

illuminations



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Contents

Features

3 Commencement Address

By Kathleen Kennedy Townsend

6 Step, Glide and Lift: A Profile of 2008 CJC Artist-in-Residence Christopher Eaves

By Nancy Mugele



Christopher Eaves works with Lower School students.

Step, Glide and Lift:

A Profile of 2008 CJC Artist-in-Residence Christopher Eaves

Nancy Mugele

*“Say Yes to your own Creativity. Say Yes to the Creativity of others.
Make each other look Good—the Good that comes
with everyone working together.”*

Remember Marcel Marceau, picture a jumping bean, imagine a volcano—now you are ready to meet Christopher Eaves. RPCS students and employees alike were moved—literally and figuratively—by the inspiring yet graciously humble presence of CJC Artist-in-Residence Christopher Eaves last May as he brought passion, energy and motion-based learning to campus for his weeklong arts residency.

Christopher Eaves is the artistic director of eavesdrop®, a New York City theatre and arts education collective dedicated to producing new American theatre and to the instruction of the arts and arts-integrated experiences for learners of all ages and abilities. During his twelve years as associate artistic director of Artsgenesis, a renowned arts-in-education organization, Christopher designed and facilitated arts residencies and professional development workshops at over 100 institutions throughout the United States. Christopher has taught in elementary, middle and high schools, and schools for students with special needs but stated that he rarely teaches at K-12 schools—a challenge at first to design a residency in which each of our three Divisions could fully participate.

Christopher Eaves is no stranger to Baltimore. He grew up on a farm in Carroll County and received a B.A. in Theatre from Towson University where he was selected as the 2004 Honored Alumnus for outstanding contributions to the performing arts. At Towson University Christopher met classmate Laura Hackman, Upper School Theatre Director, who along with Rhonda AbouHana, former Upper School Music teacher, was instrumental in bringing him to RPCS. Baltimore is also near and dear to his heart as he appeared in John Waters’ 1988 film *Hairspray!*

Eaves studied with Marcel Marceau in London and shared his special talents with RPCS students who were members of

our auditioned Footlights Theater Ensemble and Roses Reparatory Dance Company as well as Middle and Lower School classes and employees. I watched mesmerized as he worked with students in the Black Box Theater instructing them in the techniques of Marceau to “Step, Glide and Lift.” The concentration was palpable. The group dynamic was powerful. Christopher believes that to achieve better communication skills one must be flexible in thought and movement. By teaching students a range of social, emotional, political and religious gestures he believes he can motivate them to work together.

In the classroom, Christopher is an advocate of “physicalizing” curriculum to complement individual teaching styles and engage students. From math to social studies to science, Christopher showed students and teachers alike how to energize ordinary lessons with interactivity and creativity. A special employee workshop was held with the theme of immigration. Teachers played roles of immigrants, doctors and other family members to bring to life, for future history lessons, immigration to America. Faculty were motivated to implement “physicalizing” to their own curriculum.

Long after Christopher Eaves left the RPCS campus, his lessons were still being discussed and performed. The entire RPCS learning community is deeply grateful to Catherine R. Caplan, 1978 and the Caplan Family Foundation for bringing Christopher Eaves to step, glide and lift at RPCS.



Christopher Eaves leads The Footlights Theatre Ensemble in a drama exercise.

The CJC Memorial Artist-in-Residence Fund was established in 1998 and endowed by Catherine R. Caplan, 1978 of New York and the Caplan Family Foundation, Inc., of Baltimore.

The purpose of this endowment is to provide special programming for the arts at RPCS on a rotating basis between the performing and visual arts.