“Dominique Morisseau: Exploring Detroit’s Community through the Three-Play Cycle Detroit Projects”
Billicia Charnelle Hines, Assistant Professor, Theatre and Dance

Billicia Charnelle Hines is the Director of the Black Theatre Program and Assistant Professor of Theatre at Wayne State University. Currently she is establishing a research profile in the areas of African Diasporic Performance and Theatre for Social Change. She has received funding through the CFPCA Faculty Creative/Research Grant and Research Enhancement Plan to assist her academic research on three African American female playwrights; Dominique Morisseau, Nikkole Salter, and Nambi Kelley.

The Motor City’s tumultuous times have been looked at nationally through an exterior lens, but very little has been emphasized about how the continual loss of community affected the city. Through erasing the blight through urban renewal, race rebellions, and a devastating recession, the Detroit community continually are forced to rebuild. The Detroit Projects is a 3-play cycle by Dominique Morisseau that depict three eras in Detroit that were critical in changing the landscape of the city. They explore a variety of forms of experiences that are unique to Detroit, but continues to explore the sense of community versus the continual loss of community. Paradise Blue (1949) shines light on the challenges of building a better future of what our predecessors have left us. Detroit ’67 looks at the explosive and unstable days of the 1967 rebellion. Skeleton Crew (2008) depicts four auto workers facing an uncertain future as the city edges toward the 2008 recession. This presentation will explore Detroit’s sense of community versus a loss in community through Dominique Morriseau’s 3-play cycle.

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