

# Three powerful Black performers

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## Iyaba Ibo Mandingo

It's not every day, week or year that performance spaces allow the presence of three powerful portrayals by Black men. But recently this was the case in the precinct of Manhattan, where Daniel Beaty, Iyaba Ibo Mandingo and Michael Green commanded the boards in separate, magnificent roles.

Of the three, Beaty has most consistently been in performance. None of his ventures are as breathtaking as "Through the Night," particularly the version directed by Charles Randolph-Wright, in which he deftly intertwines the lives of Black men from ages 10 to 60. He seamlessly runs the gamut of emotion from an ex-convict to a church leader, displaying a multitude of voices, each equally compelling and engrossing. His voice, facial expressions and movement are synchronized to expose the inner workings of each character, and there is a moment of supreme rapture when he intones the old spiritual "His Eye is on the Sparrow." Your eyes will be riveted on Beaty, a writer and actor who deserves all the accolades bestowed on him.

Mandingo, like Beaty, is a multitalented performer. His one-man show, "unFRAMED: A Man in Progress," directed by Brent Buell, is a tour de force, providing insight into the life of an immigrant artist and the trials and tribulations of his family and friends.

Most arresting are Mandingo's childhood memories, his coming of age in Antigua and the rites of passage so scintillatingly recounted that you almost smell the medicine he has to take and the fruit he eats with relish. All of this is recounted with verve and sensitivity for the perils of immigration and deportation while he paints a self-portrait onstage. Rap, poetry, painting and beguiling recitations are the hallmark of this gifted artist.

Versatility appears to be the word with this magnificent trio-Green is equally endowed, especially in his ability to portray characters as different as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the lawyer in Esther Armah's engaging "Saviour?" directed by Passion.

Green invests the part with a variety of turns as he and Jimmy Aquino, his client in a reverse discrimination case, parry and thrust, pushing each other to the brink of fisticuffs. Throughout the duel, Green not only maintains control of his character but manages to extract from Aquino a similar balance and fire. In a classic flipping of the script, so to speak, Green delivers a stunning conclusion that draws thunderous applause.

His provocative, insightful and brilliant performance continues at the Dwyer Cultural Center through October. For information, call (212) 352-3101.

Beaty's "Through the Night" is on national tour. The best place to access his calendar of events is [danielbeaty.com](http://danielbeaty.com).

Mandingo will be among several solo artists participating in the All for One Theater Festival at 80 St. Marks Place Nov. 11-20. For additional information, go to [broadwayworld.com/article/ALL-FOR-ONE-THEATER-FESTIVAL](http://broadwayworld.com/article/ALL-FOR-ONE-THEATER-FESTIVAL).

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