

Beah Richards presents "A Black Woman Speaks"

February 3, 1977

Beah Richards will present her solo tour de force, "A Black Woman Speaks" at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, in the Mandeville Auditorium of the University of California, San Diego.

Miss Richards' repertoire includes her own compositions such as "My Gods Are Not of Virgin Birth," "Love Is Cause. It Has To Be," "Wanna Bet" and "My Father Made Souls" and Portia's speech to Brutus from Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." She will be accompanied on flute and percussion by Earl De Rouen.

The daughter of a minister, Miss Richards was born and raised in Mississippi. Following college she studied dance with Serge Oukrainsky and drama with Craig Noel at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, appearing in many productions there as well.

Lorraine Hansberry's prize-winning play "A Raisin in the Sun" provided Richards her first Broadway chance as understudy for the role of Mama -- a role she later recreated in the Inner City Repertory Theatre Company's 1968 production. She played featured roles in New York City in "The Miracle Worker," "Purlie Victorious" and Mike Nichols' production of "The Little Foxes" at Lincoln Center.

Richards recalls that her most rewarding stage experience came with the discovery of Frank Silvera's Theatre of Being and her role as Sister Margaret in its production of "The Amen Corner." She created the role and also starred in the New York production.

She has appeared in such films as "Hurry Sundown," "In the Heat of the Night" and "The Great White Hope." She received an Academy Award nomination for best supporting actress for her portrayal of Sidney Poitier's mother in "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

Richards, now an artist in residence with the Inner City Cultural Center, has appeared as a sultry Lady Macbeth and as the grief-stricken Mama in "Raisin in the Sun." Her television credits include "Room 222," "The Bill Cosby Show," "Ironside," "It Takes a Thief," "Hawaii Five-O," and the Lorimar production of "A Dream for Christmas."

She also starred in "One is a Crowd" which had its world premiere at Inner City in 1971 and was revived in 1973.

The Inner City Cultural Center, now in its tenth year of operation, is a haven for Los Angeles performing artists and a home for its companies of drama and dance.

Multi-ethnic in makeup, it is also a leading institution for training in the arts.

Richards' UC San Diego appearance is presented by the Department of Drama and the John Muir College Contemporary Black Arts Program, an ongoing program for black cultural presentations.

Due to a subsidy from the Muir program, tickets for "A Black Woman Speaks" are only \$1 for all. Tickets may be purchased at the UCSD Theatre Ticket Office, noon-4 p.m., Monday-Friday or at the door, the evening of the performance. For ticket information, telephone the ticket office at 452-4574 or the drama department at 452-3791.

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