

# Trotter Review

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## Black History Month, Trotter Style

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# Black History, Trotter Style

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- In February 2007, Faylis Matos (center) appeared in a staged reading of *Day of Absence*, a one-act play by Douglas Turner Ward, written in the 1960s. The reading was directed by Akiaba Abaka as part of the Black History Month 2007 Celebration at the Trotter Institute. Faylis Matos, a high school student, played the role of a white southern lady discomfited by the absence of her black maid.



*From left to right: Nathan Cooper, long-term UMB staff member in Facilities Administration; Akiba Abaka, director and founder of Up You Mighty Race Theatre Company; Ms. Matos, high school student; James Mayo, UMB graduate student from Nigeria; and Emmanuel Riggins, high school student who has been performing, as has Matos, with Up You Mighty Race since both were children. Up You Mighty Race is dedicated to using the arts to effect social change.*

- On three successive weeks in February 2007, the William Monroe Trotter Institute for the Study of Black History and Culture sponsored a reading series of three classic plays from the sixties. In addition to *Day of Absence*, Martin Duberman's *In White America* and Amiri Baraka's *Dutchman* were featured. The series attracted an impressive number of students and teachers from local schools.
- In February 2008, the Trotter will focus on "Blacks in Baseball." Larry Tye, a writing fellow at the Trotter who is finishing a biography of Satchel Paige for Random House, will talk to students, faculty, and the community about his research for the book.

Pumpsie Green, who integrated the Red Sox in 1959, will come to campus to recount the highs and lows of his career.

*Bingo Long and the Traveling All Stars*, a film about the Negro Leagues starring Billy Dee Williams and Richard Pryor, will be shown.

And Akiba Abaka will be back, this time directing *Fences* by August Wilson, which tells the story of a man whose baseball ambitions were thwarted by discrimination.

All events are open to the public.

**The William Monroe  
Trotter Institute**

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