College of the Arts at Montclair State University presents theatre work by members of the ASD Community

Montclair, NJ – The College of the Arts at Montclair State University presents *This is what I really think…* performed by The Workshop Theatre Ensemble on Sunday, December 16, 2007 at 2 p.m. in the L. Howard Fox Studio Theatre. The performance, part of the *Arts and Autism Series* hosted by the College of the Arts at MSU, is the culminating activity of a twelve week theatre program serving individuals with Autism called “The Workshop”. The ten members of the ensemble, ages 18 to 39, have been instrumental in developing this original work under the guidance of a teaching artist-in-residence at the University. “The Workshop”, an arts-based pilot program developed to create opportunities for personal growth through motivational and experiential programming, redefines the way individuals with Autism are viewed and lets their special talents and abilities lead to greater social, vocational, and pragmatic skills. In keeping with the College’s commitment to providing quality arts access and creating awareness of Autism, a disorder afflicting approximately 1 in 90 individuals in NJ (the national average is about 1 in 160) The *Arts and Autism Series*, in association with The Autism Center (TAC) at NJ Medical School, was launched in September 2007. The series, under the College’s arts and health initiative, began with an exhibition as part of *Artrageous*, a storewide showcase of creative talent hosted by Bloomingdales, Willowbrook in Wayne, NJ. The exhibit has since moved to MSU and features work by artists from the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) community. In addition to the exhibit, *Exploration and Celebration*, the series includes a conference, a theatre arts residency, and a theatre performance. The program was designed to increase dialogue and understanding between health and service providers, the arts community, families and individuals on the Spectrum. Funding for “The Workshop” has been made possible in part through a generous grant from Johnson & Johnson and the Society for the Arts in Healthcare.

The performance of *This is what I really think…* is free of charge and open to the general public. For more information on the art exhibit or to reserve a ticket for the performance, please contact the Office of Education and Community Outreach at (973) 655-7071 or reddingtonk@mail.montclair.edu or visit www.montclair.edu/arts/oeco/NJAH1.html.
Montclair State University
Montclair State is New Jersey's second largest university. It offers the advantages of a large university--a comprehensive undergraduate curriculum with a global focus, a broad variety of superior graduate programs through the doctoral level, and a diverse faculty and student body--combined with a small college's attention to students.

Website [http://www.montclair.edu](http://www.montclair.edu)