

Dehkontee Artists Theatre Launches “Black Culture and History Matter” Movement in Commemoration of Its 39th Anniversary!



Introduction

Recently, I shared with you my thoughts about the need to promote multiculturalism in the United States of America and across the globe. I asserted that much of the misunderstandings and violence that we experience in our daily lives could be curtailed ***if we practice inclusion in our daily lives*** rather than pretending to preach or advocate multiculturalism when in reality most of the gatekeepers (county education leaders, school principals, and policymakers) tend to ***‘build walls’*** in order to exclude and avoid the others around them from enjoying their inalienable rights and privileges as citizens. In particular, this is demonstrated in our schools and community-based programs where certain individuals are very fixed on disrespecting the cultural heritage of minority sects, particularly the Black Race, Hispanics, Asians, etc., thus depriving millions of children the opportunity to learn about their cultural and historical backgrounds. Subsequently, this leads to breeding young adults and grown-ups who have no clue as to who they really are. For this reason, they may end up being ***robots*** that lack the capacity to make informed decisions on their own. And, instead of being forerunners of their own destiny, ***those affected by gatekeepers’ construction of cultural and psychological walls around them wind up being passive stooges that go with the wind!***

In the next couple of weeks, we will be discussing the topic: ***“Black Culture and History Matter”***. Our discussion will focus on ways in which we can improve human relationships, establish respect for one another, and promote peace and unity through our shared democratic values and precepts. Furthermore, our discussion will include still photographs of theatrical productions and public functions that I have written, directed and produced through the Dehkontee Artists Theatre, Inc. (DATI)

performing arts group over the past thirty-nine years. I will explain in detail the themes and moral lessons these plays aim to promote with respect to peace education, respect for the sanctity of human lives and properties, and rule of law, so as to entertain and educate our diverse audiences. Also, I want to allay the fears of those who feel that everything that is Black is supposed to be ‘negative’, ‘fearful’, and ‘bad’! As a result, they hold the notion that ***Black Culture Does Not Matter***, which of course is an erroneous assertion!

In addition, it would be foolhardy of anyone to think that ***Black Culture and History Do Not Matter*** particularly in view of the immense contributions members of the Black Race have made toward the expanse of universal knowledge around the world. Therefore, I find it very contradictory when the history and culture of Africa is denigrated yet when major western universities sponsor exhibition tours of Egyptian mummies or ancient African artifacts in museums across the United States or parts of Western and Eastern Europe! For what purpose, I wonder?

Why Are We Launching “Black History and Culture Matter” Movement?

We are launching ***“Black Culture and History Matter” Movement*** to mark the beginning of the 39th Anniversary of Dehkontee Artists Theatre, Inc (DATI)—a performing arts and educational organization that has been in the vanguard of promoting African arts and culture for nearly four decades on the continent of Africa and here in the western hemisphere. The official launch will begin with the introduction of the Afrocentric philosophy that undergirds the purpose for the founding of the movement through a series of articles. Most of the articles will be based on personal experiences and hurdles members of my theatre company and I have endured over the decades. Some of the experiences are very similar in nature but they were executed by different individuals of different races in high and low places, and in different geographical settings along the way. I believe these experiences are worthy of being recorded so that future generations of mankind will learn from the mistakes of others in order to make this world a much better place to live. Further, part of our celebration will be the discussion of self-published books I have written that espouse the promotion of Afrocentric literacy and the production of authentic literary materials that reflect the genuine cultural beliefs and customs of Africans, particularly from West Africa where I originated. This again is necessary to provide much needed genuine Afrocentric literacy to replace those ones that stereotype Blacks as being ‘negative’ and non-productive elements of society!

Also, as part of our celebration, we will be sharing partial links of our Youtube video recording of ***“The Frogs and Black Snake in Frogsville” that was produced earlier this year at the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts*** so that you may get a feel of our grass root effort to promote universal knowledge and multiculturalism from the Afrocentric lens. We will also be launching a GoFundMe account for those of you who sincerely believe that ***“Black Culture and History Matter”!*** Also, you can make a donation by logging on our official website: www.dehkonteeartiststheatreinc.com and click on the “Donate” button to make a contribution through our PayPal account. Your donation will be tax deductible. You can contact us via e-mail: gbaba5@aol.com or by phone: (267) 973-1709 if you have questions or would like to sign up to become an active member of Dehkontee Artists Theatre, Inc. (DATI) and the ***“Black Culture and History Matter” Movement.***

Here is the Youtube link to "The Frogs and Black Snake in Frogsville" Part One: www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtMoNjJxNVo

Please give us some feedback and also, we are interested in collaborating with producers that would like to make a movie out of this production.