



# FACES

# PIPELINE

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Shuman Juvenile Detention Center has been invited to exhibit resident artwork and poetry in the lobby of City Theatre in conjunction with the play "PIPELINE" by Dominique Morisseau. The student exhibition titled "Faces of the Pipeline" will be on exhibit from October 27 – November 18, 2018. For those who have experience with the juvenile justice system, the story is far too hauntingly familiar: Young people are wedged in a system that predictively surrenders youth to further failure, disgrace and inequity. This beautifully written and executed play addresses the issues of the "school-to-prison pipeline" and the challenges youth, families and communities face when students are pushed out of schools because of progressively harsh school and municipal policies and introduced early to the criminal justice system.

Residents of Shuman Center were introduced to the Pipeline play and the collage techniques of costume designer Dominique Fawn Hill. We modeled our study through the explorative thought process Dominique used when designing the visual look of each character / cast member. The students were then asked to design a self-portrait by examining different roles in their life through various filters such as a son, brother, cousin, father, friend, etc. and design a character removed from the current situations that shadow their self-worth. They were additionally given the option to design the character of an adversary using the same thought process and filters. We used recycled materials such as wallpaper, old artwork and magazines to make our decorative identities. Portraying their character as an art form provided opportunities to understand themselves colorfully and multi-dimensionally. Designing an adversary challenged students to imagine the opposition as a "person" rather than an object of anger. Salvaged materials functioned as subliminal messages of "imperfect made beautiful" which paralleled their current situations and served as subliminal reminders that integrating negative experiences in our understanding of ourselves creates a valuable seasoned person...which can be far more beautiful than the original. Students were permitted to use Dominique's collage format or alter their project in the form of drawing, compositional writing or poetry to make their personal statements. The constant in the assignment was to create their statements with candor conveying what they discovered about themselves using images, colors, shapes, sizes, textures and words. They were given the freedom, without editing, to express themselves in any way that would suggest themselves. The final product would either corroborate or dispel stereotypes associated with the character of youth in detention and placement centers. Some of the youth had little previous exposure to art in their schools. What is important is through the process none of the students viewed themselves through their mistakes. This exhibit reflects their artistic self-discovery as well as how and what they chose to represent about themselves to you.

We hope this play and our work awakens you to the stark reality of how the heavy weight of the "school-to-prison pipeline" burdens our society with youth who surrender their identities, self-esteem, hopes, opportunities, and the beliefs necessary to function as viable and productive members of their families, schools and communities. We are advocates in finding functional, less punitive avenues for youth to learn healthier coping skills to better equip them to design attainable futures. We are honored and excited to exhibit our work and be part of this very important social justice mission. Thank you for viewing our many faces.

**Gerry Florida**

Artist Facilitator / Allegheny County Shuman Juvenile Detention Center  
Florida Recycled / [WWW.FLORIDARECYCLED.COM](http://WWW.FLORIDARECYCLED.COM)

**Thank You Shuman Juvenile Detention Center, Allegheny County & Their Title 1 Staff for  
Standing Together in Support of Our Valuable Kids!**

**Thank You Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse for the Very Cool Re-purposed Supplies!**

**Thank You John (Rocki) Oravik for Countless Hours of Behind the Scenes Contributions to Our Efforts.**

**A Very Special Thank You to Dominique Fawn Hill, City Theatre Director, Cast & Staff for  
Offering Our Residents the Public Venue to Share Their Talents!**

**A "Very Very" Special Thank You To  
Our Talented Residents Who Enthusiastically Revealed Themselves Through Their Art !!!**