

June 6, 2008

For Immediate Release

Theatre troupe takes on Slavery in Philadelphia for Philly Fringe Festival

Philadelphia, PA—

Theatre for Transformation, a multi-racial spirit-led ensemble, presents ***Show me the Franklins! Remembering the Ancestors, Slavery, and Benjamin Franklin*** a one-act play about Franklin, his family and the Africans within and around their household. The play can be seen at the historic Arch St. Meeting House on 4th and Arch in Old City Philadelphia on Sept 4, 5, 11 at 7pm and two matinee performances on each Saturday, Sept. 6 and 13 at 1pm and 3pm.

An original work, the play's action moves from an entertaining and informative lecture to a show down between Scholar, an African American professor, who is committed to the biased documentary record and Jemima an ancestor formerly enslaved by Franklin. A mixture of poetry, ritual and song, this play offers a fresh take on slavery by asking us to whom or what have we sold ourselves today.

“The heart of this play is The Ancestors Poem,” says playwright/Actor Amanda Kemp. “The Ancestors are calling you/they say remember me/they say forgive me/they say I forgive you.

Show me the Franklins! weaves together ritual and theatre to recover the stories and perspectives of Benjamin Franklin's African contemporaries and his wife Deborah. Meet Peter, Jemima, George, Othello, and King, all owned by Benjamin Franklin as well as runaway Abby Jay and freed woman Phillis Wheatley. Hear their stories and conflicts regarding slave master and renowned abolitionist, Benjamin Franklin.

Funny, compassionate and informative, this play has been awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council and been workshopped at the Z Space in San Francisco and the National Black Theatre Festival 2007.

Running about 60 minutes (including Q&A), the performance is appropriate for children aged 8 and above.

Show me the Franklins! was excerpted and performed at the Espace Canopy in Paris, France and filmed there in March 2008. The play has been performed at diverse sites including Stanford University, Franklin & Marshall College, the Missouri History Museum as well as elementary and middle schools, high schools, and community centers throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Playwright Amanda Kemp plays the Scholar in the production and is the 2007-08 Cadbury Scholar at Pendle Hill, a Quaker Center for Study and Contemplation, in Wallingford, PA. The play also features Vision, a well-known Philadelphia spoken

word artist, Deborah Billups of Freedom Theatre and Mary Ferrell of Swarthmore.

Theatre for Transformation is an emerging theatre company whose goal is to produce work that helps Americans to remember and forgive the wounds of slavery and devote energy to creating new possibilities.

Tickets: \$20 purchase at the door or through the Live Arts and Philly Fringe Box Office

FESTIVAL INFORMATION

The Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe run from August 29-September 13, 2008. Ticket prices range from free to \$25, and can be purchased online at www.livearts-fringe.org or by calling 215-413-1318. Fringe guides which include dates, times, and venues for all performances for both festivals, will be available in Philadelphia City Paper and at all festival venues.

The Fringe serves as a collective home for artists bringing their work to audiences in every conceivable form—in traditional and untraditional venues, using new artistic forms and established ones, breaking rules or refining them.

Listings Information

What: Theatre for Transformation presents *Show me the Franklins! Remembering the Ancestors, Slavery, and Benjamin Franklin*

When: Thursday Sept. 4th, Friday, Sept. 5 and Sept. 11 at 7pm; Two matinees on each Saturday, Sept. 6 and 13, at 1pm and 3pm

Where: Arch Street Meeting House, 4th and Arch St., Philadelphia PA

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.dramandakemp.com

www.liveartsandfringe.com

PHOTO INFORMATION

Press Photo by:

Featured in Photo: Deborah Billups and Amanda Kemp (right)

Press Pitch Workseet

Show Information

Theatre for Transformation

Show me the Franklins! Remembering the Ancestors, Slavery, and Benjamin Franklin

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Pitch Ideas:

Black Fringe Artists-commonalities divergences

Race and America, new historical plays since the death of August Wilson

Historical projects

Shows that are intergenerational

Slavery and Philly tourism

Spirituality and Theatre

What makes Theatre for Transformation unique?

Our company has formed around a poem:

The Ancestors

You know the ancestors are calling you

You know the ancestors are calling

You

They say

Remember me

They say

Forgive me

They say

I forgive you

We are multiracial and practice waiting worship and yoga as part of our preparation. We are based in Wallingford, PA. Our founder Amadna Kemp has a Ph.D. in performance Studies from Northwestern University and is