Nigerian Playwright Here For U.S. Debut

Tess Osonye Akaeke Onwume, Nigerian playwright and lecturer, will visit Detroit for the American premiere of her play, "The Broken Calabash," opening March 4 at Wayne State University's Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward.

A guest of the Detroit Council of the Arts and Wayne State University Theatres, Ms. Onwume will arrive in Detroit in time to assist director Von H. Washington and his cast with the many ritual songs and dances in the production.

A citizen of Nigeria, she is a lecturer in drama and literature at the Federal University of Technology in Imo State. She had her secondary education at Mary Mount College, Agbor, and holds a bachelor of arts degree in education/English and a master's degree in literature.

"The Broken Calabash" is Ms. Onwume's third play. Of the five she has written, four have been produced for the state-run Nigerian Television Network. Each of her plays concerns in some way the conflict of values in a society of transition.

This production of "The Broken Calabash" at the Bonstelle is the first performance of Ms. Onwume's work outside Nigeria.

Set against the backdrop of a colorful, native, festival, "Calabash" is a contemporary drama reflecting the tensions that exist between modern Western culture and native African tradition.

Festival turns to tragedy when a free-spirited young woman rebels against a decadent and dying custom and the wishes of her family.

For more information and reservations, contact the Wayne State University Theatre box office at 577-2960.

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AKAEKE ONWUIME