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The Soul Justice Project: An interdisciplinary performance event to combat the silencing of marginalized voices
Mesa Arts Center
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Mesa, AZ – Best known in Greater Phoenix as an organization that employs spoken word to empower young people, Phonetic Spit will present *The Soul Justice Project* in Mesa Arts Center's Piper Theater on May 1 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$22 and are available at mesaartscenter.com or by calling 480-644-6500.

In its inaugural performance event, *The Soul Justice Project* will use Newspaper Theatre – a branch of Augusto Boal's theatrical form, Theatre of the Oppressed – along with a fusion of spoken word, live

music, movement and true, personal narratives to shine a light on polarizing issues currently in the headlines.

Boal developed his version of Newspaper Theatre in 1971 in Brazil with the goal of using the news as a frame for exploring and addressing issues of social justice. The goal of *The Soul Justice Project* in using this format is to use the arts to humanize issues that are challenging to discuss and to create a platform and safe space for dialogue. Artistic Director Tomas J. Stanton said of the project, "We're not naïve enough to believe that this show will change the world, but we do believe in the power of words to ignite first steps."

Toward that goal, *The Soul Justice Project* will engage local organizations, such as the Isac Amaya Foundation, to be available before and after the show to provide factual information around issues illuminated in the performance. Post-performance, audience members are invited to join in a community dialogue wherein they can ask questions and learn about opportunities to take direct action, if so desired.

Stanton is working collaboratively with numerous Valley-based artists and educators to develop the performance. Collaborators include: Xanthia Walker, director; Sydney Jackson, choreographer and stage manager; Liliana Gomez, choreographer and dancer; Jay Bouey and Ashley Baker, dancers; and Joy Young and Myrlin Hepworth, poets.

A portion of the proceeds from the performance will be donated to the Isac Amaya Foundation, an organization created to guide and provide financial resources for students, regardless of their immigration status, to achieve a higher education.

Mesa Arts Center is located at One East Main Street in downtown Mesa.

Editor's Note: Images are available for download via Mesa Arts Center's online Press Room at <http://www.mesaartscenter.com/index.php/misc/about/press-room/login>. Password is macmedia.

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About *The Soul Justice Project*

The Soul Justice Project is dedicated to curating interdisciplinary performances that fuse together politics, dance, spoken word, live (soul) music, and community partnerships in an effort to combat the silencing of marginalized voices.

About Mesa Arts Center

The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. Owned and operated by the City of Mesa, Arizona's largest arts center is recognized as an international award-winning venue. The unique and architecturally stunning facility is home to four theaters, five art galleries, and 14 art studios and an artist cooperative gallery. For more information, visit [mesaartscenter.com](http://www.mesaartscenter.com).