



# StoryFaces™

PRESENTATIONS BY ARTIST, AUTHOR & STORYTELLER CHRISTOPHER AGOSTINO

## ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Shows for large audiences. For school assemblies, evening programs and family audiences. Variable content for different ages, grades K - 12. Assemblies run 45 - 60 minutes and can be adjusted in length to fit school schedule. Several themes available, including:

**StoryFaces** — multi-cultural folktales for Elementary and Middle Schools

**The Power of a Story** — focusing on storytelling as a traditional **Language Art**

**StoryFaces — Mask Arts Programs** on telling a story through **Visual Arts**

**Totem Tales** — North and South American Indian folktales and the totem concept

**Voices of the Earth** — traditional tales about Ecology and the wonders of Nature

**Special thematic programs** can focus on regions of interest, examples include:

**Chinese and Asian Tales; Rain Forests; African Tales; Fish Tales; Halloween Programs; and Motivational Hero Tales**

**Before Cave Walls...** —cultural studies and anthropology for Middle and High Schools presenting the history and cultural significance of mankind's oldest art

## CLASSROOM DEMONSTRATIONS

The general classroom program brings to life world mask and facepainting traditions, demonstrated on the faces of student volunteers. Programs can be tailored to particular topics, such as the use of makeup in world theater for theater students; understanding modern art by examining its origins; the use of symbology in tribal body art; exploring cultures through the ways they decorate themselves; or the fundamental rules of the mask concept demonstrated via facepainting as a precursor to any mask making projects.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In depth workshop programs for teachers including analysis of mask concepts and traditional arts; using these concepts to design modern masks and related projects for school age students; and what one learns over 30 plus years as a professional face and body painter.

## TRANSFORMATION FACEPAINTING ARTISTS

Our professional company of facepainting artists can be brought in to transform your students in support of the programs described above. The same artists seen at the Bronx Zoo and Tri-State area events can facepaint students within an arts-in-education context using styles based on World Masks, Tribal Faces, Native American Totem concepts or cultural traditions from regions around the world, such as Dia De Los Muertes or Amazon Indians. Every face is a unique work of art. We present facepainting as an art form, in a cultural context.

### FACEPAINTING IS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR ALL SORTS OF SCHOOL EVENTS:

School Fairs, Field Days, Class Parties, Dances, Festivals, Halloween, and School Plays.  
Transform your event by filling it with painted faces!

*Unique Programs to surprise and delight every audience*

**AGOSTINO ARTS**

516.771.8086

email: [info@agostinoarts.com](mailto:info@agostinoarts.com)

go to <http://agostinoarts.com/StoryFaces> to see the video

# A Multidisciplinary Approach to Arts-In-Education

All of *Christopher Agostino's StoryFaces* programs incorporate **Visual Arts** in direct support of **Language Arts** and **Cultural Studies**. Fundamental to this unique hybrid performance art style is its exemplification of the power of art — both Visual and Spoken Word — to convey social information, to retain and synthesize traditional wisdom, and to inspire the viewer/listener. In his presentations for schools, Christopher stresses the literature-based origins of the stories he tells and relays how books and museums have been his window into a world of cultural traditions.

The multidisciplinary example of a visual artist who tells stories through his art is a natural vehicle for generating student art projects that also cross disciplines with **Language Arts** and **Social Studies**. These presentations are regularly brought into schools in support of **Reading Programs, Book Fairs and Parents as Reading Partners (PARP)**, both as school day assemblies and as evening programs that get the full family involved. Presentations are also brought into schools in support of **Social Studies** curriculum as a multicultural arts program, or sometimes in exploration of specific regions of study (such as Native American or Asian traditions).

*This multidisciplinary approach means that funding for these programs may therefore be available through various school sources including PTA Cultural Arts, Literature Arts and Reading Programs, plus grants programs for cultural studies, tolerance and character building.*

## FOLLOW-UP ART AND WRITING PROJECTS

### STORYFACES — MASK ART PROGRAMS

An interdisciplinary program developing **Language Arts through Visual Arts**, designed to generate student writing projects that are then brought into the art room as the genesis of mask art projects — following the methodology Christopher presents in his performance and in follow-up classroom demonstrations.

### FROM TOTEM MASKS TO MODERN ART

This project gives students an experiential understanding of the traditional approach to art in tribal cultures as they create an animal mask design using symbols to *signify* the animal.

This “mask-concept” approach moves the design process away from realism and into exploration of symbolic art and abstraction—foundations of an understanding of modern art.

### CREATING YOUR PERSONAL HERO

Christopher's storytelling programs for school aged students include many Hero Tales, a traditional vehicle for inspiring positive action and character building through larger than life role models. Students design a “Superhero Mask” by defining the attributes of their personal heroes and depicting those attributes through colors, iconography and symbols.

# Transformational Makeup:

## Lecture and Classroom Demonstrations for Theatre and Art Students

Presented by Christopher Agostino

author of *Transformations! the Story Behind the Painted Faces*

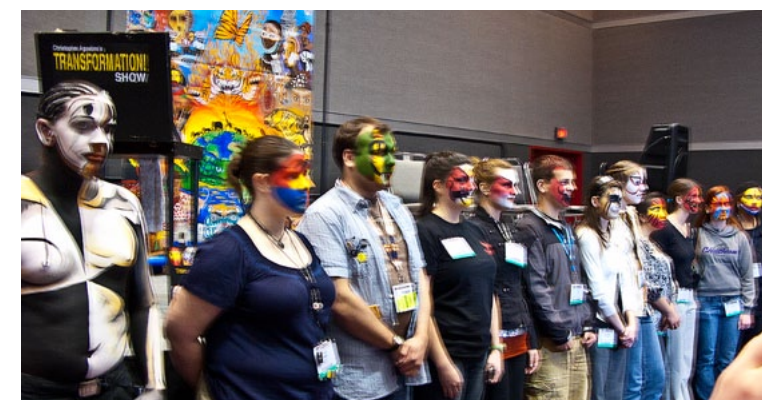
### The Art and Function of the Painted Face from Ancient Origins to Modern Theatre

From the very beginning of human culture we have used makeup and masks to transform our appearance and create a new identity. As ancient ritual evolved into theater, makeup remained as the way for an actor to present an identity beyond their normal self. It is especially evident in non-western theater, such as the Chinese Opera in which fantastically painted faces transform performers into gods, demons, heroes and all kinds of creatures to bring myths to life. When Japanese Kabuki—with its superhuman heroes in red on white *kumadori* face designs—was presented in Europe in the 1950s “the most significant thing is that makeup thus recovered its magical function as a vehicle of the supernatural, deliberately transgressing the natural features of the human face” (Michel Thévoz, *The Painted Body*). Today, traditional designs are a source for creating theatrical magic in productions like Julie Taymor's *Lion King* (with makeup based on Maasai body art) and the Metropolitan Opera's *The First Emperor*.

Christopher Agostino uses makeup and mask art from world cultures to present the story of this fundamental art in a fascination performance/lecture illustrated by his amazing facepainting on audience volunteers. For rituals, celebrations, status markings, theater and simply as a beautiful art, the reasons why we choose to transform ourselves are as varied as the images we create. In Native cultures, symbolic signs and colors mark the wearer as a member of society and imbue him with totemic powers. In Asian theater the actors are the show, becoming living special effects through sophisticated makeup and costume traditions that are hundreds of years old. And in Africa there is a treasure of face and body art, from the Spirit Masks of the Bobo Oule to the profound aesthetics of the Southeast Nuba who daily turned themselves into a work of art in celebration of the human body. These cultural designs have an innate power and exotic appeal when used in their traditional form or as the inspiration for original theatrical makeup creations.



*The Nao Dance Company of Orlando painted for performance in designs by Christopher Agostino based on the traditional bodypaint of the Southeast Nuba of Sudan.*



*The faces from a Transformational Makeup lecture at the U.S. Institute of Theatre Technology Conference (USITT) in Houston, 2008.*

*Over a thirty year career, Christopher has drawn inspiration from cultural sources to develop a mask-like makeup style with bold designs that capture the essential quality of traditional body arts—presented to audiences as a performance art in his unique series of Transformations shows. He's the founder and co-director of Agostino Arts Theatre in New York.*