

UC Berkeley's Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies presents

Conference on African and Afro-Caribbean Performance

September 26-28, 2008

Featured speakers include:

Gerard Aching, *New York University*

Author of *Masking and Power: Carnival and Popular Culture in the q Caribbean*

Pauline Malefane, *South Africa's Isango Portobello Productions*

Star and translator of the film *u-Carmen eKhayelitsha*

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *International Center for Writing and Translation, University of California, Irvine*

One of Africa's most acclaimed playwrights and novelists

Tejumola Olaniyan, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Author of *Scars of Conquest/Masks of Resistance: The Invention of Cultural Identities in African, African-American, and Caribbean Drama*

For more information, see www.berkeleytdps.org

As studies of African and Afro-Caribbean performance have acquired a wider relevance during the last decade, it is now time to examine the diverse critical approaches currently being practiced within these fields. How are African and Afro-Caribbean cultures being constructed, analyzed, and re-imagined by recent discussions about theatricality, transnationalism, diaspora, translation, Circum-Atlantic exchanges, or cyberspaces? The conference's program will bring to a diverse array of presenters from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the United States who deal with topics that include--among others--dance, drama, community theater, the links between social justice and performance, rituals, religious events, diasporas, carnival, and intercultural barterings.

This conference will also gather several organizations with overlapping interests: two UC-wide Multi-campus Research Groups including one in International Performance and another focused on African Studies; a special plenary session hosted by the African Theater and Performance Working Group of the International Federation for Theater Research (IFTR); the American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR), which is a co-sponsor having provided support for Africa-based scholars to attend; and scholars located throughout the U.S, Europe and Africa who will be attending and giving presentations. In addition, the conference will serve a focal point for organizing a renewed interest in humanities and arts-based research on the UC Berkeley Campus, with links in particular to the Departments of Music, African-American Studies, History, Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies, and the School of Information. In association with his conference, the journal *Theatre Survey* will be publishing a special issue on African and Afro-Caribbean performance in December 2008.

The **intended audience** for this event is simultaneously local, regional, national and international. While it is too early to know precisely how many people will come, we are

currently planning for an attendance of 150-200. On Friday night, the Pacific Film Archive is hosting a public screening of a film associated with the conference, the all Xhosa-language *U-Carmen eKayelitsha*. This portion of the program most directly geared towards the general public. The star and translator of the film Pauline Malefane will be coming to the conference, with a special Q&A after the film hosted by Kenyan novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Malefane's residency at Berkeley is sponsored in part by Berkeley's Consortium for the Arts.

Conference Planning Committee

Leo Cabranes-Grant, UCSB, Co-Convener
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Funding and Co-sponsorship:

Presented by UC Berkeley's Dept. of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies. Co-sponsors include:

- *The American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR)* has provided funding to help defray travel costs for scholars coming to the conference from Africa.
- *UC Berkeley's Consortium for the Arts* is sponsoring a 10-day campus residency by South African opera singer Pauline Malefane from Isango Portobello Productions. In addition to her participation in the conference and screening, Malefane will be visiting various classes at Berkeley the week after the conference.
- *The University of California Institute for Research in the Arts (UCIRA)* is co-sponsoring Pauline Malefane's visit at Berkeley and also at UC Irvine where she will be hosted by Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Center for Writing and Translation
- *The Pacific Film Archive* is sponsoring the screening of *U-Carmen*
- Additional conference programming support is provided by the *UC-wide International Performance Multi-campus Research Group* and *African Studies UC Multi-Campus Research Group*
- Additional campus support includes UC Berkeley's Center for African Studies and Department of Music
- External affiliates also include the *African Theatre and Performance Working Group of the International Federation for Theatre Research* and the journal *Theatre Survey*.

Pending requests: Department of African American Studies, Townsend Center for the Humanities,
College of Letters and Science, Division of Humanities and Arts; Dean of International and Area Studies