

NEW HORIZONS FOR MERMAID YOUTHEATRE

Now in its 17th season, Mermaid's dynamic Youtheatre continues to explore the challenges of the contemporary adolescent scene. The Youtheatre's teenage outreach program, known as The Circle, is currently developing a new play for junior high school audiences entitled *THE FIT*. It's about Michael, a 14-year-old who is increasingly unable to fit into family or community life. The script mirrors the forces that push and pull Michael, and will be told with directness, humour, and reflection. The project stems from an effort to understand community response to current teen issues. Accordingly the Youtheatre is collaborating with the Suicide Prevention Working Group of Nova Scotia's South Shore Safe Communities initiative. Michael's dilemma resonates for many young people, and it is anticipated that his story will elicit questions from Grade Nine audiences as the play, a pilot project, tours to Lunenburg County schools during the Fall of 2007. Following each performance, these queries will become the focus of guided audience debriefings with qualified professionals.

Also during the Autumn of 2007, Youtheatre director Chris Heide will embark on a further new adventure as he takes the Mermaid Youtheatre's outreach work to Pangnirtung. While in residence in Nunavut, he'll seek to engage Inuit teens in the creation of theatre