

"Young, Gifted and Black" presented by UCSD Black Drama Association

May 25, 1973

A salute to the Black graduates from local colleges will be presented by the University of California, San Diego Black Drama Association in a special program, "Young, Gifted and Black."

The performance, which is free and open to the public, will be held at 8 p.m., Friday, June 1, in Room 2100, Basic Science Building, at the UCSD School of Medicine (within one block of a La Jolla "R" bus stop).

Most of the program of music, poetry, drama and dance productions are original works created by the performers in the Association as a prelude to the Black College Graduation scheduled for noon the following day in Southcrest Park, Southeast San Diego.

Both the Black College Graduation and the "Young, Gifted and Black" production were initiated by members of the Association. They will receive four units of college credit for their work on community projects.

Mesiha Gie Simpson, 29, president and founder of the UCSD Black Drama Association, is project coordinator for the two activities. Simpson said, "Our main objective for creating these programs was to bring about a better relationship between the San Diego Black community and the campus Black communities through a tie of cultural events presented on and off campus.

"There are a lot of black and white people in the community who feel that just because you are in college you have a superiority complex, and you are down on them," he said.

"Most Black students appreciate the fact that they have been able to attend colleges and universities. If they didn't, a lot of them would not be working so hard," said Simpson.

We want to let people know that most of us are getting an education so we can go back into the Black community and do whatever we can to alleviate problems," he said.

"About 80 per cent of the students I know are concerned about their home communities, and realize that their help would be more acceptable than that of an outsider," said Simpson.

Simpson has written a poem about the Black college graduate:

There is no power stronger than progress through knowledge.

When morning comes--sound out freedom's drums-

louder--louder still

The sound has never rung--It's never pierced an ear.

I'll be damned if I sleep tonight

Without freedom embracing me tight

I am the black man--- who give Freedom her sight.

Today I graduate from college,

Tonight I'll have a moment of rest,

and tomorrow--tomorrow I'll enter the Black

community and begin the fight.

Simpson will graduate from UCSD's John Muir College this June with a double major in economics and urban and rural studies and a double minor in drama and philosophy.

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