

MYTHIC PASSAGES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MYTHIC IMAGINATION INSTITUTE
A NON-PROFIT ARTS AND EDUCATION CORPORATION

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A Message from Creative Director Honora Foah The 2005 National Black Arts Festival

One of our most important purposes at Mythic Imagination Institute is to connect people of different cultures and backgrounds to each other through sharing story and myth. These stories are carried most often on the wings, or the in the fiber of art.



The last few weeks have jazzed my bones, got me jumping around in excitement because we've started to work on content ideas and cross connections with the National Black Arts Festival. We are cooking on some powerful stuff.

These dedicated people put together a wonderful festival every year in July. Many of their offerings and the performers and people associated with NBAF are right up our Mythic Imagination alley.

Since we are working together for the 2006 Mythic Journeys Conference and Performance Festival, as well as the 2006 NBAF, we wanted to tune you in to the offerings from their NBAF 2005 festival coming up this July. I encourage you to check it out and to attend their events. Their selections are of a sterling caliber. Dig in, enjoy.

Honora Foah

For more information visit NBAF.org.

National Black Arts Festival

July 15 – 24, 2005

Generation to Generation: Master – Mentor – Muse

Art is the skill of creative transformation – a journey from thought, through talent to performance. Drawing on the African Diaspora's wellspring of images, ideas, movement and sound – artists create, master their skills and mentor the next generation, a tribute to the Muse that inspires the creative continuum.

The 2005 National Black Arts Festival celebrates the creative continuum – *Generation to Generation: Master – Mentor – Muse*, July 15 - 24, 2005. Through Dance, Film, Music, Literature, Theater, Visual Arts and the Humanities, audiences spanning generations, from the young to young-at-heart, will experience the contemporary legacy of the Masters and the masterful potential of the emerging artist.

Join us as we celebrate the creative contribution of people of African descent. Be transformed by the unique, dynamic, entertaining and creative dialogue between the Master, the Mentor and the Muse.

2005 Festival Highlights

Living Legends: A Celebration of the Masters: The Neville Brothers with special guest Odetta and introducing Raúl Midón

Sponsored by Coca-Cola

Each year the National Black Arts Festivals pays tribute to pioneers who have enhanced the artistic community and expanded the definition of African-American culture. In 2005 the Festival celebrates artists who collective mastery spans nearly a century of music and enduring talent.

The Neville Brothers, truly reflect the 2005 Festival theme, Generation to Generation. For nearly three decades, brothers **Art, Charles, Aaron** and **Cyril**, the first family of New Orleans music, have taken from music's distinctive genres – Soul, R&B, Pop, Rock and Gospel – making a kind of heritage music they seem born of. Now mentoring the next generation – with Aaron's son, Ivan, on keyboards and Art's son, Ian, on guitar, this musical dynasty continues its rich tradition with no end in sight.

Special Guests for the evening:

Odetta is one of the most influential artists of the 20th Century. Through folk, blues, Negro spirituals, jazz, work and protest songs her rich voice had defined the American experience to audiences throughout the world for more than 50 years. Her standards – "He's Got The Whole World In His Hands," "Kumbaya," "Goodnight Irene," "Amazing

Grace" and "This Little Light of Mine," – have influenced generations including the careers of Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Sweet Honey In The Rock, Judy Collins, Tracy Chapman, Carly Simon, Cassandra Wilson and Jewel.

This celebration will introduce **Raúl Midón**, an extraordinary artist of the emerging generation. His style – a remarkable combination of soul, R&B, pop, folk, jazz and Latin, has captivated audiences from New Mexico to New York. Accompanied by his jazz-infused acoustic guitar, Midón's full-bodied vocals are steeped in soul and flavored with traces from the Masters: Donny Hathaway, Stevie Wonder, Jose Feliciano and, Richie Havens.

Date: Friday, July 15, 8 p.m.

Location: Woodruff Arts Center/Alliance Theatre

Tickets: \$35 – \$50

Literary Event: *The Power of the Word with Nikki Giovanni*

Sponsored by Starbucks

A staged reading featuring one of the most widely read American poets. This year's featured author is Nikki Giovanni. A world-renowned poet, writer, commentator, activist, educator and self-described Black American, daughter, mother and professor of English, Giovanni is the author of more than two dozen books including children's books, essays and poetry collections – she is in every sense a literary master. Yet, her work has the freshness of a talent emerging – Giovanni's creativity seems to feed and provide feedback on contemporary issues.

Her work, spanning nearly forty decades, is immediately recognizable (who doesn't know *Ego-tripping*) and unexpected like her poem, *All Eyez on U* (For 2Pac Shakur). Ms. Giovanni is one of the most widely read American poets and during the 2005 NBAF, audiences will have the opportunity to see, hear, learn, enjoy and be challenged by a true literary Master!

Date: Sunday, July 17, 3pm

Location: Woodruff Arts Center/Rich Theatre

Price: \$ 20

Dance: *Ron K. Brown/Evidence*

Infused with the spirit of Masters like -Dunham, Ailey, Primus, McKayle and Beatty-choreographer Ron K. Brown moves into the spotlight with his blend of African, modern, ballet and hip-hop dance. Telling stories of the past and present to the music of Duke Ellington, Nina Simone, Fela, Nina Simone, African rhythms and contemporary pieces, Brown's dance company, Evidence, captivates audiences with it's finely crafted, exquisitely danced fables about heritage, truth, destiny and liberation of the spirit. The *New York Times* has hailed Ron K. Brown as a

choreographer "in a class by himself" and his dance company *Evidence* as "nothing less than extraordinary." Their movement will move you.

Especially for NBAF, Ron K. Brown/*Evidence* has choreographed *Freedom Song*, featuring Giwayen Mata; Atlanta's own award-winning, all-"sistah" dance percussion and vocal ensemble. (Giwayen Mata means "Elephant Leaders of Women" in the West African Hausa language.) Their mission celebrates the lives of women and uplifts communities and the planet with dynamic, soul stirring percussion, rhythms and songs of the African Diaspora, enlightening audiences of all ethnicities, ages and backgrounds.

Dates: Friday, July 22, 8pm & Saturday, July 23, 8pm

Location: Rialto Center for the Performing Arts

Price: \$ 25-30

Theater: *True Colors Theatre Company presents*

Flyin' West by Pearl Cleage

Directed by Andrea Frye

Produced by True Colors Theatre Company

Nicodemus, Kansas, 1898. Taking advantage of The Homestead Act, four African-American women and two men boldly brave the harsh conditions of the new west in a play by best-selling author/playwright and Artistic Director of True Colors Theatre Company, Pearl Cleage. Through Cleage's adept story-telling and strong characters, we are enlightened and informed that pioneers were people of color, too.

In this fact-inspired work, a small band of pioneers leave the oppressive South in a quest for freedom and land ownership. We witness through the prisms of race, class and gender their determination against tremendous odds to build new lives for themselves and their families. The *New York Times* hailed "*Flyin' West*" as a "sweet anthem of a play... the most potent, gripping play... a paean to women." "*Flyin' West*" is well on its way to becoming a classic and is a must see!

NBAF Dates: July 17, 2005 - July 24, 2005

Previews: Sunday, July 17, 2:30 p.m. & 8:30 p.m.

Opening Night: Monday, July 18, 8:00 p.m.

Performances: Wednesday-Saturday, July 20-23, 8 p.m.

Additional performances: July 26-31, for more information call: 404-733-5000

Will Power in "Flow"

Support for Will Power is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support is provided by BellSouth.

Actor, rapper, playwright and educator, Will Power, stars in "Flow", rhythm and rhyme are hip-hop theatre that "...combines the complexity of serious drama with the visual and sonic arsenal of MTV." (*New York Times*). This critically acclaimed piece fuses hip-hop beats, gospel vocals, rhymes and African rhythms to explore the stories of a "b-boy" fairy tale and the daily struggles and lessons of seven great MC's.

Dates: July 21, 2005 - July 23, 2005, 8pm

Location: 14th Street Playhouse

Price: \$ 25

Music: Abbey Lincoln in Concert

Sponsored by Wachovia

Always a Festival favorite, Abbey Lincoln – composer, lyricist, actor, activist, artist and jazz singer – returns to the National Black Arts Festival for one unforgettable performance. In the tradition of the Masters – Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington – Abbey Lincoln is one of America's most prolific artists. Her career traverses genres and encompasses art and activism. The many facets of her talent are highlighted by powerful performances in groundbreaking films like *Nothing But A Man* with Ivan Dixon (1963) and *For Love of Ivy* with Sidney Poitier (1968), her fearless participation in the civil rights movement and a discography that could be the soundtrack for the African-American experience from the 1950's to today. But it is vocal jazz that that continues to bring Abbey Lincoln to the stage and keeps her there in her seventh decade.

Dates: July 21, 2005, 8pm

Location: Rialto Center for the Performing Arts

Price: \$ 30-\$40

Visual Arts: Celebration and Vision: The Hewitt Collection of African-American Art

Sponsored by Bank of America

The Hewitt Collection is regarded as one of the most important and comprehensive collections of art produced by artists of color during this century. There is an Atlanta connection to the Hewitt Collection. The collectors, Vivian and John Hewitt, after meeting and marrying in Atlanta spent 50 years together amassed an extraordinary collection of emerging artists that would grow to national prominence.

The collection includes 55 two-dimensional works of art by 20 artists including; Romare Bearden, John Biggers, Elizabeth Catlett, Ernest Crichlow, Jonathan Green, Henry O. Tanner and 4 artists connected with Atlanta University including the esteemed artist and educator, Hale Woodruff.

Dates: Friday, July 15 – Friday, September 30, 2005