



ILLUSION THEATER

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612.339.4944 | illusiontheater.org

3754 Pleasant Ave South, Suite 321w/ Minneapolis, MN 55409

For immediate release
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Contact
Jeffery Alspaugh
612-767-9257

Illusion Theater announces the Afro-Atlantic Playwright Festival October 13, 14, 15, 2023 in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Three new plays coming from the Cultural Diaspora Program will be presented this October in Minneapolis, Minnesota co-curated by Carlyle Brown and Chuck Mike. Hosted by Camargo Foundation, Playwrights' Center, and Illusion Theater.

Opening Friday October 13 and running through October 29 **We Take Care of Our Own** by **Zainabu Jallo**, directed by **Carlyle Brown**.

On Saturday October 14 at 12N a staged reading of **MY SOUL IS NOT RESTED** by **Cassandra Medley** directed by **Aaron Todd Douglas**.

Also, on Saturday October 14 at 3pm a staged reading of **Red Dragon** by **Tonderai Munyevu** directed by **Ansa Akyea**. [Mature content warning]

On Sunday October 15 following the 2pm matinee of **We Take Care of Our Own**, a roundtable discussion **What is the African Diaspora? A Conversation about Afro-Atlantic Culture** with playwright Zainabu Jallo and Africana Scholar Maboula Soumahoro, moderated by director and festival curator Carlyle Brown.

The Playwrights and Plays:

We Take Care of Our Own by **Zainabu Jallo** directed by **Carlyle Brown**

"I was immediately attracted to **We Take Care of Our Own**, to its use of language - playful, poetic, percussive - its slightly heightened nature, all of which to my ear contributed to the African-ness of the play. It is the kind of play I like - theatrical, authentic, grounded in simplicity, its themes relevant, with something to say. It makes you think and causes you to wonder.

Zainabu Jallo, playwright, is a true child of the African Diaspora, born in Nigeria of a Nigerian father and a mother with Brazilian roots, she refers to herself as a rolling stone, living in different cities on different continents, calling five cities her home. She lives and actively participates in the here and there of a diasporic condition. A playwright, poet, and scholar with her doctoral research in the study of diasporic consciousness with a special interest in the intersections of theatre and spiritual performance, she is a poster child for what we are exploring in the Cultural Diaspora Project." - Carlyle Brown

We Take Care of Our Own features **Warren C. Bowles**, **Richard Ooms**, and **Stan Egi**.

MY SOUL IS NOT RESTED by **Cassandra Medley** directed by **Aaron Todd Douglas**

Newly arrived New York City undocumented refugees clash with the New York City homeless. Two desperate women struggle for turf in a New York City hotel room.

Cassandra Medley is a playwright and a teacher. Originally from Detroit, Michigan she is based in New York City. Her plays have been produced all over the U.S. Most recently she is a recipient of the 2023 Helen Merrill Playwriting Award. Recent works include the libretto for

Fannie Lou Hamer Opera at the Trilogy Opera Company of New Jersey, MARCH 13, 2020 at Martha's Vineyard Theater, Celebrating our Community at Gatekeeper's Collective, Mrs. Palmer's Honey at Bread and Roses Theater Her play, *Relativity* (Magic Theatre), a commission from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, won the Audelco August Wilson Playwriting Award, was featured on Science Friday on National Public Radio and is published by Broadway Play Publishing.

MY SOUL IS NOT RESTED features **Amber Patton** and **Carla Solari**.

Red Dragon by **Tonderai Munyevu** directed by **Ansa Akyea**

1607, a ship, The Red Dragon, is transporting Shakespeare's *Hamlet* bound for Africa. 2024 a celebration of that journey in Sierra Leone; and a gathering in London that ponders questions: What is cultural? Who gets to define it? Are art and subjugation ultimately interlinked?

Tonderai Munyevu is an award-winning writer born in Zimbabwe and raised in London. His play MUGABE, MY DAD AND ME opened at York Theatre Royal in collaboration with English Touring Theatre, and later became the debut production of the newly opened Brixton House Theatre. The play won the UK Theatre Awards Best New Play 2022 and was shortlisted for The Alfred Fagon Award. He has most recently co-adapted and directed Jane Austen's MANSFIELD PARK at the Watermill Theatre.

Red Dragon features **Pearce Bunting, Dominique Jones, Domino D'Lorion, Ninchai Nok-Chiclana, Carolyn Pool, Wariboko Semenitari**.

The Afro-Atlantic Playwright Festival

October 13, 14, and 15, 2023

At Illusion Theater located In the Center for the Performing Arts

3754 Pleasant Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409

Tickets: Tickets are available at the Illusion Theater website (www.illusiontheater.org) or by phone (612-339-4944). **Note:** Tickets for the Staged Readings on October 14 and the Discussion on October 15 are free, however, reservations are required.

Please [click here](#) for more information on the Afro-Atlantic Playwright Festival.

Hosted by:



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