

Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe presents tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

WBTT to celebrate Dr. King's legacy on 50th anniversary of his assassination with expanded program

SARASOTA, FL – On the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe invites the community to celebrate his rich legacy during a community-wide program. The event, titled “Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,” will feature re-enactments of Dr. King’s speeches, song and dance.

Program highlights will include excerpts from Dr. King’s speeches and writings, performed by Reverend Charles MacKenzie, interspersed with singing and dancing by some of WBTT’s most popular performers. Founder and artistic director Nate Jacobs and his daughter, Naarai Jacobs, will be featured soloists; other performers will include Ariel Blue, Leon S. Pitts II, Michael Mendez, Ashley Brooks, Brian Boyd and more.

"For all of us at the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, the commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy is a significant occasion. This year is particularly poignant as we recognize the 50th anniversary of his death," added WBTT founder and artistic director Nate Jacobs. "Dr. King fought for equality while always exemplifying the values of justice, dignity, courage and service to others. At our organization, we promote and celebrate the African-American experience – certainly Dr. King's leadership during the Civil Rights Movement is a major part of that experience and we are proud to honor his contributions to creating a more just society for all Americans today."

The event takes place on Monday, January 15, 2018, 7-9 p.m. at Booker High School (3201 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota). Leading event sponsor is the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

For the past two years, WBTT presented a similar program that was produced as a collaboration with and hosted by Sarasota’s Temple Emanu-El.

“For this special anniversary, we are bringing a larger cast of singers and needed a larger venue to stage the production,” said WBTT executive director Julie Leach. “By presenting the event at the Booker High School theater, we hope to reach more people throughout the community. We are grateful

for the financial support of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, which is enabling us to keep ticket prices low.”

Cost is \$10/reserved seating, \$35/premium reserved seating. For tickets, go to westcoastblacktheatre.org or call the WBTT Box Office at (941) 366-1505, ext. 1.

PHOTO ID: Performers from a previous celebration of Dr. King have included (clockwise from upper left) Reverend Charles MacKenzie, Nate Jacobs, Christopher Eisenberg, Leon S. Pitts II, ?????, James E. Dodge II, Elaine ?????, and Ariel Blue

About Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe:

The Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe of Florida, Inc. is the only professional black theater company on Florida’s West Coast. The mission is to produce professional theatre that promotes and celebrates the African-American experience, to attract diverse audiences, to support and develop African-American artists, and to build the self-esteem of African-American youth. For more information on WBTT, visit the website at westcoastblacktheatre.org or call (941) 366-1505.

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