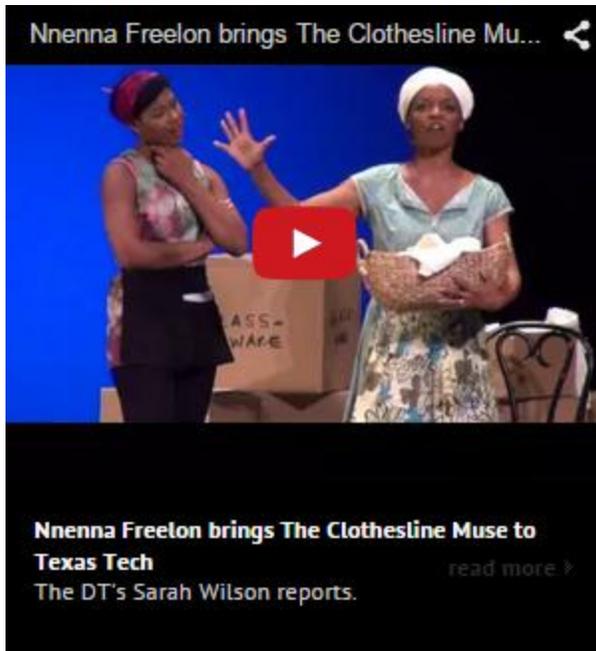


Nnenna Freelon brings The Clothesline Muse to Texas Tech

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Staff Writer



“The Clothesline Muse” is a multidisciplinary theater project by Nnenna Freelon about the relationship between a grandmother and her granddaughter, and the battle between new and old technology.

“The Clothesline Muse” was performed in the Allen Theater in the Student Union Building at Texas Tech University on Friday night.

“Working together with three generations telling stories about the clothesline, and really it’s a passion project for me,” Freelon said. “I’m just delighted to work on a piece about intergenerational communication.”

Ashton Johnson, senior public relations major from Kilgore, is an account manager with RaiderComm, the student public relations firm at Tech. Johnson worked to promote the event and get the word out.

“This is a part of the Presidential Lecture Series,” Johnson said. “I work with Jo Moore, Presidential Lecture & Performance Series administrator, in promoting this, and I was in charge of getting the word out.”

Many Tech professors were in attendance and students were able to get in for free, just by showing their student identification card. Johnson was in attendance with a few friends, and they all said they were eager to see the show.

“It’s really exploring past history,” Alyssa McCoy, a sophomore public relations major from Lubbock said. “From what I have read about it, it’s influenced by today’s events as well.”

“The Clothesline Muse” had two main characters and five dances. Freelon’s daughter, Maya Freelon Asante, designed the set, as well as collaborated with Asante’s mother-in-law, Kariamua Welsh, to help Freelon turn the theater show into what it currently is.

“It includes art, dance, vocal, visual, to tell the story of African American culture,” McCoy said. “It centers on the clothesline, which is the community, and how they all kind of come together and commune.”

Brittani Pfau, a senior agricultural communications major from White Oak, heard about the event through a friend. Pfau said she was excited to be attending, but wasn’t sure what to expect.

“From what I have read, it seems to be a jack of all trades kind of production. My friend said it was going to be an interesting night,” Pfau said. “She had been working really hard on this for awhile, so I came out to support her.”

Freelon said during a question and answer portion being able to talk about hard things is important. The stories included in “The Clothesline Muse” are a mixture of personal stories as well as history, Freelon said.

“I really value being able to talk to people who are younger and older and everything in-between,” Freelon said. “I think you just learn so much.”

Freelon said she wanted to encourage students to stop thinking of the clothesline as an antiquated technology of just a line between two posts, but to see it as a creative entity.

“What struck me about the clothesline, this old old technology, and online, which is a new piece of technology, but they have similar connections,” Freelon said. “You can pin things on a line, you can post things online. You know a lot about a person by what’s hanging on their line.”

Freelon and the rest of the cast will finish up their four-month tour on April 5 in Dallas.