

Welcome to Extra N.A. Online!

Monday September 15, 2008

[Homepage](#) | [News](#) | [Archives](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact Us](#) |

News

[Email to a Friend >](#)


Dub poet opens own theatre space

Wednesday, August 20, 2008



d'bi.young

By Neil Armstrong

TORONTO:

Award-winning dub poet, writer, teacher and theatre practitioner d'bi.young has taken her passions for performing and community involvement one step further with the launch of her new arts initiative, anitAFRIKA! dub theatre. Located in west Toronto's Liberty Village, the theatre was officially launched on August 19 with the start of a five-day artist development conference called storyteller.groundings.fest.

fest.

"I feel like the culmination of the dream, which is, to have a school, have an institution that espouses the kinds of values that I was taught," said the dub poet in an interview with ExtraNA. Young says at age 30, and six months pregnant with her second child, she feels ready for this new initiative.

The five-day storyteller.groundings.fest will feature works by Toronto's emerging youth artists, a series of rigorous panels by artists from all disciplines, anti-oppression and equality workshops, and a marketplace of Afri-Canadian artisans. Participants will have access to nine different groundings sessions, ranging from "the storytellers' integrity to art for social change, art for revolushunary change and art for liberashunal change." Working with a collective of nine people, young says the development conference is based on a circular model, which will allow members of the community to ask the storytellers questions about their art and the artists will share the processes involved in the creation of their work. "Accessibility is important to us," says young. Over 30 panellists will participate and groups, including an arts and political group visiting from Brazil will attend the conference. There will also be groups from Scarborough, the westend, African Food Basket, Elevated Ground and Toronto Community Housing.

The new theatre company is a radical arts initiative founded on seven principles of dub poetry and dub theatre: the use of rhythm, language, political content, morality, urgency, integrity and sacredness as mediums of social change through storytelling. It is a registered non-profit organisation

Founded by d'bi.young during her mentorship with visionary dub artist ahdri zhina mandiel, the new theatre company is a dub poetry/dub theatre school, and a drastic arts option providing multi-disciplinary creative offerings to the community including two alternative biannual gatherings: storyteller.groundings.fest (August 2008) and word! sound! powah! fest (August 2009).

Other initiatives

Other initiatives include anti-oppression workshops, creative living courses, mentorship, theme-specific lectures, dramaturgy and directing, cross-cultural collaborations, touring productions, storytelling classes and performances. young is the artistic director, Oksana Kolibaba is the associate director, Jamilah Abu-Bakare is the



director of operations and Sarah Brown is the director of multimedia.

Described as an "afrikan-jamaican-canadian visionary who believes in life, love, and revolushun," young views this new move as a culmination of the work that she has been doing for over a decade. She has performed, published, and lectured internationally. She is also the author of two dub poetry collections: *Art on black and rivers* and *other blackness between us*, and the author of the double Dora Award-winning play *blood.claat*.

Send your comments about this Note. Include your name and location at the bottom of your comments.

1000 characters left.

Send

[>>Read More News Stories](#)