

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
FREEDOM CENTER

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BARBARA LEE AND ELLIHU HARRIS LECTURE SERIES PRESENTS:

KENYAN PERFORMANCE ARTIST ANNA MWALAGHO'S *NEVER THOUGHT I WAS BLACK TILL I CAME TO AMERICA* IN ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY OCTOBER 24 AT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA JAMES MOORE THEATER

ONE-WOMAN SHOW EXPLORES COMEDIAN/MUSICIAN/WRITER'S EXPERIENCES AND OBSERVATIONS ABOUT RACE IN THE US

Oakland, CA, October 7, 2019 –The acclaimed and popular **Barbara Lee and Elihu Harris Lecture Series** will present comedian, actor, musician and author **Anna Mwalagho's one-woman show, *Never Thought I was Black Till I Came to America***, in one performance only, Thursday, October 24, at 7 pm at the Oakland Museum of California's James Moore Theatre. Oakland comedian and activist **Don Lacy** will emcee the evening. **Admission is free and reservations are required by calling the Freedom Center at 510-434-3988.** For more information, visit www.mlkfreedomcenter.org. The Barbara Lee and Elihu Harris Lecture Series is co-produced by the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center with the Peralta Community College District.

"Dr. King teaches that '...peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.'" Says Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center Executive Director Dr. Roy D. Wilson. "We are enhancing our usual lecture format with a powerful cultural and educational presentation in this vein. Spoken word, music and storytelling are fundamental and compelling ways of sharing culture, identifying issues and inspiring civic engagement. Anna Mwalagho eloquently, with humor and depth, insightfully dissects the roles race and race relations play in our nation and a community. The Lecture Series theme is 'Chaos or Community: Where Do We Go

From Here?’ and Anna Mwalagho’s work is a refreshing and dynamic exploration of this vital question Dr. posed five decades ago.”

Anna Mwalagho is a remarkably versatile artist, an internationally recognized actor, comedian, poet/spoken word artist, African dancer, singer/songwriter and storyteller. She has won numerous national awards in her native country Kenya, and in the USA, where she is recognized as the Queen of spoken Afro beat and "Mama Africa". She has captivated many with her blend of spoken word, African dance, music, comedy, acting and storytelling into an electrifying one woman show. Her theatrical poetry inspires, evokes thought and entertains as well as educates all ages and races.

Her music has a unique message from the soul of the motherland. It tells the story of life rough but fulfilling journeys. Since the launch of her career in the United States, Anna has become one of the most sought after African Spoken Word/Poetic Afro beat artist.

She was appointed Ambassador for peace by the Inter-Religious and International Federation for Peace, She received an award for her work as a Kenyan in the Diaspora, by the Jamhuriwood Awards, received the "Hope Award" from the Eagle Awards Association for her performing artist service to the community, and promoting positive awareness about Africa, nominated for the Spirit of Diaspora Extravaganza-Next Generation Award and received The Justice and peace poet award by the African Legends Nite award ceremony for her invoking and inspiring poetry. In 2013 she was honored by the Montgomery county of Maryland and received -The Cultural Empowerment Award.

About the Barbara Lee and Elihu Harris Lecture Series and the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center

The Barbara Lee and Elihu Harris Lecture Series, co-produced by the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center and Peralta Community College District, promotes an ample exchange of ideas to help inspire and move forward new leadership and servanthship.

Broad East Bay audiences of all ages are exposed to some of our nation’s most courageous and exemplary civil and human rights figures, engaging in creative solutions and challenges to some of the most perplexing issues facing our communities today: economic inequity, voter disenfranchisement, systemic racism, violence in schools and neighborhoods, police brutality, and the contradictions and ramifications of extreme poverty.

Lectures are organized by the youth and staff at the Freedom Center, with a focus on promoting ideas and actions rooted in principles of nonviolence, and lessons from some of our nation’s most significant civil rights struggles.

Civic engagement at the Martin Luther King Jr Freedom Center brings together individuals and organizations of diverse ages, races and socioeconomic backgrounds, working side-by-side for a healthy democracy.

The Freedom Center brings best practices from the nation's Civil Rights Movement to the forefront in community education, training, and practice, building strong community partnerships with proven results.

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