

Faculty College 2016
Wednesday Evening SoTL in the Arts Session
7pm, June 1, 2016

First Wave Program Graduates

Office of Multicultural Arts Initiatives, UW-Madison



Sean Medlin
Christian Robinson
Rain Wilson

The Office of Multicultural Arts Initiatives' mission is to provide innovative, culturally relevant hip-hop art programs to inspire engagement, learning, and activism for diverse communities.

Sub-Everything (Sean Medlin and Christian Robinson, aka Rich Robbins)

“Sub-Everything” is a multimedia performance piece by Sean Avery and Rich Robbins. Pulling from their experiences as young Brown & Black men raised in suburbs neighboring large metropolitan cities, the piece addresses the pain of being treated “sub everything” but also celebrates the two by reclaiming a sense of wholeness.

Skeleton Key (Rain Wilson)

“I will be reading and performing from my workbook, “Skeleton Key” – Inside are excerpts of work and exercises created for theater using personal narrative as the stimulus. These stories, including my own, were all once hidden behind doors I had the privilege to be walked into or were sometimes held behind bars and walls I was asked to tear down. The common ground has been a stage where the narratives could scream loud and be heard, often for the first time. The seeds of youth life is watered by so many sources, good and bad. As this life grows and grapples with the stereotypes imposed on it, the messages that are difficult to filter through and the choices that are being made consciously and unconsciously – identity is being shaped. The questions of, “Who am I? What do I stand for? Who do I stand with? and many others are asked, answered, ignored, fought with, pulled on and adjusted simultaneously. My effort has been to put frameworks in place through written/ spoken word, exercises and other art forms freely collaborating into the space of theater where those lives can be channeled to empower themselves and others and break chains.”



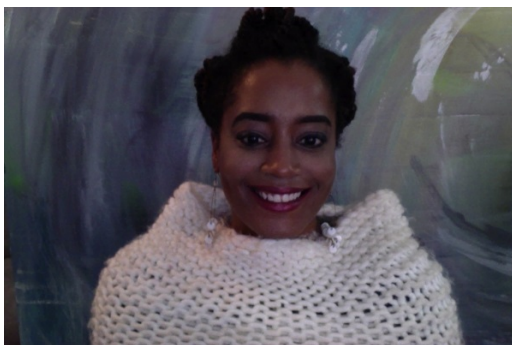
Sean Avery: As a child, Sean Avery was a military brat who kicked his grandma because he thought he was a Power Ranger. Today, Avery is a rapper, poet, actor, essayist, and performance artist by way of Avondale, Arizona. Sean’s work uses personal narrative, Hip-Hop culture, speculative fiction, and the African diaspora as frameworks for defining Black masculinity. Currently, Sean is expanding his senior thesis “Requiem: A Personal Narrative of Black Masculinity & Rap Music” into a multimedia nonfiction performance art project.

His work has been featured in BuzzFeed, Blavity, AFROPUNK, Obsidian Magazine at Brown University, the Wisconsin Film Festival, the Chazen Museum of Art, the Wisconsin Academy and Illumination: The University of Wisconsin-Madison Undergraduate Journal of Humanities.



Christian Robinson: Christian, better known by his stage name **Rich Robbins**, is a hip-hop recording artist out of the west suburbs of Chicago (Oak Park). Raised in Philadelphia, Rich began his career as an emcee upon returning to Chicago at the start of high school. In 2012 Rich was accepted into the 6th cohort of First Wave, a full-tuition hip-hop scholarship to the University of Wisconsin – Madison where he graduated with a degree in English and Creative Writing. As an emcee, music engineer, performing poet, and actor, his art is a means of finding legitimacy in a world he has yet to obtain a stable sense of self within. It is the performance narrative of a young Brown man who has a home in both urban and suburban communities, thus Rich’s art is a

means of bridging those two worlds together.



Rain Wilson is a writer, performer, teacher and director sought after for her ability to educate and empower artists and audiences alike. She utilizes innovative techniques that allow students to reach deep into the words that embody their personal narrative, using theater as a space for it to connect others in needed dialogue for social change. Rain has a B.A. from Columbia College and an M.F.A in Theater from Rutgers Mason Gross School of the arts. She is currently the Associate Artistic Director of First Wave and has been

teaching and performing for over 20 years. She has performed multiple one woman shows in Los Angeles, Wisconsin, Chicago and New Jersey. Rain has done television and several plays, receiving a Jeff nomination for Best Lead Actress for “Breath Boom”. Rain has written and composed original full length plays that have been shared to sold out audiences – most recently in Feb. of this year in New Orleans with her play Jungle Kings, which creates empathy in the hearts of many as the untold stories unfold of young men who have lived a life of gang violence and crime. Her newest play, “Police State”, which deals with the topic of police brutality and a family scarred by it, will be engaged in workshop efforts this summer. Rain’s mission is to reach out to the community and beyond through the arts, to help change and transform our lives, and to unify and grow in our role as a more empowered people.