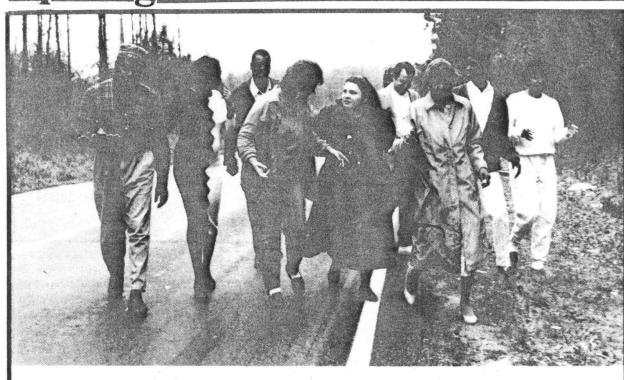
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VOICE OF BLACK MISSISSIPPIANS

acksor

Spotlight



Freedom": (I to r) James Green, Veronica Ins Harvey, Sadat Muhammad, Shelia Richard-Cooper, Leroy Divinity, Kay King Valentine, son and Sameerah Muhammad (not pictured).

Jackson-area participants in "Mississippi Deborah Imboden, Kent Lambert, Clarie Col-

World premiere of Jackson-based "Mississippi Freedom" theater production May 29-30

On Friday and Saturday, May 29 and 30, at 8 p.m. the Smith Robertson Museum in Jackson will be the site of the premiere of "Mississippi Freedom," a new theater production that will draw on the personal stories of living Mississippians as a way of exploring the legacy of race relations in the state over the last three decades. Created by awardwinning New York theater artist Robbie McCauley in collaboration with 11 actors, storytellers and musicians from the Jackson area, "Mississippi Freedom" place special emphasis on the "freedom riders" in Jackson and the voting rights struggle of the 1960s as a watershed of change for the entire country. The work is being presented by The Arts

Company of Cambridge, MA, in association with Potpourri Theater Company of Jackson.

For the past six months, Mc-Cauley and her multriacial collaborators have been collecting oral histories from people in the state and elsewhere which will form the basis of much of the dialogue in the piece. This will be combined with the performers' own stories and interaction among themselves and with Mc-Cauley. Various storytelling styles, local music, historical and contemporary slides and media footage will contribute to the social resonance of the work.

The 11 cast members of "Mississippi Freedom" are African American and Caucasian, range in age from early twenties to mid-sixties and live now in the Jackson area, though the original homes of many of them are located throughout the state. Most were involved in or have personal memories of the voting rights struggle in the 1960s. They are: Ona Banks, Veronica Cooper, Leroy Divinity, James Green, Deborah Imboden, Dick Johnson, Kent Lambert, Sadat Muhammad, Sameerah Muhammad, Sheila Richardson and Kay King Valentine. Along with Robbie Mc-Cauley, they will participate in discussions about "Mississippi Freedom" with interested audience members after each performance.