by City Lights Youth Theatre in partnership with the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in 1996, **The Origins Project** is a five-week summer program in which teens research, write, and perform an original theatre piece based on an aspect of New York City history. The project creates a distinctive collaboration between a museum and a theatre company, and also serves as an innovative arts education model. Since the inception of Origins, CLYT has partnered with the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Brooklyn Historical Society, the American Jewish Historical Society, the New York Historical Society, and the Museum of the City of New York, among others. Research oriented, The Origins Project teaches tolerance for people of different backgrounds, the universality of the immigrant experience, and the enduring legacy of the past.

City Lights Youth Theatre, founded in 1991, is a non-profit educational organization providing theatre arts programs for young people of diverse backgrounds. City Lights programs engage New York City youth ages 3-19 in the creation and performance of theatre through after-school and weekend classes, full-scale productions, and in-school residencies. Please call 212.262.0200 or visit our website at www.citylightsnyc.org for more information on our programs.

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