

Indiana Statehood Takes Center Stage

New York playwright EllaRose Chary notes she missed Indiana's Centennial celebration and likely won't make the Tricentennial event, so she's thrilled to be contributing to the Bicentennial party.

The Gary native was selected by a collaboration of Corydon's Bicentennial committee and Hayswood Theatre to write an original production to be performed during events in Corydon this summer.

"We wanted it to be original and something that celebrated Corydon's role in the process of statehood and at the same time celebrate the Bicentennial," says Hayswood's Allen Platt, who chaired the collaborative committee.

Chary says her vision of the project weaves three primary threads of Indiana's history to create a diverse, historically accurate and dramatic telling of the path to statehood and the legacy of the state's continued role in the Union.



"I was specifically attracted to the Bicentennial project because it's a really interesting, historical opportunity," she says. "It's cool to be around for a centennial of my home state, and to be able to contribute in some way to the telling of our story as Hoosiers has a lot of resonance with me."

Chary is no stranger to Harrison County, having written about native artist Sidney Crosier in the 2013 original Hayswood production "Sidney D. Crosier: An Unfinished Portrait."

"It was reassuring to know what

we'll get because, when they worked with her on the Sidney Crosier production, it was really well done," Platt says.

Chary says the Bicentennial storyline will include the Native American origins of the region, the white settlers' fight for statehood and the implications of the abolitionist cause on the journey.

"I also proposed using original song and stylized theatrical devices to make the piece entertaining and informative," she adds.

Five actors will be cast into multiple roles for the 30-minute production that will run throughout the day at Hayswood Theatre during selected Bicentennial events in Corydon.

Chary hopes the show is fun, educational and thought-provoking for its audience.

"I grew up in Indiana, learning about Indiana history, and I didn't know any of the things I have learned in researching this play," she says. "Hopefully, that means audiences can expect to take away a new perspective on the Bicentennial that they didn't learn in school."

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