On Monday, Sept. 10, "Miss Cora" will be
presented in Louisville at the annual conference
of the Kentucky Literacy Commission. Duncan
and her colleague also plan to make the
production available at no charge to schools and
community organizations. Booking information
is available from Duncan, Performing Artist-in-
Residence, Cora Wilson Stewart Moonlight
School Project, Morehead State University, Rader
Hall 205.

While studying oral interpretation at Eastern
Michigan University, Duncan earned numerous
national honors, including the 1987 Outstanding
Performer in the United States, the highest honor
accorded a collegiate performer. She also created
one woman productions based on the works of
women poets, including June Jordan and Nikki
Giovanni. Duncan is the daughter of two MSU
education faculty members, Dr. and Mrs. John R.
Duncan.

O’Connell also studied at Eastern Michigan,
where he was two-time national champion in
competitive performance and one of the nation’s
top 10 collegiate performers. He has developed a
musical vaudeville show which he performs in
theaters across the country.

Duncan, who has long been fascinated by the
Cora Wilson Stewart story, began her research
for the production earlier this year with funding
support from several agencies, including the
Citizens Bank of Morehead, Investor’s Heritage
Life Insurance Company, Kentucky Department
of Education, Kentucky Foundation for Women,
Kentucky Humanities Foundation and the Na-
tional Endowment for the Humanities, Kentucky
Oral History Commission, Lexington Herald-
Leader, and the Office of Equal Educational
Opportunity, state Department of Education.

Laura Lee Duncan and Michael O’Connell will perform
in "Miss Cora," the Moonlight Lady, an interpretive
production based on the life of the founder of the adult
literacy movement.

MOREHEAD—“Miss Cora,” the Moonlight Lady, an interpretive
production based on the life of the woman who founded the nation’s adult
literacy movement, will have its premiere performance at 1 p.m. Sept. 7
in Botten Auditorium at Morehead State University.

Created by Morehead native Laura Lee Duncan, “Miss Cora” offers a
glimpse into the personal struggles of Cora Wilson Stewart as she worked
to establish and maintain the Moonlight School program for illiterate
adults.

Her program, launched Sept. 5, 1911, in Rowan County, became a model
for other states and Miss Cora gained national prominence in the
literacy movement. But, according to Duncan, Miss Cora’s commitment
to helping improve the educational lot of adults was accompanied by
personal sacrifices.

“She had a child die in infancy, was divorced twice at a time when
society did not condone divorce and was partially ostracized by the
community because she was not assuming the traditional woman’s role,”
Duncan said. “I want to provide an insight into this side of her life as well
as her heroic efforts to provide an education to Kentucky’s adults.”

The premiere performance will feature Duncan and Michael O’Connell
with music by the White Horse String Band. A multi-media production,
the premiere will feature a sculpture installation by regional artist Sam
McKinney. A reception will follow the production. There is no charge for
the production.

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conference of the Kentucky Literacy Commission. Duncan and her
colleagues also plan to make the production available at no charge to
schools and community organizations. Booking information is available
from Duncan, Performing Artist-in-Residence, Cora Wilson Stewart
Moonlight School Project, Morehead State University, Rader Hall 205,
Morehead KY 40351-1689.