



“If These Walls Could Talk...”

By: Shana Berkeley
STAFF WRITER

“Through the Walls,” a performance by Vanderbilt’s own Rhythm and Roots Performance Company, was a brilliant account of African American history. Using the modern day story of a community center being torn down as a backdrop, these actors and dancers incorporated historical accounts ranging from Africa to slavery.

The creativity portrayed in this performance, ranging from spoken word to movement, met and exceeded everyone’s expectations. “This year’s Rhythm and Roots performance was absolutely astounding. What a creative way to learn about MY history. Rhythm and Roots captured the essence of Africa in American history through the art of dance, song, and skit. I found the performance to be captivating as well as inspiring. I give it two thumbs up!” said Tovya Prince, A&S junior.

Though viewers likely would have seen several Black



“The pieces on the “womanist” movement and Malcolm X offered less-familiar perspectives of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960’s.... No stone was left unturned as the crew addressed lynching, cross-burning, and even the Jena Six.”

Photo courtesy of Complete Capture

History performances, these acts were anything but cliché. The pieces on the “womanist” movement and Malcolm X offered less-familiar perspectives of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960’s. These accounts

as well as the photographs documenting events such as children being attacked by police allowed the audience not only to see but to feel the struggles of the past.

See “Rhythm and Roots” pg 2

Harambee!!!

By: Cardella Leak
STAFF WRITER

Drummers. Dancers. Drama. These were a few of the attractions at Harambee, a celebration of African cultures presented by the Vanderbilt African Student Union. Harambee is Swahili for “a cooperative society that comes together.” That is exactly what was displayed in the Student Life Center on February 5th, 2009.

The vibrant colors of the costumes and outfits were almost as diverse as the array of people present at the show. Vanderbilt lived up to the Swahili title and came together for a great show and cause. Edverette Brewster, a sophomore in Arts and Science, exclaimed, “the show was not only entertaining, but well put together and informative! I learned a lot and could see the hard work and dedication that everyone put into the show!”

Instead of simply presenting different aspects of African culture, ASU put on a full-blown storyline production. The show followed three students during their day at Vanderbilt.



“The vibrant colors of the costumes and outfits were almost as diverse as the array of people present at the show.”

Photo courtesy of Complete Capture

They all attended classes that centered on African culture and traditions. Each “class” demonstrated, through performance, some of the knowledge that they acquired throughout the school year.

Performances included African drumming ensemble, the

Heritage Performers from Nashville School of Arts, belly dancers from Vanderbilt and Belmont University, a fashion show of different African styles, a spoken word piece by guest artist Diallo and Vanderbilt’s own Jose’ Grenet, as well as the Nilaja-Amari Dance Troupe. “I really felt educated about the African culture. Additionally, I feel like I have an understanding of what it means to be a first generation American citizen/student. It was truly inspirational and engaging,” said Kayla Brooks, A&S, sophomore.

The crowd thoroughly enjoyed the different avenues that revealed the essence of traditional African culture. ASU not only put on a fantastic and dynamic show

but they gave their proceeds to the Kasiisi Project, which is dedicated to fund raising for improved education in Uganda.

This year’s show has the Vanderbilt community in anticipation for another great production next year.

BCC BLACK HISTORY EVENTS

Saturday, February 14

The Vanderbilt Spoken Word 2009 Showcase

Valentine’s Day will never be the same. Vandy Spoken Word presents THE LOVE SHOW, a two hour showcase of original spoken word, hip-hop, and more. Bring a date!

7 – 9 pm, Student Life Center

(Tickets are \$5 and may be purchased at the Sarratt Student Center Box Office or at the door on the day of the event.)

Sunday, February 15

5th Annual Nothing But Love Affair Valentine’s Benefit Concert

“My Funny Soulful Valentine” Hosted by Lav Luv, Starring After 7 & Maysa, and featuring Joe Johnson.

Doors open @ 6 pm, Showtime 7 pm, Langford Auditorium

(Advance general admission tickets \$30, general admission tickets on the day of the show \$40. Tickets available at nbl4u.com or jazzandjokes.com, or may be purchased at the Sarratt Student Center Box Office. Free parking at the VUMC East Garage on Medical Center Drive.)

Monday, February 16

God Bless The Child: An Evening With Hannah Elias & Madam C J Walker

The African American Playwrights Exchange (AAPEX) presents an evening showcasing two new plays by AAPEX artists dealing with two significant African American women from the beginning of the 20th century - HANNAH ELIAS and MADAM CJ WALKER. Featuring Helen Shute Pettaway as Hannah Elias and Jewel Lucien as CJ Walker. Hosted by Jaz Dorsey, Dramarug and founder of AAPEX. Co-sponsored with Leadership Development and Intercultural Affairs

7 pm, BCC Auditorium

Tuesday, February 17

The Richard Wright Centennial Reading Series #2: Black Power

Discussion led by Professor Hortense Spillers.

6 pm, BCC Seminar Room

(Reading the featured book is not required for attending the sessions)

Wednesday, February 25

Black History at Lunchtime Series:

“The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas”

Dr. Talitha M. Washington, Assistant Professor of Mathematics at the University of Evansville, will discuss the life and legacy of Dr. Elbert Cox, the first person to receive the Ph.D. in Mathematics and the coincidence of racism and the Ku Klux Klan in Evansville, IN, in the 1920s. Co-sponsored with Leadership Development and Intercultural Affairs

12 Noon, BCC Auditorium

What’s Inside this Issue?

Students Speak on Slant’s Recent Issue.....Page 2
 From the Desk of the Editor-in-Chief.....Page 2
 Words of Inspiration.....Page 3
 “Relationships: Behind the Scenes”.....Page 3
 “All the Single Ladies”.....Page 3
 Black History Photos from Complete Capture.....Page 4
 Poetry Corner.....Page 4

To advertise with Talented Tenth

contact us at:

vandytalentedtenth@gmail.com

Embrace Change

From the Desk of the Editor-in-Chief

“Change: 1 a: to make different in some particular way; alter b: to make radically different; transform c: to give a different position, course, or direction to [...] 5: to undergo transformation, transition, or substitution” (Webster.com)

Many fear change. We mostly fear the idea of it, because it forces us out of our comfort zone and forces us to alter our routine. We may fear it because of how intangible it seems or how far away it appears or how difficult it is to obtain.

We lack the patience for the unknown. We always want to know the next move before it is made. But if everyone was like this, there would be no America, no liberty, no freedom, no progress, and definitely no Barack Obama. Change brings progress and is fostered in the everyday-man as well as the most powerful.

We must embrace change in its totality. We must march on without stepping back, yet always remember where we have been. One day, we will reach our destiny, but we cannot get there if we remain stagnant, if we decide to go for what is comfortable.

Change causes growth and maturity. For a flower to form, a seed cannot remain a seed. A seed cannot be afraid of the water that causes it to break out of its shell. In order for a butterfly to morph, a caterpillar cannot remain a caterpillar. It cannot be afraid of uncertainty. It cannot be afraid of the dark. So why do we fear change? Why not accept it as an opportunity and a powerful endeavor?

In America, change was proclaimed on January 20th, with the inauguration of a person of color to the President of the United States, proving that the American Dream does exist. For graduating seniors, change is approaching on May 8th. We will leave the familiar and the comfortable for the next steps in our lives, but we must do so with confidence knowing that we have made it thus far. For The Talented Tenth, change begins in March with the passing of my torch to a new Editor-in-Chief and Staff for the 2009-2010 school year. They will take this publication to new heights and allow it to mature and flourish.

It has been my honor to serve as Talented Tenth's second Editor-in-Chief, bringing it back into the forefront and out of hiatus. I thank my Editorial Board and Staff for all of their hard work and dedication. I also thank our supporters and fervent readers and urge you to continue supporting us as we go through these transitions. I look forward to the future of this great publication as it brings forth cultural upliftment, enlightenment, and conversation.

Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief

Angela Moore

Associate Editors

Jakevia Green

Ashley Oliver (inactive for this issue)

Janelle Stokes

Copy Editors

Angelica Ibezim

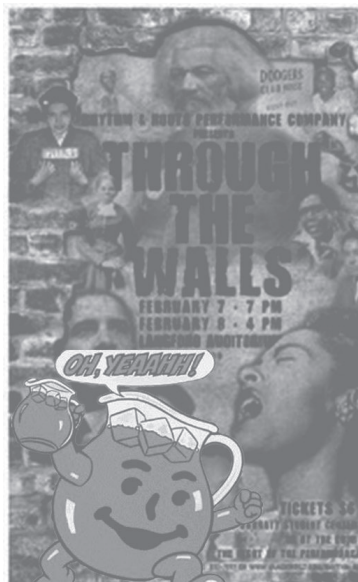
Michael Poku

Director of Arts and Layout

Sherryl Grant (inactive for this issue)

OPINION POLICY

We at Talented Tenth appreciate the thought-provoking comments and opinions that you feel would be beneficial to our readers. All letters sent need to be well written, cohesive, and contain logical arguments to any claims made. Submissions that do not meet these requirements and are nameless will not be considered. Once submitted, all articles become property of the Talented Tenth and are subject to editing as the editor-in-chief deems necessary. Please submit to vandytalentedtenth@gmail.com



Above is the “advertisement” that Slant ran in its latest issue (February 5th, 2009)

Ameedah Williams, A&S junior

“As an African American student, I found the joke very offensive, and it was not perceived as a joke at all. The main problem that I have is that all minorities (ethnicities) were NOT targeted as mockery in the article. There are too many people on this campus that are ignorant to the struggles of being a minority student, and stereotypes are easily perpetuated by misrepresentation of things that are thought to be personal truths...

For example, you will not see me as an African American and ask me if I like Kool-aid or if I was informed when I voted for Obama. You will just attribute my skin color to these stereotypes. Furthermore, these comments make people think that it is okay to make fun or mock our heritage and our unique identity—something that I would not make mockery of for any other group of people on this campus. Also, was it

necessary to put articles geared towards black people, how did you represent the unique identity of Africans, Hispanics, Indians, Malaysians, or Asians? You didn't!”

Rachel Conard, A&S senior, Rhythm and Roots performer

“Several Rhythm and Roots performers were conversing when another performer came to us with a Slant newspaper pointing to the Kool-Aid man placed on the Rhythm and Roots poster saying “Ohh Yeah!” Mixed emotions filled the air; some began to laugh while others became extremely angry. My first thought was-- maybe we should all just laugh and move on. Maybe we are just a bunch of overly sensitive Blacks that are ready to call Jesse Jackson at the first sign of racism.

However, being a member of Rhythm and Roots for three years, I could not just let my feelings of anger aside. Rhythm and Roots strives to educate, inspire people to change their lives for the better, and fulfill their dreams. The Kool-Aid man placed on the Rhythm and roots poster filled with Blacks who made great historical accomplishments not only shows a lack of understanding of what Rhythm and Roots strives to promote, but it also shows a lack of understanding of the struggle that Blacks have and continue to undergo. The Kool-Aid man may not be sign of racism but it is a sign of ignorance.”

Speak Out

Did Slant's recent issue cross the line? Or, was it harmless fun? Here are three viewpoints on the matter:

Brendan Alviani
Editor-in-Chief of Slant

“I chose to print the outrageously racist opinion piece because I thought it took a fresh angle towards the “post-racial” attitude being espoused by some. For me, the article helped raise awareness of some of America's not-so black-and-white historical racism. It is easy to point at slavery as racism, but until you discuss those shades of grey, you won't see those tendencies in yourself.

As someone who has gone through many classes about diversity and lives in a nearly all-black neighborhood at home, I saw through the blatant ridiculousness of the author's language. However, I can certainly see the concern for those who are “less acquainted” with black culture to miss the boat. For the Kool-Aid guy advertisement, it was the opposite case: I didn't see the problem at all until someone brought it to my attention. Rather, I saw a great visual pun on the “bursting through walls” theme with a fictional character who happened to be filled with a delicious sugary drink.

Here is a case for why that “shades of grey” argument is important: I was not aware of such an insensitive action and as such, I did not recognize it as racist. However, I do appreciate the Black community's response. Minorities should have a loud and clear megaphone to voice their concerns when ignorance (such as mine) arises...”

Rhythm and Roots

Cont. from pg 1



Rhythm and Roots production “Through the Walls”
Photo courtesy of Complete Capture

“Rhythm and Roots was very captivating and inspiring...there were some moments where I just felt chills and tears welled in my eyes. I felt like I was there, back in those days, I could feel the pain of those who endured a scared past... This was also a testament to the immense talent on Vanderbilt's campus. Simply amazing,” said Ashley N. Cockrell, A&S sophomore.

No stone was left unturned as the crew addressed lynching, cross-burning, and even the Jena Six. Continuing on the journey, another pleasant surprise was the exploration of Hip-

Hop culture. To be balanced, however, the performance also documented some negative aspects of Black culture, such as gang violence, explaining its origin and perpetuation in our communities.

As history came full circle, the performance returned to the community center and its historical significance, eluding to the fact that many of these historical landmarks happen at the very spot that the community center stood.

In the end Mr. Wealth and Ms. Fortune (notice the play on words) had a change of heart. The final and fitting scene of this amazing performance uses the audience as a participant in the show by displaying how we too were apart of history, living to elect the first black President.

Each and every participant deserves an award for a JOB WELL DONE! Say it loud “I'M BLACK AND I'M PROUD!”

Bravo Rhythm and Roots!



LOVE IS IN THE AIR



Relationships: Behind the Scenes

By: Eric Brown
STAFF WRITER

At my house in the midst of a gathering with friends and my girlfriend, a discussion about relationships arose—with my response to a question sparking unexpected controversy. The question was: Do you find other women besides your girlfriend attractive and would you ever cheat on her?

What has kept my girlfriend and I together for the past two years is great communication with one another. So being open and translucent in this situation, I said, “Yes,” and “Though I do not, I don’t know what I will do in the future.” This was an honest answer, but a few of the single women thought I was supposed to say I don’t, and they were appalled!

After the conversation, I reflected on several questions: Why must we feel that we cannot talk openly to the opposite gender; especially when in a relationship? Why can’t opposite sexes find clarity in male/female language? Why is there so much ‘double talk’ when the other gender comes around? Why can’t we deal with issues of admiring the beauty or attractiveness of another without it being translated into “Hyper-sexuality”?



Rosevelt L. Noble (Class of 1998 and 2003) and Kristen Noble (Class of 2003).
Photo courtesy of Rosevelt L. Noble

Because there is so much variance in the way men and women perceive relationships [i.e. BET, mother-and-father relationships, talk shows, former relationships, etc]—and because every relationship is different, talking about aspects of dating can be problematic though they don’t always have to be.

I don’t like pretending that certain issues need not be discussed. In my own life, I deal with insecurities of what others think, and how my words may come out to another. I struggle with attempting to be vulnerable because I know I am an emotionally repressed black male.

When men and women come together, many opinions are camouflaged and conversations are filled with language of denial and naivety. This could be due to fear of being ridiculed or criticized. By being open and honest with one another, men and women can have meaningful dialogue and work through these frailties.

Relationships and sexuality should be openly discussed, and people should be encouraged to voice their concerns honestly regardless of disagreement; “there should not be any physical and/or verbal abuse because of incongruities.” Having serious conversations about relationships

requires mature people who agree to provide intellectual perspectives.

Present your thoughts openly and unashamedly. Please don’t stop the conversation!

All the Single Ladies

Are you disappointed that you have no Valentine this year? Well, here are 7 ways you can still enjoy the Day of Love:

- 1) **Have all your single friends as your Valentines. Go out to a nice restaurant.**
- 2) **Attend Vanderbilt Spoken Word’s Love Show.**
- 3) **Love your femininity and attend Vagina Monologues.**
- 4) **Tempt your palette and buy your own chocolate.**
- 5) **Go make a teddy bear to cuddle with at Vandytines.**
- 6) **Try a spa treatment. Essence Day Spa is great, and it’s a Black-owned business.**
- 7) **Groove to the tunes of India.Arie’s new album “Testimony Vol 2: Love and Politics”**

It’s okay to treat yourself. Remember you are valuable, gifted, and strong.

Happy Valentine’s Day!!!

Words of Inspiration:

After the Honeymoon is Over

By: Lee Perkins
STAFF WRITER

Like marriage, entering into a relationship with and professing love for God is a deep commitment. When you enter covenant with God, you vow to be faithful to Him, just as He promises to be to you. Although God always honors his vows, many of us cannot say that we do.

With national divorce rates sky-high and the dating game as tumultuous as ever, most people have never experienced commitment and love in a relationship with another person, let alone God. We are faithful when God is blessing us. We are faithful when He is answering our every prayer. But when we find Him testing our commitment, we are quick to turn our backs on Him.

We think that the actions -- or inactions -- of God are cause for separation or divorce. In fact, when the “honeymoon” period is over, and God no longer caters to our every need, we soon fall out of love with Him. However, God’s test of our

faith is only an expression of His love for us and His desire to see us grow.

Clearly, when we are unfaithful to Him, God chooses to remain faithful to us. The prophet Jeremiah wrote, “Return, faithless people,” declares the LORD, “for I am your husband” (*Jeremiah*

3:1, NIV). While Beyonce admonishes commitment-phobic men to “put a ring on it,” God, our spiritual husband, has already done so. His ring is symbolic of love everlasting.

Traditionally, the wedding ring is worn on the left ring finger because the

vein in the left ring finger, referred to as the vena amoris, was believed to be directly connected to the heart. Accordingly, when God makes His commitment of love towards us, He hopes that we will give Him our heart. As you express your love for your significant other during Valentine’s Day, make a commitment to faithfully love God as He has loved you.



Join our staff! Contact us at:
vandytalentedtenth@gmail.com

Poetry Corner



"A Poet Has a Duty to Words."

"Still Life"

By: Angela P. Moore
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

You stood head held high and humble.
Your soft dark eyes pierce
Into mine like an arrow
Hitting the target for the first time.
It's been a few days,
But you remain as a still life in my mind.

Chocolate skin tightly wound to your body, glowing
Because of an aura induced by your smile.
It's inviting, and I want to move closer
Due to the magnetic force
In your baritone voice
That pulls me.

I want you
To entice me,
Intrigue me,
Enlighten.

Show me what's underneath
That chocolate skin.

Love May Come. Love May Go. True Love Remains the Same

from "Men"

By: Maya Angelou

"Young men sharp as mustard.
See them. Men are always
Going somewhere.
They knew I was there. Fifteen
Years old and starving for them"

from "Now My Mother Will
Remember"

By: Honoree F. Jeffers

"She first fell in love with my father's
poems, I was wearing a blue chemise
and he made up a verse right there
on the spot. Those words were verbal
foreplay"

from "Song"

By: Paul Laurence Dunbar

"Kisses are wine
Brewed for the lover in sunshine and shade;
Let me drink deep, then, my African maid."

"black girl, black woman to black boy,
black man"

By: Janelle K. Stokes
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

black boy, black man
why are you always running from us?
I ask, why are you leaving? are we really through?
because you only shun me to later take me back real-
izing
you need me
I'm no delilah
regardless of what your brothers might say
I won't cut your hair and leave you

if you were you and I was me
I'd sit you by my feet
rub massage ease my fingers over your scalp
with Madame's grease and tell you a story
so you would grow
but you run scared and digress
from the image of the man
sandra, regina, connie, stella, inez, willa, audrey,
thelma, vallaire, louise, sharon
everybody
knows you could be

don't be a nigga, thug, baby daddy or
give into hypocrisy, stereotypes, the "Man"

accept my hands, love, spirit
black boy, black man
I only want to see you grown

Black at Vanderbilt from Complete Capture

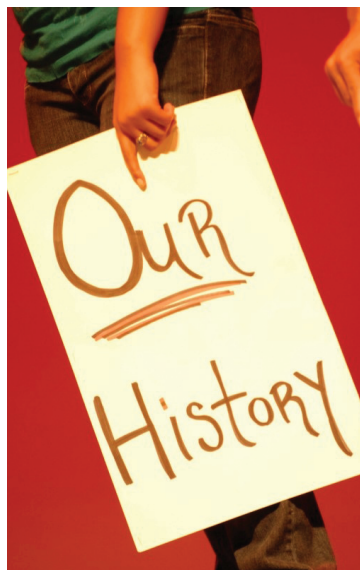
Complete Capture is a team of photographers led by Professor Rosevelt L. Noble. They seek to capture Black students' lives on Vanderbilt campus. Here are a sampling of their photos from various cultural and historical events:



Harambee, 2009



Aba Temeng, junior, shows her excitement at Barack Obama's Inauguration Viewing at the BCC, Jan. 20th.



Rhythm and Roots, 2009



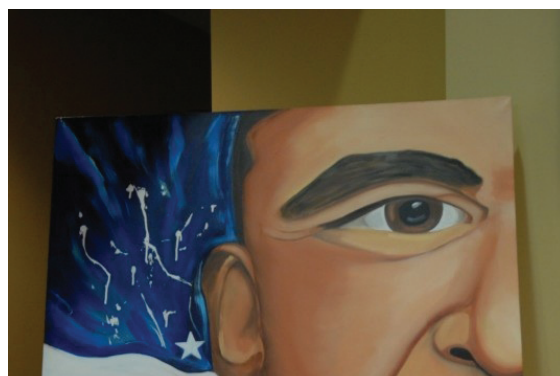
Wendy Cox, sophomore, at MLK Vigil



"Pledge Allegiance" (Inauguration Viewing)



Rev. Lawson speaks at MLK Candlelight Vigil, Jan. 19th.



Tiffany Palmer, senior, poses with MLK Essay Winner in the BCC.

For purchasing info and appointments, call Rosevelt Noble (615) 335-3303.