

For Immediate Release
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(g)riot (*gree-oh*) *n*: a festival of performance from women and trans people of color

Where: WOW Café Theater, 59-61 E 4th St, 4th Floor (between Bowery and 2nd Ave), F to 2nd Ave or 6 to Astor Place

When: June 10-20, 2004

Reservations: (212) 330-8801

Storytelling, spitting, spinning and deconstructing... WOW Café presents (g)riot, a festival of work by people of color exploring identities, neighborhoods, politics and histories. In landscapes as diverse as Caribbean plantations and New York City park benches, these artists speak to the past, struggle with today and look to the future with wit and eloquence.

(g)riot will open at WOW on Thursday, June 10 with “Delilah Brown: Revolutionary”, “Martha Redding” and “The Bag Lady and Old Becky” by Ira Jeffries. The festival runs through June 20 featuring work from Imani Henry, Tere Martinez, Hanifa Walidah, Keturah Kendrick, GinnaKarla S. Nicholas, t'ai freedom ford, Sabrina Hayeem-Ladani, Patricia Smith, Tonya Hegamin, Linda Susan Jackson, Jacqueline Joan Johnson, Karma Johnson, and Kenyatta Lovings among many. The schedule and ticket prices are as follows:

Three Short Plays by Ira Jeffries: “Delilah Brown: Revolutionary”, “Martha Redding” and “The Bag Lady and Ole Becky”: Thursday June 10 and 17, 8pm \$10

Living in the Light, Written and Performed by Imani Henry: June 11 and 12 at 8pm, June 13 at 7pm \$10

Women of Cave Canem Reading, featuring Patricia Smith: Saturday, June 12 4pm \$7

Time For A Song (staged reading), by Tere Martinez: Thursday June 17 @6pm \$5

Black Folks Guide, by Hanifah Walidah: Fri-Sun June 18-20 @8pm \$10

Word Buffet, featuring Keturah Kendrick, GinnaKarla S. Nicholas, t'ai freedom ford, and Sabrina Hayeem-Ladani: Friday June 18m 10pm \$7

Young (g)riot's Circle: Sat June 19 @ 5pm \$5

The Inside Story: music and performance from trans and gender queer artists of color: Sunday June 20, 4pm \$5

Sharing Our Stories: People of Color at WOW (A roundtable discussion) Tuesday, June 22, 8pm free

“Delilah Brown: Revolutionary”, “Martha Redding” and “The Bag Lady and Ole Becky” by Ira Jeffries: Thursdays June 10 and 17, 8pm tks \$10

“Delilah Brown” is about a woman who joined the women’s army corps as a WAC during World War II to escape the oppression, discrimination and racism of the colored race in the 1940’s. Startling revelations emerge regarding Delilah’s sexuality, and how she handled it.

“Martha Redding” is about a mentally dysfunctional woman tormented by her won demons, the spirit of her dead husband Warren and her account of the loss of her daughter Cenie. During her daily visits to the park Martha Redding has a very unfortunate incident with her friends...ants.

"The Bag Lady and Ole Becky" is a monologue about a bag lady and her closest friend, Ole Becky. The bag lady, seeking companionship in her old age, encounters a woman who is neurotic and turns on her. Ole Becky comes to the bag lady's aid and the bag lady and Ole Becky are forced to commit a criminal act that ultimately leads to the bag lady's imprisonment. The revelation as to who or what Ole Becky is comes as quite a surprise at the end.

Scottie Davis, professional actor, singer and mime, and founder of the Salt and Pepper Mime, will perform Delilah Brown and the Bag Lady. "The characters in Ira's plays are an actor's dream"

Ira L. Jeffries has been a playwright for over twenty years and a member of the WOW collective for over ten years. She is a graduate of City College with a B.A. in communications. She has written over twenty plays most of which have been produced at WOW. She founded Kaleidoscope Theatre to produce her own plays and deal with issues of the lesbian community. In 1985 she received an Audelco Theatre Award for Excellence in Playwriting.

***Living in the Light* written and performed by Imani Henry: June 11 and 12 at 8pm, June 13 at 7pm tks \$10**

West Africa, Kingston, Port au Prince, Havana and Brooklyn, NY, create the legacy of *Living in the Light*; a new multi-media theater piece written and performed by Imani Henry. In this solo work, Henry calls forth cane field memories of slavery while walking through the cultural mecca of Brooklyn's Flatbush area; an area he calls home.

Henry documents living and breathing inside the largest Caribbean community in the U.S. juxtaposed with images of slavery and the Caribbean's history of colonization. He explores the specific multi-national, African, immigrant communities that shape Flatbush and depicts how people co-exist in this neighborhood. Multi-media footage includes documentary interviews with people from the neighborhood. Henry portrays several characters, both women and men, as he tells present day stories and stories of the past. This interactive, cabaret-style theater performance invites the audience to become part of the show as they bear witness to this story unfolding.

Imani Henry is an activist, performer and writer. As a solo performer Imani has toured nationally and has been featured at a wide array of venues including The Boston Center for the Arts, The Apollo Theater and national anti-war rallies. He is a second year Artist in Residence at BAX.
www.geocities.com/imani_henry

Women of Cave Canem Reading: Saturday, June 12 4pm tks \$7

WOW Café Theater and Cave Canem are proud to co-present an afternoon of Cave Canem women poets. Award-winning poet, writer, journalist and national slam champion Patricia Smith headlines the reading. Ms. Smith is the author of three volumes of poetry as well as the PBS

companion book "Africans in America," the children's book "Janna and the Kings," and the upcoming "Fixed on a Furious Star," a biography of Harriet Tubman. Ms. Smith will be joined by Cave Canem fellows Tonya Hegamin, Linda Susan Jackson, Jacqueline Joan Johnson, Karma Johnson, and Kenyatta Lovings.

Cave Canem was founded in 1996 by Toi Dericotte and poet Cornelius Eady to offer a home for the diverse voices of African American Poetry. Cave Canem's programs offer black poets a chance to work together in a welcoming atmosphere and to study with accomplished poets and teachers. Programs include a summer Workshop/Retreat, a first Book Prize, regional workshops and readings in major cities.

Time For A Song by Tere Martinez: Thursday June 17 @6pm tks \$5

When she is not volunteering for Love for Kitties, Carla spends her days trying to figure out her life. She likes Carlos and thinks she might even be in love with him. Does she dare give herself another chance at life? While getting to know Emma, another volunteer, Carla learns what she never wanted to know about herself.

Black Folks Guide by Hanifah Walidah: Fri-Sun June 18-20 @8pm tks \$10-\$15

Black Folks Guide to Black Folks, a "one-woman comedic tour de force" (SF Chronicle) starring the playwright, poet Hanifah Walidah, was heralded to critical acclaim in both the SF Chronicle and East Bay Express in its preview run. In the play Walidah plays an entire neighborhood of characters linked together in a polyrhythmic mesh of loves and life lessons. Black Folks Guide approaches the topic of homophobia in the black community by remaining true to the familiar as it blurs the lines and giggles in the faces of sexuality, health, love, faith, and fear. For Press quotes go to <http://www.blackfolksguide.com/>

Word Buffet, featuring Keturah Kendrick, GinnaKarla S. Nicholas, t'ai freedom ford, and Sabrina Hayeem-Ladani: Friday June 18m 10pm tks \$7

Word Buffet is an explosion of poetry, spoken word and stand-up featuring some of the city's hottest performers. The hilarious Keturah Kendrick performs "Questions for Mama:" a woman on the precipitous edge of 30 puts her life choices and those of her mother under a magnifying glass. t'ai freedom ford's "Psychic Graffiti" is a collage of hip-hop poetics scrawled on the walls of the imagination. GinnaKarla S. Nicholas fuses page poetry and stage poetry into "The Sleep Chronicles (things we know, even with our eyes shut)." She is joined by dancer and poet Sabrina Hayeem-Ladani.

t'ai freedom ford is a writer and performance poet who lives, loves and survives in Brooklyn. In 2002, she earned her MFA in Creative Writing from Brooklyn College where she had the honor to study with Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Cunningham. t'ai was a proud member of Bar 13's 2003 National Slam Team. You can find t'ai honing her DJ'ing skills at Bar 13 every Monday night. Her latest spoken word CD is entitled *Prehistoric Hip Hop Futuristic*, which features candid interview segments and new poems. For more info about T'ai, check out her website: www.taifreedomford.com.

Sabrina Hayeem-Ladani is a poet, actor, singer and dancer who was born and raised in Manhattan. She has toured with her poetry across the United States, reading at such venues as the Nuyorican Poet's Café, Bar 13, and the Bowery Poetry Club. She has also worked as a teaching artist in both New Mexico and New York City. Sabrina was a member of the Albuquerque Poetry Experiment, a spoken word/jazz music ensemble, has performed with Organic Ghetto, a live poetry collaboration with The African Space Project, and has opened in concert for Béla Fleck and the Flecktones. She served as coach of the 1998 Albuquerque Poetry Slam Team and led them to competition in the National Poetry Slam held in Austin, Texas. This spring, Sabrina can be seen in the Off-Broadway production of Downtown Rhythm at Primary Stages Theatre. She is also a member of the louderARTS Project, a not-for-profit arts collective committed to developing challenging spaces for artists to create, critique, present and teach poetry. Her work is available in her two chapbooks, *harsh miracles*, and *the bone, the weight*.

GinnaKarla S. Nicolas received her B.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Redlands and her M.F.A. in Poetry from Saint Mary's College of California. She is the recipient of two Academy of American Poets Jean Burden Prize Honorable Mentions, and won Second Place in the Wendy Norins Poetry Prize. Her work has appeared in Coracle, Anthology, Cimarron Review and Cider Press Review. She part of the louderARTS Project and lives, writes, teaches and performs in New York, a city she loves in a way that doesn't surprise her.

A native of New Orleans the Beautiful, Keturah Kendrick is a writer, performer and teaching artist who has resided in Harlem, New York for three years. Her writing has been featured in The Louisiana Weekly, Heart and Soul magazine and her work as a stage and screenwriter has been recognized in theater festivals and staged readings across the country. The former host of Rivers of Honey at WOW, Keturah performs in and around the city.

**Young (g)riot's Circle: Young poets and playwrights adding their stories to our book.
Saturday, June 19 5pm tks \$5**

**The Inside Story: music and performance from trans and gender queer artists of color:
Sunday June 20, 4pm \$5**

“Sharing Our Stories: People of Color at WOW”: A roundtable discussion on the experiences of women and trans artists of color over the last 24 years of the WOW Café Theater. Tuesday, June 22 8 p.m. free