Black History Month Celebration: Transformative Life Narratives

Commonwealth Honors College is hosting its second Black History Month celebration, featuring Onawumi Jean Moss, the soulful storyteller, performing scenes from her first solo show inspired by the autobiography Seriously...What Did You Call Me? The event, which focuses on original narratives that describe transformative life experiences, includes poetry readings and performances by student musicians. UMass Amherst Residential Life, CMASS, and CHC Faculty-in-Residence are cosponsors.

Monday, February 22, 2016
4:30-7:00 p.m.
Commonwealth Honors College Events Hall

4:30 p.m.
Reception with music and light refreshments

5:15 p.m.
Featured speaker, followed by student performances and poetry

The work of

Onawumi Jean Moss bears witness to her challenging migration through the Jim Crow South, the Suez Canal Crisis, the Civil Rights Movement, and the ubiquitous war on poverty. Her personal struggle to become an empowered African American woman is portrayed with
unflinching honesty. Humor and reverence bridge the great divide between giving up and rising up. Her edgy then-and-now narrative honors those who challenge the long standing epithets and practices set in place to sustain repression and suppression of people who (in pursuit of their inalienable rights) protest the status quo. Seriously.

An award-winning storyteller and author, this artist-activist is also compassionate and fierce with a wicked sense of humor. She draws intergenerational and multicultural audiences into lived experiences that are familiar on many different levels. In the course of doing so she aims to discourage the use of ignorance as a haven for apathy and spark courageous conversations. Most of all, her intent is to inspire much needed community and coalition building within and across cultural boundaries.

Photo credit: Dennis Vandal

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