



Young playwright/performers
featured in Double Bill

Description

BTW and PWM combine forces in *Dark Red* and *Cry Baby*

By **Byron Toben**

A pleasure to see two of our valued local theatre entities, the **Black Theatre Workshop** (founded 1972) and the **Playwrights Workshop Montreal** (founded 1963), combine forces.

They have done so recently to encourage the further development of two young playwright/performers, namely **Willow Cioppa** and **Kalale Dalton Lutale**. This is part of a joint Artist Mentoring Program.

Ms. Cioppa's piece is called ***Dark Red*** and Ms. Lutale's, ***Cry Baby***.

The former was directed by **Tamara Brown** and the latter by **Jesse Strong**, who also dramaturged both.



Ms. Cioppa, who refers to herself in the plural, focuses on the nuances of sexuality, trauma, self-reflection, femininity, Blackness and their favourite rap music.

Ms. Lutale's piece embraces surrealism, mothers, loss and pop culture. Lots of baby eye views from under tables or seeing grandfathers.

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Both pieces, in my opinion, overuse the word "Fuck". I am not shocked by that, but bored. Worked for *The Sopranos* on TV, but it has become so common that its shock value has diminished. How long before it becomes bland, as "bloody" has since Victorian times?

That aside, both ladies show promise both in writing and performing. After the show, **Quincy Armorer**, Artistic Director of the Black Theatre Workshop, urged donations to The Actors Fund, which aids theatre people in temporary distress. This fund had its origins in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, but I will save that story for another article in the future.

Double Bill ran at the MAI from December 10 to 15.

Visit blacktheatreworkshop.ca and playwrights.ca

Images: Andrée Lanthier

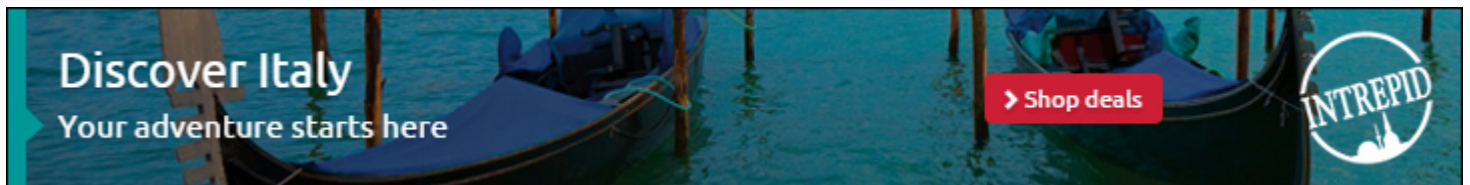


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Byron Toben, a past president of *The Montreal Press Club*, has been *WestmountMag.ca*'s theatre reviewer since July 2015. Previously, he wrote for since terminated web sites *Rover Arts* and *Charlebois Post*, print weekly *The Downtowner* and print monthly *The Senior Times*. He also is an expert consultant on U.S. work permits for Canadians.



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