



May 11, 2012

Dear Simon:

I just wanted to take a moment to share with you the rich experience we had with Paige Hernandez.

While Paige was with us last month she performed "Paige in Full" and lead 2 workshops: one with teachers and one with middle school students. Her work was extraordinary - her show is smart, engaging, challenging, and relevant. The students laughed hard, got up and danced, went silent when the story turned serious, and stood cheering at the end. Their questions and Paige's answers were insightful and far reaching.

In the afternoon Paige led a teacher workshop in using hip hop strategies in the classroom. A group of middle and high school teachers gathered in a hot classroom - after a hot day of teaching and worked hard and joyfully with Paige. Paige understands teachers and is a generous and savvy arts educator.

The next morning Paige and our education staff drove up to Lyman Moore Middle School where a group of students were waiting outside to greet them. The front doors of the school were decorated with student-made, graffiti-like posters welcoming Paige. The students and teachers at Moore had Skyped with Paige prior to the performance, they had made full use of the Ovation's study guides (even purchasing recommended hip hop books for the library!), and everybody was ready. Twenty students gathered in the library to work with Paige - they created hip hop names, worked on a collaborative graffiti poster, wrote & performed poetry. Like Paige, the students made smart, personal work and performed for a supportive audience.

Paige's two days in Portland reached deeply into our community. I highly recommend Paige Hernandez as an artist, educator, and role model for teens. And what's more: She's a joy to work with.

Thank you again for bringing this special artist to our attention and helping make it a highly successful residency.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aimée M. Petrin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Aimée M. Petrin
Executive Director