



Fall 9-27-1999

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Recommended Citation

Gore, Shannon, "MPACCT Brings Main Stage Production to IWU" (1999). *News and Events*. 7211.

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Sept. 27, 1999

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MPACCT Brings Main Stage Production to IWU

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- Maat Production Association of Afrikan Centered Theatre (MPAACT) will bring its full, main stage production of "Beneath a Dark Sky" to Illinois Wesleyan University on Wednesday, Sept. 29. The 7 p.m. performance in the Main Lounge, Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington, marks the fifth year Black Student Union (BSU) has brought MPAACT to IWU's campus.

MPAACT is a multi-disciplinary theatre arts organization dedicated to producing original works. For seven years, the Chicago-based company has built a reputation for excellence and innovation by producing world premiere productions using language, music and movement to engage diverse audiences.

"Beneath a Dark Sky," written by Shepsu Aakhu, founder of MPAACT, depicts a story of African-American life in rural, southeast Texas. The play focuses on the character of Willamena Levy and the events shaping her world and her perceptions.

BSU is bringing MPAACT's production to IWU to provide students with a different type of performance. Afrikan Centered Theatre (ACT) is expressionism that interprets the Afrikan culture and experience through emotive and spiritual resonance. "IWU doesn't usually have African-based plays here. MPAACT really allows the audience to see a different culture," said Mona Williams, BSU president.

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“The play will definitely be something different that you would not typically see in Bloomington-Normal. There is no production company here that does performances of this scale,” said Williams.

“Beneath a Dark Sky” is a full, mainstage production complete with special lighting, scenery and props. The free performance is open to the Bloomington-Normal community and will last approximately an hour and a half. After the performance, the company members give the audience an opportunity to reflect on the performance.

“The company is very open to the audience. ACT gives the audience the opportunity to express their opinions regarding the performance. Company members love what they do and they perform to express a part of themselves,” said Williams.