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The University of Akron

Rethinking Race

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2015 Performances

"Sister Friend"

Thursday, Feb. 5

7:30 p.m. in Kolbe Hall's Daum Theatre

Sponsored by: University Libraries

Sister Friend: Phillis Wheatley and Obour Tanner On Freedom, Love, and the Divine - a one-act play and audience talk-back.

Phillis Wheatley, eighteenth-century Black poet and international celebrity and her friend Obour Tanner come to life in this one-act drama about their friendship, love, and understanding of the Divine. Based on the unique correspondence between Wheatley and Tanner, both of whom were enslaved, this play explore the women's assertions of freedom, dignity and faith. The play blends narrative with African American spirituals, exquisitely rendered by tenor Deborah Billups and soprano Vanessa Ballard. You don't want to miss this story that will make your toes tap and your heart soar.

Sister Friend Trailer



The Dark Kalamazoo

By Oni Faida Lampley

Monday, Feb. 9, at 7 p.m. in the Student Union Theatre

Free Admission

Presented by the UA Theatre Arts Program; School of Dance, Theatre and Arts Administration and the Akron Story Circle Project. Directed by **Erika Kinney** Featuring UA student **Corryne Shuler**.

A funny, poignant, and unusual coming-of-age story, with strong political undertones exploring the colonization of African and African-American minds, this play is a delightful dance from Oklahoma City, to Sierra Leone and back to the true wilds of JFK airport.

This play kicks off a new initiative of The Akron Story Circle Project: Telling Your Own Story. Using this play as a model, UA students will have the opportunity to tell, script, and perform their own stories over the next year under the guidance of theatre professor **James Slowiak**. A selection of these student stories will be performed for Rethinking Race 2016. For information on how to participate in Telling Your Own Story, contact slowiak@uakron.edu (mailto:slowiak@uakron.edu)

Spoken Word Poet Rudy Francisco

Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 7:17 p.m. in the Student Union Starbucks

Free Admission

Sponsored by RHPB

Rudy Francisco combines activism and poetry to enlighten the minds of those who witness his performance. Rudy eloquently absorbs the experiences of those around him, synthesizes them and converts their stories into poetry. Furthermore, Rudy has made conscious efforts to cultivate young poets and expose the youth to the genre of Spoken Word Poetry through workshops and performances at schools and community centers. Rudy Francisco is the 2009 National Underground Poetry Slam Champion, the 2010 San Diego Grand Slam Champion, the 2010 San Francisco Grand Slam Champion and the 2010 Individual World Poetry Slam Champion.

"...Or Does It Explode?"

Thursday, Feb. 12

7 p.m. in Kolbe Hall's Daum Theatre

Sponsored by: Center for Conflict Management, the Center for Applied Theatre and Active Culture (CATAC), and Ma'Sue Productions

This free play is written, produced and performed by local young black men based on actual stories about young black men in Akron.