6 Play Radio Series

Listen Engage Respond

MPAACT
S 1991
The Covid Crisis has changed how we do theater. With our buildings shuttered, and our touring productions idle, we have put our heads together and put our artists back to work telling the stories that reflect our diverse and vibrant worlds.

Striving to be “nimble” in uncertain times, we have designed a program which will engage the campus community and allow for safe interaction, without sacrificing the quality arts experience.

In a podcast (which feels like an old fashioned radio-play) MPAACT will stream content for a live listening event (to promote shared community). Immediately following the live event production members will “zoom” into the venue for a lively talk back to assist in exploring and nuancing the play and the issues therein. To encourage a more inclusive community experience, we also offer private streaming — in advance of the campus (or virtual) event.
MPAACT IS...

29 SEASONS OF EXCELLENCE
89 WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTIONS
213 AWARD NOMINATIONS AND HONORS
45 AWARDS OF RECOGNITION
26 PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTION ARTISTS
4 BOOKS ON AFRICAN CENTERED THEATER
2 BROADWAY PRODUCED PLAYWRIGHTS

1 AMAZING CULTURAL INSTITUTION

WWW.MPAACT.ORG
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 about the multiply conflicted allegiances of two African-American Chicago police officers in the immediate aftermath of the Laquan McDonald video release ...the script's intellectual rigor and visceral impact are unmistakable.

Davoe Sexton and Jayson Rabedeau patrol the notorious neighborhood on Chicago's long-neglected south-east side. The area is known to locals as “Terror Town.” As veteran cops who “happen to be Black,” these men must navigate the streets, the policies of policing, and the deeply conflicted roles that they play in the lives of those that they are supposed to “serve and protect.” Set in 2016, these officers find themselves at ground zero when long-suppressed evidence surfaces (via the media) illuminating an officer involved shooting on the very streets that they patrol. Over the course of a single day Sexton and Rabedeau must confront the most corrosive questions that face African American officers. Are they Black? Are they Blue? Or are they a volatile mix of Black and Blue?
Dueling Critics
Kelly Kleiman
April 2016

Feral
A NEW PLAY BY SHEPSU AAKHU

A blistering 90 minutes. Feral is Shepsu Aakhu's finest play yet, focusing on police shootings of young black men without merely reiterating what we hear nearly every night on the news.

The word FERAL has been tagged on buildings across the city. FX (Francis Xavier), is behind this politically motivated campaign. He is young Black and full to bursting with ideas about himself and the world around him. On a warm night in late July, FX and the local police share a moment of violence. The city and country respond... but what about FX, his family, friends, and the complex ideas that he hoped to communicate? In the national conversation "Black Lives Matter," FERAL looks at youth, idealism, and desperation. It all starts with a word spray painted on a wall.
Mother of the Dark Water

Devised by Lauren Wells-Mann

Newcity

Gorgeous...
ninety minutes of pure, joyous black-girl worship.

Picture this Post

Black Goddess Magic

Mother of the Dark Water requires and commands your attention...
Though it has many light and humorous moments, this is a serious look at what it means to be a black woman, not only in white America, but in Black America also.
A spectacular storyline
riveting yet complicated love story
wonderful cast of actors!

Young lovers from an intolerant small town reunite years later in a major city. Their difficult past must be reconciled with an even more challenging present.

One of them is transgender.
Can love roll with the changes?
The world was supposed to come to an end. For Alger, a man of deep faith (and his family), it did not. ...perhaps for them- that actually IS the apocalypse. There are covenants that bind people together - man and woman, pastor and flock, humanity and divinity. Never the Milk & Honey explores the fall-out when those covenants are broken. Can faith ever be rebuilt?

Shepsu Aakhu casts a sympathetic, compassionate gaze on one of society's biggest collective punch lines: doomsday preachers. When the sun rises on the day after what was supposed to be the end of the world and the eye-rolling public moves on, it's easy to forget that fellow human beings, however misguided, have just had their understanding of the universe obliterated. Carla Stillwell's MPAACT production makes the gravity of that situation feel true in an isolated, claustrophobic Mississippi home. Unable to face his congregation or provide comfort to an ailing parishioner, a deeply shamed pastor (Darren Jones) cedes responsibilities to his wife (Renee Lockett). Lockett's performance resonates with pain and pity, then explodes with the sort of grief known only to those hurt by the ones they love the most. ... HIGHLY Recommended
King Davis is a recovering addict whose only legacy is the six-flat building in the rapidly gentrifying neighborhood of Bronzeville (Chicago). Back taxes threaten to take the building, but King lost the respect of his mother years ago.

Wrestling with questions of rehabilitation and redemption, King struggles with his past, his present, and the man he wishes to someday become. This searing drama is about survival, loss, and redemption. *Dandelions* is about who gets to stay and who’s weeded out.