

2.4.08

I was honored to be a part of this celebration of **Oscar Brown Jr.** Thanks to Steppenwolf's **Sylvia Ewing** for having me and (re)connecting me with **Maggie** and **Africa Brown**.

I enjoy rockin' iconic venues like this and cultured, mature audiences that might not be typical for hip-hop. As a grown-up, b-boy MC, I appreciate that demo as much as any considered standard.

Watch us do "**Onion Rings**" <https://goo.gl/QKx7h7>

-JB



steppenwolf
..... traffic

A Legacy of Jazz and Poetry with Maggie Brown and Friends

Monday, 2.4.08 7:30pm
Downstairs Theatre - \$28

Oscar Brown Jr. was a prolific artist creating poetry, plays and music. His daughter **Maggie**, a respected singer in her own right, celebrates his work with a night of jazz and poetry.

A Legacy of Jazz and Poetry explores her father's impact on the Black Arts Movement of the 70's and young hip-hop artists still inspired by him today.

The performance is backed by a live jazz/soul quintet, and also features sister **Africa Brown**, mc/poet **Jeff Baraka** and spoken word artist and educator **Keith M. Kelley**.



Maggie Brown

Official Partner of
Steppenwolf Traffic Series
CHICAGO PUBLIC RADIO

1650 N. Halsted Street Chicago, IL 60614 www.steppenwolf.org 312-335-1650



Chicago Tribune

Feb. 6, 2008 Arts & Entertainment:
music review by **Howard Reich**, Tribune critic

Celebrating life of Oscar Brown Jr.

(edited)

They didn't give out lucrative MacArthur "genius" grants when Chicagoan **Oscar Brown Jr.** was in his prime, which is too bad, because he needed one badly. Though he penned more than 1,000 songs, 15 plays, dozens of essays and Lord knows what else, Brown never partook in the riches his work generated for those who

performed and disseminated it. Before Brown died, in 2005 at age 78, he was just about broke, yet he still hoped to achieve some kind of breakthrough. The windfall never arrived, but the artistic value of his work remained beyond question...

It probably would take a couple of months to perform Brown's complete oeuvre, but **Maggie** and **Africa Brown** -- his daughters -- had only one night in which to touch on the highlights. They made the most of it Monday evening at Steppenwolf Theatre, where the ongoing Traffic series presented the world premiere of their homage to their father, "*A Legacy of Jazz and Poetry*."

...the performance lucidly evoked the spirit, style and majesty of Brown's musical creations. Joined by a younger generation of poets and an adroit jazz band, the sisters Brown in two fast hours reminded a nearly full house why their father still matters... In short order, listeners heard definitive accounts of classics such as "*Brown Baby*," "*Afro Blue*" and "*Work Song*," each a testament to some facet of the black experience in America.

But the show did not stop with these historic recreations. By bringing to the stage the performance poets **Jeff Baraka** and **Keith M. Kelley**, "*Legacy*" connected Brown's groundbreaking work to the rhythms of a new generation...

