



**VIDEO:** [Mouthful Monologue Festival Video: Meet the Writers](#)

**AUDIO:** [Mouthful Podcast Season Three: Behind the Scenes](#)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Uniting Behind Youth  
Teen Perspectives Take Center Stage  
in the Mouthful Monologue Festival and Mouthful Podcast***



**PHILADELPHIA—(February 19, 2018)**—When is the last time a teenager taught you something? Impressed you? Surprised you? If it's been awhile, when was the last time you engaged a teenager?

Beginning February 28, 18 young writers will have their work produced on stage for public audiences as part of the [2019 Mouthful Monologue Festival](#). Featuring winning monologues selected from more than 600 submissions, the Festival packs 18 bite-sized stories and perspectives created by a diverse group of teenagers from across the Greater Philadelphia region into one story-packed show. The Pay What You Can production is a collaboration between the student writers and theater professionals who direct and perform the monologues. For audiences and for the students alike, the Festival is a rare chance to engage with people across a full spectrum of identities and backgrounds.



“As a high school student, it’s easy for me to get caught up in my own world,” says Isabel Mehta, one of the winning monologue writers and a junior at Germantown Friends School. “I interact with the same people everyday... so I rarely gain new perspectives and become aware of experiences other than my own.” Not so with the Mouthful Monologue Festival, says Isabel. “For the first time ever, I read writing from students that didn’t attend my school and was exposed to a breadth of student voices and stories from across Philadelphia.”

Running the gamut from comedy and drama, the 18 monologues include something for everyone. Isabel’s monologue “What I Will Tell You” addresses friendship and the role of social media in shaping social dynamics at school. Isabel’s isn’t the only one that deals with the prevalence and pressures of the digital world. “Summer Vacation” by Nick Pierron, a junior at the Arts Academy of Benjamin Rush, explores the social isolation that can result from becoming absorbed in video games. Imbued with humor, Pierron’s monologue considers how real-life friendships suffer when they are ignored or cast aside in favor of digital relationships.

Students do not shy away from heavy topics. Radnor High School senior Mab Rangione’s monologue “What I Wouldn’t Do,” for example, places its character in the midst of an active shooter situation at school. “[School shootings] are something that I know my peers think about when they go to school every single day.” Mab shared when discussing her monologue. “I think a lot of kids think: ‘What would I do if it happened?’”

Mab drew inspiration from the youth-led March for Our Lives last March. “I got a lot of inspiration from Emma Gonzalez after the Parkland shooting... Watching people who actually have gone through this. And people who do have to live with this every day... I can't imagine what that must be like.” Mab hopes that audiences consider what more they can do to prevent school shootings. “I hope people what takeaway is, what am I not doing, what can I be doing? What more can I be doing?”

Mab’s monologue and nine others from the Festival will become the centerpiece of extended conversations as part of the ten-episode third season of [Mouthful Podcast](#). Hosted by Trenae Nuri and produced by a team at Philadelphia Young Playwrights that includes two youth producers, the podcast combines the student-written monologues with interviews to dig deeper into each of the topics at hand.

Part performance, part interview, part conversation, the podcast extends the reach of



the student playwrights' work beyond the in-person experience at the Festival, drawing more than 40,000 listeners in 40+ states over its first two seasons. Season Three will begin on February 19th, with two "Meet the Writers" episodes followed by weekly releases of monologue-inspired conversations. **Mouthful Podcast** is available to stream, free, on all podcast platforms including [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), and [Stitcher](#).

For audiences located in the Greater Philadelphia region, the **2019 Mouthful Monologue Festival** will include seven public performances at the Louis Bluver Theater at the Drake (302 S. Hicks Street, Philadelphia, PA). All performances are **Pay What You Can**. Reservations are required and can be made [online](#) or by phone at 215-665-9226.

[Mouthful Monologue Festival Fact Sheet](#)  
[Mouthful Podcast Fact Sheet](#)

#### About Philadelphia Young Playwrights

The mission of Philadelphia Young Playwrights (PYP) is to tap the potential of youth and inspire learning through playwriting. This year, the organization celebrates its 30th full year of service to this mission. PYP began its first full year of operations in 1987 and quickly established a reputation for its innovative classroom practices, focusing on playwriting as a literacy-learning tool and as an opportunity to engage students in new, creative ways. The organization's commitment to new work began the next year in 1988 through readings, workshops, and full-fledged professional productions of student-written plays and monologues that have launched and shaped the careers of dozens of playwrights, writers, businesspeople, and professionals of all stripes including, notably: Quiara Alegria Hudes, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright; Adam F. Goldberg, creator of ABC's *The Goldbergs* and *Schooled*; Roger J. Hobbs, the late *New York Times* bestselling-author; Genne Murphy, recipient of the 2016 Leah Ryan Prize for Emerging Women Writers prize; and Emily Acker, *Orbiter 3* founding playwright and recent Eugene O'Neill New Play Conference Finalist.

Approximately 2,100 students participate in PYP's core classroom program each year through placements in public, private, and parochial schools throughout the five-county Greater Philadelphia region. PYP places a special emphasis on the School District of Philadelphia, with whom the organization has partnered in each year since its founding.

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