



Minerva and daughters.



Dara Frazier.



Margaret Reed.



Indira Obregon.

'Passing' - a unique take on race

By Devin T. Laster

With Barack Obama in office, many people are saying that America has moved past its painful history of racism. Playwright Dara Frazier says, "I volunteered for his campaign and I was inspired to see people of all colors rally around him. Yet it amazes me that African-Americans were not even allowed to vote a mere 45 years ago."

Frazier's play, "Passing," tells the story of Minerva Roulhac, an orphan born in 1899. Minerva looked white, but her true ethnicity is unknown. She was raised by a former slave in the black community of Marianna, Florida. Her brother ran away and decided to "pass" for white. "Passing was very common in those days," Frazier says. "If your skin was light enough and you had keen features, it gained you access into a world without prejudice, even if it meant denying your roots. What makes Minerva so unique is that she could have passed for white, but she was courageous enough to live as a black woman in the segregated south."

Minerva raised eight children who all attended college. One of her daughter's, Mary is Frazier's grandmother whom she affectionately called "Mother Dear." "I grew up next door to Mother Dear and she

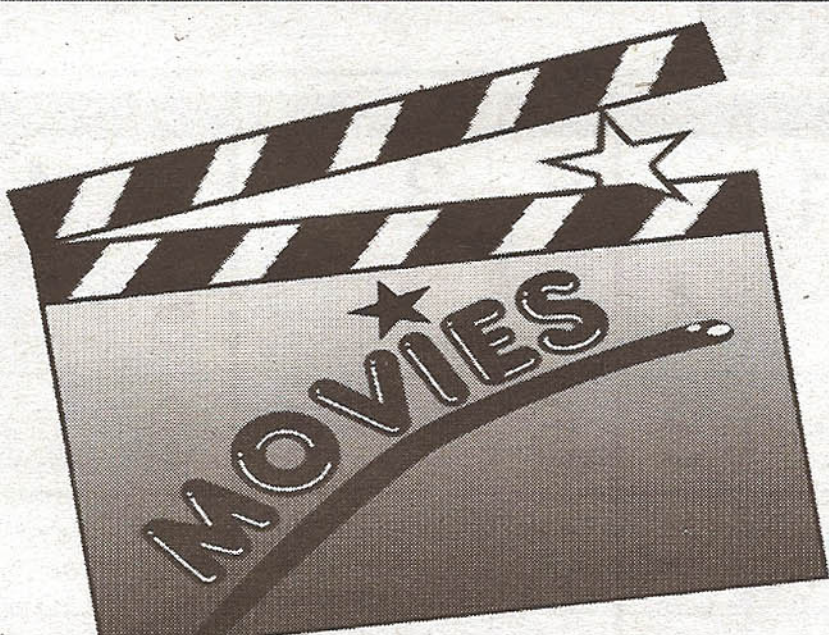
would sit on her porch and tell me stories of Minerva and what it was like to grow up in the south. This play is based on a true story that is very close to my heart."

Frazier hopes that "Passing" will open dialogue about race, com-

plexion, class and inter-racial relationships. "Even in 2009, America has not completely healed from its past. The first step to moving beyond race is to discuss it honestly."

"Passing" is playing at the Matthew Corozine

Theatre on 300 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. from (Weekends: Fridays 8p.m., Saturdays 8p.m., Sundays 3p.m.) May 1 - May 24, 2009. For more information, please visit www.mlentertainmentgroup.com.



**Check Out The Latest Movie Reviews
And Previews On This Page
Every Week**

**Look For Profiles Of The Stars,
Movie Summaries And Sneak Previews
Every Week In**

Caribbean Life