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Young Performers to Present Timeless Caribbean-Flavored Musical

A wager between the gods...a clash of cultures...and the ultimate sacrifice for love. That is the theme for *Once on this Island!*

This enchanting musical fable of star-crossed lovers, based on Rosa Guy's *My Love, My Love* and inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*, will be presented by Acting Up, the young performers community theater of Mason, Ohio. Shows are scheduled May 11-13 at the Mason Community Center/High School Theater, 6100 Mason Montgomery Road and feature a cast of 59 talented youngsters ages 6 to 18.

Once on This Island explores through music, song and dance, the universal issues that affect us all – love, anger, forgiveness, faith, maturity and death. It's a story of Ti Moune, a peasant girl who falls in love above her class, and told to a young child on a dark stormy night by a group of Caribbean peasants as they wait out a terrible storm. Ti Moune's journey is one of unrequited love comes to prove that the power of love is so strong that it can withstand the storm and survive even in the face of death.

Once on this Island, which opened to rave reviews in 1989, was nominated for eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Score and Best Book. It won the 1995 Olivier Award for Best Musical. The Tony Award-winning team of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty (of *Ragtime* and the animated film *Anastasia*) wrote the play's catchy, contemporary and Caribbean-flavored score.

Acting Up strives to give youngsters an educational experience in the theater through performing and backstage knowledge in designing costumes and lighting, choreography, and assisting in stage managing and other stage crew positions.

Although based in Mason, Acting Up's production of *Once on This Island* draws kids from 34 different schools and from as far away as Dayton, OH and Florence, KY.

Performances of "Once on This Island" will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, May 11; 1 p.m., (sign language interpreter will be provided) and 7 p.m., Saturday, May 12; and at 1 p.m. Sunday, May 13. Tickets are \$8 each and are available online at www.ActingUp.com or at the box office. For more info call 513-588-0988.