

Contact: Sharon Morrissey
Governors State University
Phone: (708) 235.2812
Email: sbanaszak@govst.edu

For Immediate Release

GSU Theatre and Performance Studies Program presents a Coming of Age Tale in *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*

March 15, 2018 (University Park, IL): Before there was the #metoo and #timesup movements, there was theatre. Theatre has always illuminated the human condition and tackled life's harshest realities with unwavering candor. The Governors State University Theatre and Performance Studies (T.A.P.S.) program confronts stories of love, loss, sisterhood, and empowerment in *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf* on April 5, 6 and 7 at 8 p.m.

The 1976 Broadway production was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play, and Tyler Perry's screen adaptation won an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Motion Picture (2011) and BET Award for Best Movie (2011). At the time, the Huffington Post wrote, "For Colored Girls illustrates the universal sisterhood of struggle, strife, and survival that women find themselves in certain types relationships with men." And it has never been more relevant than today.

This collection of twenty interconnected stories of women is a "choreopoem," woven together through music and dance. The cast of seven nameless women, only identified by colors, is a picture of solidarity and coming of age as an African-American girl. The playwright Ntozake Shange's poetry articulates the many struggles that African-American women (and all women) may face throughout the cycles of life, from rape, abandonment, abortion, and domestic violence to the importance of friendship and unity in the face of hardship. The colors of the rainbow represent the core of what it means to be a woman.

for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf contains mature content—and this is intentional. With poems that explore losing one's virginity, abortion, and love lost, and the use of explicit language, Shange wants to ensure that, if such important issues are not being discussed at home or under the guidance of careful mentorship, the production serves as a lesson, a cautionary tale, to those coming of age. In fact, Shange wrote the work with an intended audience in mind—12 year old girls. That said, guardians are encouraged to use their own discretion about whether or not it is appropriate for a younger audience.

Director Dr. Patrick Santoro says of the play, "While presenting the audience with challenging content, *for colored girls...* is a testament of what it means to live—to survive—in the face of oppression. Our production does not shy away from those moments that haunt, but we also embrace moments of freedom from such ghosts. *for colored girls...* is, as Shange advocates, a cautionary tale for youth to witness the mistakes made by their elders so as not to repeat them. In fact, I would argue that it is as much for boys and men as it is for girls and women—of color or not. This is life. We are living. And while some have a more comfortable position in the social hierarchy than others, we are all in this together. We have responsibilities to one another—to treat each other with respect and kindness—however lost such ideals have become. Come celebrate women of color and what it means to be alive in this undeniably powerful work of spoken word, song, and dance."

Meet the Rainbow

Brown—Kimberly Davis

Red—Ash Janelle

Blue—Mary Angel

Green—Jennifer Simmons

Yellow—Wendolyn Sims-Rucker

Orange—Kayla Liggins

Purple—Cherise Joy Stone

When You Go

Tickets are \$15 and \$10 for students with valid I.D. at the box office. For tickets, information, and the complete cast list, please visit **CenterTickets.net** or call **(708) 235-2222**.

The box office is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and two hours prior to performances (the box office is open until 6 p.m. on Thursdays). This performance is partially supported by funding from Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway in University Park.

About Theatre and Performance Studies at GSU

This play is produced by GSU's Theatre and Performance Studies (T.A.P.S) Program. GSU's T.A.P.S. bachelor's degree is the only degree combining the two disciplines at a public state university in Illinois. For information on the T.A.P.S. program, contact Dr. Patrick Santoro at psantoro@govst.edu or Dr. Jason Zingsheim at jzingsheim@govst.edu. Like us on Facebook @tapsgsu for updates.

###

Governors State University serves 5,200 undergraduate and graduate students with degree programs that prepare them for success in business, industry, healthcare, the arts, and education. As a state university, GSU is committed to providing high-quality, accessible, and responsible higher education opportunities. GSU is located 35 miles south of Chicago in University Park, IL and committed to embracing diversity and academic excellence while transforming student passion into lifelong purpose.