

LTC awarded grant

By MISANI | Posted: Thursday, April 11, 2013 2:44 pm

The Harlem-based Liberation Theatre Company (LBT) was recently awarded a grant from the West Harlem Development Corporation to assist in developing their new production, “The Silver Thread,” by Joslyn Housley-McLaughlin.

LBT is among the 83 Harlem community-based organizations who received the inaugural grant cycle of funds distributed by the West Harlem Local Development Corporation (WHLDC). LBT, which was established in 2009 “to help emerging Black playwrights develop their work and express themselves artistically in a supportive and focused environment,” will share a portion of the \$575,750 awarded to 29 arts and cultural organizations, from a total of \$2 million distributed by WHLDC.

“We are honored that West Harlem Local Development Corporation recognizes the valuable work we are doing to create new opportunities for black theater artists in Harlem and across New York City,” said Sandra A. Daley-Shariff, founder and producing artistic director of LBT. “Arts funding have become increasingly difficult to secure, challenging us to seek financial support from a wider range of funding sources. We are appreciative of this grant because it will help us to move forward our plans to produce new plays from new writers.”

LBT is currently working with Housley-McLaughlin to bring “The Silver Thread” to the stage this fall. This important and powerful play with historical and cultural significance is based on the true story of Dr. J. Marion Sims, the “father of modern gynecology” who, while developing groundbreaking procedures to improve women’s health in 1840s Alabama, used enslaved Black women as his research subjects without use of anesthesia or regard for the pain they were enduring.

“This story is relevant because it addresses passion and the drive for medical advancement as it intersects with the lives of disenfranchised, poor Black women,” said Daley-Sharif. “The specific problem of fistula, while no longer an issue here in the U.S., largely because of Sims’ work, remains a problem in third world–nations. It is a story and a subject more people need to know about.”

In addition to stage productions, LBT also offers dramaturgical services, professional readings, four-day workshops with facilitated feedback and a widely successful Black Playwrights Group, which initiated Harlem 9. This successful collaboration of Black theater producers in Harlem produced “48 Hours in Harlem,” a weekend festival of new works by six emerging Black playwrights and directors, presented in August 2011 and 2012.

For further information, please visit Liberation Theatre Company at www.liberationtheatrecompany.org, the Silver Thread at www.thesilverthreadplay.com and West Harlem Local Development Corporation at www.westharlemdc.org/whdc/news/whdc-news/whlhc-awards-2-million-in-grants-to-improve-quality-of-life-for-west-harlem-residents.