



# Tarrytown-SleepyHollowPatch



Art Pulse

By **Leona Beasley** January 9, 2011

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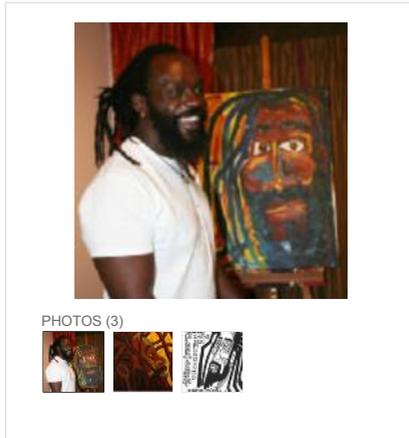
## The Language of Art: A Talk With Playwright Iyaba Ibo Mandingo

Where painting and poetry produce unframed art. What's exciting about art is it has its own unique language — a language that is defined by the artist's experience, specialty, background and desire.

One of the greatest things about being a creative soul is you can blend all your artistic genres into a powerful end result. Such is the creative life of painter, poet, and playwright Iyaba Ibo Mandingo.

On Sunday, Feb. 13, at 4:30 p.m., the [Hudson Valley Writer's Center](#) (<http://www.writerscenter.org/>) will host an afternoon where you can immerse yourself in Iyaba's use of poetic dialog and storytelling skills.

During the performance of this autobiographical one-man play entitled *unFRAMED*, an original painting is started, composed and completed by the end of the play.



This multifaceted artist weaves together stories of immigrating from the West Indies to the United States, living in Connecticut, attending college in Iowa, the effects of racism, and the all important focus — one might say the glue that kept him sane — his art.

One could easily consider Iyaba Ibo Mandingo a versatile artist, a Renaissance Man, a man in progress, and on a cold winter's day we talked about how art fills his life and craft of combining varied artistic disciplines to form a new genres.

With parents and grandparents who were artisans: a singer, a tailor and a seamstress, Iyaba came to art naturally.

"In college I majored in history, but minored in fine arts. There I really got into painting. One teacher really stressed the use of color and how it could affect a person's mood," he said.

"There are seven principals of color and if you know how to use them you can have a person stand in front of you and feel angst or joy depending on the color combination.

"For example orange and purple *hate* being next to each other and if I wanted to do a painting on anxiety or feeling unsettled, it is a great combination.

"Whereas blue and tan *love* being next to each other, and they almost blend in to each other like yellow and green. Placing color combinations in front of people it can really affect their mood."

*How did you start writing poetry?*

"I started off doing it privately. I finished college in '92 but the spoken word scene got popular in '94 and a lot of the poets who were beginning then make a living at it now.

"Back then I was an audience member. But I was completely inspired about how their words came off the page with the performance piece.

"Eventually by the time '96 rolled around, I was on the stage doing the same thing. At the same time I had paintings in Nagano, Japan and other places.

"Still some people knew me as a painter while others only knew me as a spoken word artist. And it became this thing of how can I share everything I do."

*How did you combine painting with poetry?*

"At a poetry show I had a friend who was also a painter and we decided one would paint while the other performed. We worked on the same painting. We played around with it and after it was done it was cool.

"I decided I had to figure out how to do this and that was the kernel of the play's beginnings, which was ten years ago.

"Some years later I first met Brent, (the director) while we did some creative work with prisoners at Sing-Sing. In the last few years we have joined heads and I'm proud of what the play has become.

"Now I sing, dance, have improved my prose, and kept the poems that help tell the story.

"I feel like I'm sharing all of me, not just the poet, or visual artist. And people walk away getting a whole picture of this black man from the West Indies, who's lived in the States the last thirty years, was schooled in Connecticut and Iowa, has dreadlocks, but also loves his children."

On Sunday February 13th at 4:30 PM at the Hudson Valley Writer's Center presents unFRAMED, a one-man play written and performed by Iyaba Ibo Mandingo. The website is:

<http://www.unFRAMEDthePlay.com> (<http://www.unFRAMEDthePlay.com/>)

The Director is Brent Buell, Doing Life Productions.

The Executive Producer is Jane Dubin, Double Play Connections. You can contact her at <http://www.doubleplayconnections.com/> (<http://www.doubleplayconnections.com/>)

The play is presented in association with Hudson Valley Writer's Center (<http://www.writerscenter.org/>).

After the show the painting that Iyaba Ibo Mandingo creates will be auctioned. Portion of those proceeds will benefit the HVWC.

HVWC Playwright Reading Series website: <http://bit.ly/HVWCPlayReading> (<http://bit.ly/HVWCPlayReading>)

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