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"Twilight" Reflects on Rodney King Beating and L.A. Riots

Winthrop University

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"Twilight" Reflects on Rodney King Beating and L.A. Riots

Quick Facts

- The documentary theatre piece, written by Anna Deavere Smith, will be performed from Oct. 26-30 in the Studio Theatre in Johnson Hall.
- Each of the company members will provide different perspectives on King's beating, which was captured on videotape and broadcast nationally.



"Twilight" cast, front row, from left: Crissie Sturgis, Raj Karottukunnel, Anastatia Ketchen and Torrell Martin. Back row, from left: Steve Lancaster, Kelly Sumpter, Steve Diubaldo and Karina Roberts. Not pictured: Megan Bryant.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - The nine actors in Winthrop University's production of **"Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992"** will bring to life experiences relating to the beating of **Rodney King** during the spring of 1991 by Los Angeles police.

The **documentary theatre piece**, written by **Anna Deavere Smith**, will be performed from Oct. 26-30 in **Johnson Studio Theatre**. The Oct. 26-29 productions begin at 8 p.m. and the Oct. 30 production at 2 p.m.

Director **Annie-Laurie Wheat**, Winthrop professor of theatre, said the cast has been in rehearsal since late August. Each of the company members will provide

different perspectives on King's beating, which was captured on videotape and broadcast nationally. The next year the four police officers were acquitted and for three days Los Angeles was burned, looted and ravaged.

Actor, playwright, director and poet Anna Deavere Smith interviewed more than 200 people directly or indirectly involved in the incidents over a nine-month period. She then developed the script using the actual words of 37 people who represent a diverse cross section of Los Angeles.

There are both men and women of African, Hispanic, Asian and European descent who tell their side of the story. The voices include Rodney King's aunt, white police officer Ted Briseno, black community activist, Gina Rae AKA Queen Malkah, black scholar Cornell West, Mexican sculptor and painter Rudy Salas and Korean liquor store owner Mrs. Young, Soon Han.

Wheat said words tell of the tragedy of the events that beset Los Angeles before, during and after the riots. However, she said, as the last voice rings out, the play leaves the audience with the hope of a better harmonious tomorrow where people of all colors can work together for a more peaceful tolerant tomorrow.

"Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992" is the 14th piece in Anna Deavere Smith's work-in-progress "On the Road: A Search for American Character." Each part of "On the Road" has been created, in Smith's words, "by interviewing people and later performing them using their own words."

Tickets are \$5 with a Winthrop I.D. and \$10 general admission. For more information, call 803/323-2287.

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