

# Young Black Writers' Program being offered

As a community, it is through our literary arts that we find the means to communicate the ideas and events of our collective experience. We have only to go to the library and find a book by Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker, or James Baldwin to see it is through words that we create a lasting record of our African-American heritage.

The Young Black Writers' Program is a series of seminars for high school aged young adults focusing on teaching literature and providing specialized instruction on the craft of writing. The program teaches creative writing skills with an emphasis on the works of African-American writers.

Co-sponsored by The Arts Council and the North Carolina Writers' Network, this project is an important part of both organizations' efforts to promote literacy and build an audience for literature throughout North Carolina. At present, 22 of the 25 openings for this program have been filled with bright young men and women from throughout Winston-Salem interested in the arts of writing.

The seminars take place on the second and fourth Saturdays of each

month from 9-11 a.m. St. Benedict's Catholic Church. Classes are taught by Stacie Brown and Millie King, both active members of the literary community.

Angelou, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Nikki Giovanni as well as others will be read and discussed as part of the programs overall goal of introducing the students to African-

exhibition. Toward the end of the program the curriculum will stress the students the process of developing as a writer. The participants will be reading poetry and fiction critically, writing regularly, evaluating their works and drawing from the fellowship of poets.

The primary objectives of the program is to provide specific technical direction and understanding of poetry and fiction. The seminars enhance student interest in reading as well as expose students to the writings of African-American writers. At the same time, the project may foster fellowship and critical objectivity among an emerging community of writers.

Perhaps it is this "fellowship" of young people — coming together for a common learning experience and looking to the African-American writers before them for guidance — that makes this experience so special and important to our community.

It is this type of activity, created to give our young people opportunities to develop their talents and minds, that provides healthy outlets of self-expression and proper role models.

## ARTS REACH



By REGGIE JOHNSON

This year's curriculum focuses on poetry and fiction. Throughout the ten weeks of the program students will read, discuss and write poetry and fiction pieces. The students have the opportunity to learn exactly what poetry is including what is a good poem and what makes it so. Characteristics of poetry will be discussed as well as the importance of reading other poets. Fiction will be discussed as a mix of experience and invention for the writer. Motives as well as technique for writing will be presented.

Works by Margaret Walker, Conrad Kent Rivers, Alice Walker, Toni Cade Bambara, Earnest J. Gaines, Lucille Clifton, Maya

American writers and the rich heritage expressed in their works.

In each seminar, the Young Black Writers Program teaches not only the mechanics and language of creative composition but the freedom and opportunity of self-expression in the art of writing. The students are encouraged to use personal experience as a source of inspiration as a part of the creative process.

Special projects are created throughout the program to help inspire and educate the students.

One such project including holding "class time" at the Diggs Gallery on the campus of Winston-Salem State University during the recent quilt

# 'Portraits' of the African-American family

Seagram's Gin has officially unveiled "New Generation," a commissioned work by renowned artist Elizabeth Catlett, as part of the 6th annual "Portraits of Black America" program benefiting the National Urban League (NUL).

"New Generation" joins the Seagram's Gin "Portraits of Black America" collection of five outstanding works done by African-American artists commissioned by Seagram's Gin over the last five years in honor of Black History Month. Previous artists are: James Denmark, Hughie Lee Smith, Synthia Saint James, Jonathan Green, and Louis Delsarte.

"New Generation" is a mixed medium of work of collage, paint and pencil, depicting the intimate and unique relationship experienced between a black father and son. The recipient of numerous academic, artistic and civic honors and commissions, Elizabeth Catlett's sculptures and paintings are represented in private and public collections throughout the world.

Carl Horton, House of Seagram's director of business development, explains, "For more than four decades, Joseph E. Seagram & Sons has been a supporter of the National

Urban League and its work. Through its annual donation of limited edition lithographs of works by some of America's foremost African-American artists, Seagram's Gin continues this tradition."

"We are thrilled to have "New Generation," the sixth in a series of commissioned work by Seagram's Gin, on view in the National Urban League gallery, along with some of her other paintings and sculptures," says NUL president John Jacob.

"We invite you to support the League through the purchase of these limited edition lithographs."

Thirteen of Catlett's paintings and sculptures are on view at the NUL gallery for one month starting February 5. Limited edition lithographs of "New Generation" will be available for purchase through the NUL as part of Sea-



Renowned painter and sculptor Elizabeth Catlett (right) was commissioned to create a work of art depicting the positive relationship between African-American fathers and sons. Pictured along with her are John Jacob (left), president and CEO of the National Urban League and Carl Horton, business director for the House of Seagram.

gram's Gin's long-standing commitment to the African-American community.

The unveiling event was held at the Time-Life Building and was hosted by WCBS-TV News anchor Reggie Harris. A distinguished group of artists, art connoisseurs,

NUL supporters and celebrity well-wishers were in attendance at the event.

# Producer Woodie King Jr. comes to town

Woodie King Jr., a living legend in the annals of contemporary theatre as a producer, director, writer, and teacher, is the original producer of *Zora*, the hit play of the 1991 National Black Theatre Festival, based on the life and times of Zora Neale Hurston, the Queen of the Harlem Renaissance, which will be returning to Winston-Salem for an encore performance at the Arts Council Theatre.

Reigning as the director of New Federal Theatre at the Henry Street Settlement in New York City since 1970, Woodie King's formidable directing prowess has earned critical acclaim in the most prestigious theatre in the country. He has directed in such theatres as The American Place Theater in New York, Center Stage in Baltimore, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Studio Arena in Buffalo, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse and for the New York Shakespeare Festival.

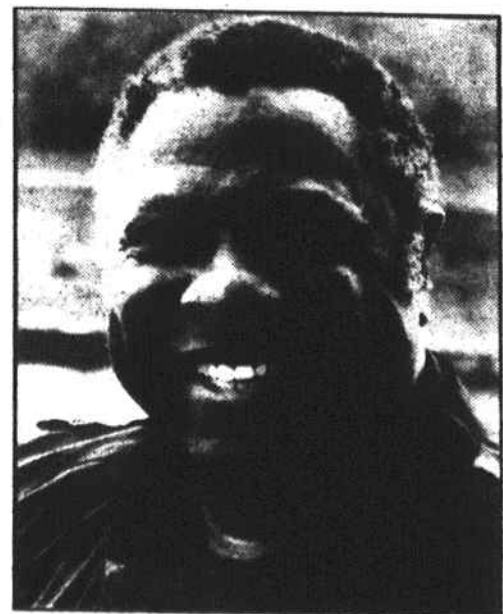
Woodie King Jr. has produced over 50 plays internationally and for many writers who already enjoy a pedestal in the corridors of African-American theatre history. His prolific film producing repertoire includes the motion pictures *Right On!*, *Black Theatre Movement*, *The Long Night*, *Torture of Mothers*, and *Death of a Prophet*.

As the Cultural Arts Director for the Mobilization for Youth, N.Y.C. he set up of the first training program in the arts for young Blacks and Latinos. Films produced under the program won the Venice Festival Award, Oberhovens Award, International Film Critics Award, and the A. Philip Randolph Award.

Last year Mr. King won both

the prestigious Best Dramatic Production Award from the American Women in Radio and Television, and the CBBA Award for his CBS T.V. special *Women of the Regent Hotel*.

King is also a renown writer. His most recent publication, an anthology of plays is entitled *New*



Woodie King Jr.

*Plays for the Black Theatre*. He has written articles and stories for *Black World*, *Liberator*, *Variety Magazine*, *Tulane Drama Review*, *Association for RHW Study of Negro Life and History*, *Black Theatre Magazine*, and others.

King's teaching credits include Yale University, Columbia University, Oberlin College, as Distinguished Visiting Professor, Penn State University, Brooklyn College's School of Contemporary Studies and Hunter College. Woodie King Jr. is a mega producing, directing award winner for achievements in theatre that espouse an undaunted energy inspired to break new ground; an energy powered by genius that heralds a Who's Who in every field of

his endeavors.

Don't miss *Zora* at the Arts, Council Theatre, 610 Coliseum Drive, Feb. 27, 28, 29, March 5, 6, 7 at 8 p.m., with a special matinee Sunday, March 1 and 8. For reservations and information, Fund Raiser Opportunities and Special Group Rates call (919) 723-7907 NOW! Mastercard and VISA accepted.

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