During the 2020/2021 academic year MPAACT offers SPOKEN WORD, as our flagship university touring production.

Contact: Brittany Davis
Director of Touring Engagements
BDAVIS@MPAACT.ORG

Phone number

Sex Race and Gender collide in an epic culture war
It all turns on a single word never spoken
Resonant with Arthur Miller’s “The Crucible,”

*SPOKEN WORD*

takes place in a small community dominated by hearsay, fear, outrage, and over-reaching authority figures. On the isolated campus of a Midwest university - sex, race, and gender, collide in an epic culture war. At the center of this genre-bending drama are two undergrads - one Persian, the other Black - trying to navigate their conflicted feelings, while social loyalties, family obligations, and administrative pressures encroach on their privacy with an oppressive need to know everything about their sexual encounter gone wrong.

In *SPOKEN WORD* everyone will have their say, and it all turns on a single word never spoken.

Spoken Word contains adult language and themes.
THE CRITICS SAY...

Great show. Absolutely brilliant writing. So timely and so thought provoking.

In case you need a reminder of just how insightful and powerful a writer Chicago's Shepsu Aakhu is, consider MPAACT's staging of his new play ...The script's intellectual rigor and visceral impact are unmistakable.

... Amazing Show. I was on the edge of my seat the entire time. The spoken word poetry was awesome. The music was awesome. The performances were so honest especially the college students. Such a refreshing viewpoint - and as a bonus, I never was exposed to Persian poets until this show.

JEFF RECOMMENDED

JEFF AWARDS

THE JEFF AWARDS has been honoring outstanding theatre artists annually since it was established in 1968. The Jeff Awards is committed to celebrating the vitality of Chicago area theatre.
A Conversation with the Director

Is there privacy in a world where everything is instantly public? The speed with which we communicate is outpacing our ability to calibrate how we respond to what we hear. Our outrage rests on a hair trigger. BANG! And we rush in with our opinion, our bias, our agenda and our needs. BANG! And we are in protect mode - defense mode - justice mode. But are we listening? How do we navigate the need to protect the vulnerable, and the need to respect the personal? Spoken Word presents a world as complex and nuanced as the world in which we live - issues of gender, class, race, privilege and power co-mingle with questions of agency, authority, loyalty, culture and connection. If everybody is talking... is anybody listening?

The Playwright's Process

I have two sons in college. Two Black males living a life completely free from my daily protection. I have always had a very open and easy way with my sons. Conversations between us know few boundaries, so navigating the world of sex and relationships has never been particularly prickly. This past winter, one of my sons came to me and asked for my advice navigating a difficult social reality at his school. Spoken Word is a meditation on that conversation. It is a chance to look at the nuances and complexities of navigating a word, a world, and the many vested parties in that reality. In our conversation we had choice - we could stick to easy troupes and politically correct affirmations... or we could be brave - brave enough to explore difficult questions and uneasy answers. Spoken Word is a glimpse into that open conversation. We hope it encourages more openness - more discussion - as our world and our understanding continues to evolve.
SPOKEN
WORD

A NEW WORK BY
SHEPSU AAKHU
CREATOR OF BLACK & BLUE

DIRECTED BY
LAUREN “LL” LUNDY
COMPOSED BY
SHAWN WALLACE

Celebrating our 29th year, MPAACT has built a reputation for innovation and excellence by solely producing world premiere productions which utilize language, music, and movement in a manner which captivates both the critical and commercial audience. Inside you can find out more about specific programs. For additional information contact:

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