



The Waged Poor Project

Forum Theatre about working and living in poverty

Thursday, October 25th 7:00 PM

Downtown Public Library Boardroom

admission by donation

Background to this Event

Leading up to the 2006 *Victoria International Arts Symposium*, galleries of local artists will feature socially engaged projects. One of these galleries will include a performance of **The Waged Poor Project**, created by *TheatreWorks* Director River Chandler and the *Quality of Life Challenge*. On October 25, 2006 a performance of the play, **The Waged Poor Project**, will use forum theatre to provide audience members with an opportunity to discuss the issues related to working and living in poverty in the Capital Region.

There are many faces of poverty in the Capital Region, the most visible being people living on the street or in shelters, panhandling, and going to places like The Open Door in order to eat. But there are other people living in poverty who are not as visible: single parents, seniors, immigrants, youth, people with disabilities, and Aboriginal people, all working and barely making it.

- Over 43,000 people in the Capital Region live in poverty, and over 21,000 of those are employed for at least part of the year.
- Heads of families have paid work but are still unable to make ends meet and resort to food banks to feed their children.
- Many people spend 50% or more of their income on shelter-and that's if they can find shelter, in a region with a rental vacancy rate of 0.6 %.
- Some working people are already homeless or near homeless, getting up every morning in a shelter, campground, on a friends' couch, or in their car, and going to work.

What is Forum Theatre?

Forum theatre involves the creation and performance of plays developed by actors living the issues. Plays are performed once and the story builds to a crisis and stops there, offering no solutions. Each play is then performed a second time, with audience members able to "freeze" the action at any point where they see a character engaged in a struggle. An audience member says "stop", comes into the playing area, replaces the character, and tries out their idea for resolving the problem. This is called an 'intervention'. The process is fun, profound, entertaining and full of surprises.

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For more information about the *Quality of Life Challenge*, and what they are doing to end working and living in poverty, please visit their website: www.qolchallenge.ca.