

Frank Theatre presents Danai Gurira's award-winning play

ECLIPSED



Directed by Wendy Knox

Costume Design by Kathy Kohl

Lighting Design by Ray Steveson

Set Design by Todd Edwards

Sound Design by Michael Crowell

Dramaturgy by Steve Matuszak

Stage Managed by Glenn Klapperich

Featuring

Shá Cage, Hope Cervantes, Nisreen Dawan,
Signe Harriday and Yeukai Mudzi

**SEPT. 17 -
OCT. 10, 2010**

**at the Playwrights' Center
2301 E. Franklin Ave, Minneapolis**

Tickets at www.franktheatre.org, or 612-724-3760

FRANK
T H E A T R E

Frankly Speaking

NEWS OF FRANK THEATRE

SEPTEMBER - 2010

Frank Theatre celebrates 21st season with Danai Gurira's

ECLIPSED

SEPT. 17-OCT. 10, 2010

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Waring Jones Theater

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PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8:00 pm, Sundays at 2:00 pm. **NOTE:** The theatre seats ONLY 75 people, so please make reservations!
- Tickets are \$20 on Thurs and Sun; \$22 on Fri and Sat; \$2 discount for students, seniors and low-income. Call 612-724-3760 for info on group rates and audio-described performance.
- Post-show panel discussions are Sunday Sept 19,26 and Oct 3. (Sept. 26 special post-show event with the local Liberian community.)
- Reservations can be made online at www.franktheatre.org or by calling the Frank box office at 612-724-3760.



ABOUT THE PLAY

ECLIPSED centers on the lives of five women who are thrown together by the recent civil war in Liberia. Salvaged as chattel from wartime looting, these "wives" of the commanding officer form a hardscrabble sisterhood and develop their own hierarchy as they confront questions of survival in their compound. The arrival of a new girl who has learned to read, and the return of a former "wife" who can kill, quickly transforms their possibilities. Surprisingly vivacious and often funnier than you would expect, **ECLIPSED** raises thought-provoking questions about power and resistance, solidarity and complicity, as the women hold out for the hope of a brighter destiny.



**PARKING and DIRECTIONS
TO THE THEATRE**
**located at the Playwright's
Center, 2301 E. Franklin Ave.,
Minneapolis:**

(Please double check on Mapquest or Google!)

FROM THE WEST:

Take I-94 east to the 25th Ave/Riverside Ave. exit. Turn right at the light at the end of the ramp. Go to the next light, which is Franklin Ave., and turn right. The Playwrights' Center is on the left side of the road at the intersection of 23rd Ave. and Franklin Ave.

FROM THE EAST: I-94

Take I-94 west to Riverside Ave/25th Ave. exit. At the second light, turn left. Go to Franklin, turn right. (see above).

FROM THE NORTH:

Coming in on 35W from the north, exit on Hiawatha, then take the Cedar Ave. ramp. Turn left on to Cedar, go to Franklin Ave. and turn right. The Playwrights' Center will be on your right side at 23rd Ave.

FROM THE SOUTH:

Head north on 35W, take the I-94 exit towards St. Paul, and exit at the 25th St./Riverside Ave. exit. Turn right at the light at the end of the ramp. Go to the next light, which is Franklin Ave., and turn right. The Playwrights' Center is on the left side at 23rd Ave.

“ Palace of the End... had its spellbinding area premiere by Frank Theatre... Emily Zimmer beguiles and repulses in a spittfire performance. Frank regular Patrick Bailey, in what is perhaps his best performance yet, emanates a visceral sense of paranoia. A sublime Taous Claire Khazem is understated yet riveting. Director Wendy Knox has guided three shattering performances across Thompson's vast emotional terrain...”

– StarTribune

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Danai Gurira is an Obie Award-winning playwright (IN THE CONTINUUM, 2006, which was performed across the U.S., in Zimbabwe and South Africa) and actor, with connections to the Twin Cities. She attended Macalester College, graduated in 2001, and earned an MFA in Acting at NYU. In 2007, Gurira received a “New Generations” fellowship from the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), to visit Liberia and conduct the research that would provide the basis for **ECLIPSED** (which recently received a Helen Hayes award as Best New Play of 2009). **ECLIPSED** received its premiere in fall 2009 at Woolly Mammoth Theatre (DC), Mark Taper Forum/ Kirk Douglas Theatre (LA), and Yale Rep. Following the Minneapolis production, the play will open in Boston, Chicago and Johannesburg, South Africa. As an actor, she appeared as “Zainab” in *The Visitor*, the independent film that explores the experiences of two undocumented immigrants in New York City. She has also appeared onstage in a variety of other venues, and she recently made her Broadway debut in a revival of JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

We've gathered a fantastic group of artists for this production! The cast features **Shá Cage**, who — in addition to her non-stop work around town, acting, teaching, jolting the voltage in the amazing local spoken word scene — anchored previous Frank productions such as **VENUS** and **F***ING A**; **Signe Harriday**, lured back from New York when this script was dangled in front of her, previously appeared as the younger sister of the shrew, Bianca, in our iconic **THE TAMING OF THE SHREW** five years ago; a fantastic trio of Frank newcomers — **Hope Cervantes**, **Nisreen Dawan** and **Yeukai Mudzi** — make their Frank debuts with **ECLIPSED**. **Todd Edwards**, on the faculty at St. Olaf, joins us in creating the environment for the play,

and **Ray Steveson** is gonna shed some light on the situation — both of them joining us for the first time. Grizzled Frank veterans (well, none of them are very grizzly, actually) **Mike Croswell** creates the sound of a Liberian civil war, **Kathy Kohl** threads together the costumes and Artistic Director **Wendy Knox** directs. The dynamic stage management duo of **Glenn Klapperich** and **Katie Burger** will keep us all in line, and the dramaturgical department of **Steve Matuszak** and **Emily Zimmer** are making sure we're sticking close to the story. We're also benefiting from the expertise of fantastic consultants and coaches, among them **Peter Rachleff**, **Beth Cleary**, e.g. **bailey**, **Ansa Akyea**, and many others. *How lucky are we?*



PHOTO BY TONY NELSON

“ When Frank Theatre couldn't get the rights to a recent, critically-acclaimed adaptation of Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, they decided to create their own. And what a fortuitous decision that was. The collaboration between Wendy Knox and her company has produced a truly idiosyncratic, brilliant and enthralling piece of work...”

— StarTribune

THE FRANK PANEL DISCUSSION

A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS!

About 10 years ago, an audience member told us that she wanted to talk about a Frank show after seeing it. We took



her to heart, and we initiated our post-show discussion tradition. Every Sunday following the matinee (except for our final performance), we invite you to stick around or come back and join us to wrestle with the ideas sparked by the play. We gather a panel of community members who have some experience with, or interest in, some aspect of the subject matter of the play. We ask them to respond to the performance, and then we invite you to ask your questions and offer your comments. We're interested in YOUR ideas, and we're interested in your response to the play. These have proven to be fascinating, stimulating, and insightful conversations. They're free, they're casual, and we would love to have you.

“ In the more-than-capable hands of Frank Theatre, which has spent 20 years bringing the difficult to the stage, [BY THE BOG OF CATS] becomes a wild carnival ride, Carr's terrific script is a fine starting point, but the work truly comes alive in the hands of Frank director Wendy Knox and a talented cast of performers. The show is also buoyed by excellent costumes and set, and a wonderful soundscape by Michael Crosswell, which brings the unearthly qualities of the BOG OF CATS TO LIFE...”

— MinnPost

SILENT AUCTION OCTOBER 2, 2010

You may have missed the announcement at Summer Splash, but Frank has announced a season of THREE (count 'em, THREE) shows!



ECLIPSED opens soon, and on the heels of that, we head downtown to Hennepin Stages with a production of David Sedaris' **SANTALAND**. Then next spring, at an undisclosed location, it's **CABARET!**

We want to invite you to celebrate this festivity at our annual silent auction on Oct. 2. Your generous support allows us to keep presenting the new, the re-thought, the

dangerous and the thrilling work you expect from Frank. Our fall auction has not only earned a reputation as a fantastically fun event, it's also a great night to meet other Frank-o-philes, newbies, artists and board members, have some nosh, and sip some wine — all while bidding on some great auction items! Your \$65 admission gets you into the WILD auction bidding, wine and hors d'oeuvres, a ticket to **ECLIPSED**, and post-show champagne and dessert! **CALL NOW — 612-724-3760. TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE.**



COMING UP NEXT AT FRANK:

David Sedaris' **SANTALAND**.

Nov. 26-Dec. 31

Call 612 724 3760 for tickets and info.

Group rates available.

FEATURED RECIPE

LIBERIAN JOLLOF RICE

Jollof rice is a staple dish of many of the West African countries, including Liberia, with regional variations. Typically made with meat or fish, it also can be vegetarian by leaving out the meat.

1/2 c. vegetable oil	1 c. green beans
1 lb chicken, shrimp, fish or other meat	1 c. shredded cabbage
3-4 c. water or stock	1 T. salt
1/2 c. onion, finely chopped	1/2 tsp. black pepper
4 cloves garlic	1/2 tsp. thyme
1/2 c. green or red pepper, finely chopped	1 tsp. crushed red pepper or fresh chilies.
2 cups long grain rice	1/2 tsp. ground ginger or allspice (optional)
1 6-oz. can tomato paste	
1 16 oz can tomatoes, diced	
2 chopped carrots	

Vegetable options: you can also add any or all of the following: mushrooms, eggplant, squash

In a skillet, sauté the chicken, meat or fish in 1/4 c. vegetable oil. Remove from heat and set aside in larger pot. Add 2-3 cups stock or water to chicken and simmer for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, sauté onion, and green or red pepper until soft in oil, 4-5 min; add garlic and sauté 1-2 min longer. Stir rice into the onions and peppers, then add tomato paste, stirring to coat rice and give it a reddish hue. Add chopped tomatoes, and let them cook down for several minutes. Pour this mixture over the chicken, add carrots, green beans, cabbage and spices. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Serve on a platter, garnish with sliced hard-boiled egg, cilantro or parsley.

MISSION STATEMENT

Frank Theatre is a professional theatre company committed to producing unique work that stretches the skills of the artists who create the work while simultaneously challenging the everyday perceptions of the audience through the exploration of ideas and issues of social, political and/or cultural concern.

Frank Theatre was founded with the desire to produce work that provides opportunities for artists to grow, to stretch, to work outside of and beyond the typical opportunities provided by theatres with a greater commercial interest. The theatre has successfully pursued this goal through the consistent staging of works that require the actors, designers, and director to challenge themselves and each other.

The theatre is a Twin Cities'-based company, founded in 1989 by Artistic Director Wendy Knox. In its twenty-one year history, the theatre has staged 45 productions.

The theatre is committed to producing work that reflects the world in which we live.



Call Frank Theatre
at 612-724-3760
for tickets
& information.

Want to receive Frank Theatre updates via e-mail?

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Send us an e-mail at

info@franktheatre.org,

and we'll keep you cyberposted!

WHY THIS PLAY?

I often say that it's difficult to define what makes a script right for Frank. It's almost easier to identify what doesn't make a play right for us than to define why a piece is Frank material. **ECLIPSED** was, thankfully, brought to my attention by frequent collaborators Beth Cleary and Peter Rachleff, who are Essential Participants in the Frank Theatre Brain Trust. They made a trip to D.C. last fall and came back with glowing reports of a production of **ECLIPSED** they had seen. Peter graciously sent me the script, and there it sat. Some months later, a couple more excellent folk, Shá Cage and Signe Harriday, said they wanted to get together and talk about "doing some stuff." We met, we gabbed, we laughed, we talked about stuff that we might wanna do. I proposed that we jump start things with something simple: readings of a couple of scripts that I wanted to hear, including **ECLIPSED**. Shá lined up some folks, Signe wrangled a time for us to get together, and a week or so later, we sat around the table reading the script. As I listened to it, I realized that I was experiencing what a Frank Theatre audience member must frequently go thru: I howled, I winced, I covered my eyes and peeked through my fingers, I wanted it to stop, I wanted more. I didn't know the script, so I didn't know what would happen next. And at the end, we all looked at each other and said "Yeah." It was funny, it was painful, and it delved into a real situation that real people in this world were enduring. It raised questions, and it gave food for thought. **ECLIPSED** was definitely Frank material.

I read the play again, and kept thinking about it. One thing that kept me scratching my head was why Danai's name seemed so familiar. I had directed a show at Macalester years ago when she was a student of Beth and Peter, so I figured that must be it. Then last spring, Afrika!, a cultural organization of African students at Macalester, presented a reading of the play, and issued a press release mentioning that Danai, who I knew was from Zimbabwe, had been born in Grinnell, Iowa. As a product of Grinnell College, I thought "How in the HECK could she have been born in Grinnell and grown up in Zimbabwe—unless her parents were faculty?!" That's when the lightning bolt hit me: the familiarity with her name was because her father, Roger Gurira, had been my chemistry professor freshman year of college! Small, small world, I'm tellin' ya...

I often say that each Frank production is like a giant research project and/or a fantastic trip to another place, another time, another world. **ECLIPSED** has again provided that opportunity. With Minnesota being home to the largest number of Liberian immigrants in the country, (70,000) I was a bit sheepish about my own ignorance of our complicated relationship with the country. I certainly was aware of the events that played out in the smaller type headlines of the last decade, but it was only as we dived into this project, watching fascinating documentaries, reading books and articles that made you scratch your head in wonder at what was happening, and hearing firsthand accounts from the many people who contributed to our experience, that I realized how complicated the relationship was between the two countries. We didn't need much more reason to tackle a play like this.

ECLIPSED is the kind of play, the kind of story, that Frank relishes. There are parts of the story that are heart-breaking and infuriating, and these are juxtaposed to events that make you howl with laughter. In the end, it's an incredibly touching story of five women who don't have access to the kind of power they need to change their situation, but do have access to an incredible power and willingness to survive. Danai has written a great play, with great characters that provide wonderful opportunities for these fabulous actors. It has been a thrill and an honor to visit this place with these fellow travelers as we create another piece of Frank's history. Don't miss this one—it's going to rock!

Wendy Knox, Artistic Director



PHOTO BY ANN MARSDEN

FRANK T H E A T R E

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
3156 23rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407-1907
www.franktheatre.org

SEPT 17 - OCT 10, 2010

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