2012/2013
the 58th season

Welcome to *Jitney* and to the beginning of another season at Court Theatre. Every year we build seasons that are collections of classic plays that demand another look, interpretation, or production. This season features an unrivaled group of authors: August Wilson, James Joyce, David Hare, David Auburn, and Molière. It's a journey that begins in Pittsburgh, travels to Dublin and London, back home to Hyde Park, and concludes in France. We are grateful that you have joined us, whether for the first leg or the whole journey.

On the meaning of his work, August Wilson stated, "I once wrote this short story called 'The Best Blues Singer in the World,' and it went like this—'The streets that Balboa walked were his own private ocean, and Balboa was drowning.' End of story. That says it all. Nothing else to say. I've been rewriting that same story over and over again. All my plays are rewriting that same story."

When Wilson took command of the American theatre it was a transformative moment. Lloyd Richards, who had in 1959 directed *A Raisin in the Sun* on Broadway, was the Dean of the Yale School of Drama and was the leader of the National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, where a young August Wilson had begun to send his work. He recognized Wilson's talent immediately, and through the combination of developmental workshops at the O'Neill and productions at Yale Rep, moved two of Wilson's plays, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (1984) and *Fences* (1987), to Broadway. *Fences* attracted James Earl Jones to the production, and it won both the Pulitzer Prize and the Tony Award for best play, establishing Wilson as a powerful new voice. *Jitney* is the fourth play of Wilson's Century Cycle that Court has produced.

August Wilson's success is also the success of the non-profit theatre. Wilson's plays required a longer period of development and gestation, which is not one of the characteristics of Broadway theatre. Richards was partnered at Yale by a visionary producer, Ben Mordecai. He understood the potential that a collection of theatres working together might provide Wilson and Richards to craft the productions, learn from them, and move them from theatre to theatre. In the wake of these productions—that began in New Haven and traveled to Boston, Chicago, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Seattle—were newly discovered audiences who diversified theaters and who were enriched by a new understanding of this slice of American history.

Wilson wrote *Jitney* in 1979, before Yale and before Broadway; he would eventually rewrite the play in the 1990s. It was his one work that never reached Broadway, yet it is a work that is continuing to be produced around the country. At Court, we are pleased to have Ron OJ Parson, our Resident Artist, again guiding an August Wilson tale to our stage for you our audience.

We hope you find it a great beginning to a new season!

Charles Newell, *Artistic Director*

Stephen J. Albert, *Executive Director*

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO | Arts

2012/2013
the 58th season

Artistic Director
CHARLES NEWELL

Executive Director
STEPHEN J. ALBERT

AUGUST WILSON'S

JITNEY

directed by Ron OJ Parson

Jack Magaw*	*Scenic Design*
Melissa Torchia	*Costume Design*
Marc Stubblefield*	*Lighting Design*
Josh Horvath*	*Sound Design*
Joe Faust	*Fight Choreographer*
Drew Dir	*Resident Dramaturg*
Sara Gammage	*Production Stage Manager*
Amber Johnson	*Stage Manager*

Jitney is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

The Director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.

**Denotes a member of the United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E. Local USA829, AFL-CIO, CLC.*

The Stage Managers are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Sponsored by Hyde Park Bank

Ron OJ Parson's Artistic Residency is made possible by The Joyce Foundation

CAST

Rena..... **Caren Blackmore**

Youngblood..... **Kamal Angelo Bolden***

Booster..... **Anthony Fleming III***

Turnbo..... **Allen Gilmore***

Becker..... **A.C. Smith***

Philmore..... **André Teamer**

Shealy..... **Brian Weddington***

Fielding..... **Alfred Wilson***

Doub..... **Cedric Young***

Understudies: Kristiana Colón, David Goodloe, C. Anthony Jackson, Henri Watkins

**Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

SETTING

A "gypsy" cab station in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in early autumn 1977.

There will be a fifteen-minute intermission.

Special thanks to Kelly Miller and Kimberly Coburn of South Coast Repertory for sharing their research materials on *Jitney*.

Cover art for Court Theatre's production of *Jitney* by Lauren Nassef.

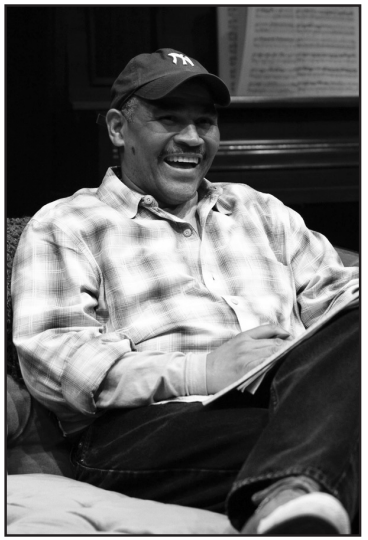
Court Theatre performs in the intimate Abelson Auditorium, made possible through a gift from Hope and Lester Abelson.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means is stricly prohibited.

Please turn off all phones, pagers, and chiming watches.

Court Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. Productions are made possible, in part, by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; a City Arts grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; and the Cultural Outreach Program of the City of Chicago. Court Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American Theatre, the League of Resident Theatres, the Illinois Humanities Council, Arts Alliance Illinois, and the League of Chicago Theatres.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Sometimes when asked to write something about the project I am working on, I shy away from it, but with August Wilson it seems to be easy to talk about the experience and what is means as an artist to work on his plays. This is especially true of *Jitney*, one of my favorite plays of all time.

This is the twentieth August Wilson production that I've directed or acted in, but there's something special about doing August at Court. August Wilson's words are precious, and here in Court's intimate space, you can sink into the language like nowhere else. Plus, here in Chicago I can assemble a cast of veteran hometown actors like this one who understand how to bring August's words to life. Chicago is my home and Court Theatre is my artistic home. It's my sixth year as Resident Artist at Court Theatre, and the growth we've seen in work by African American playwrights, directors, and actors—as well as the growth of new audiences that have discovered Court—has been incredible. I'm grateful for the unwavering support from the Joyce Foundation, which has fostered our efforts to diversify the theatre's work on stage and to expand our potential to reach new audiences.

My relationship to *Jitney* goes way back. I had the good fortune of working on *Jitney* as an understudy to "The Wilsonites," as I like to call them. I worked with powerhouse actors Paul Butler, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Anthony Chisholm, Russell Hornsby, Willis Burks II, Michole Briana White, and Barry Shabaka Henley, who I feel are friends to this day even though our paths haven't crossed much over the years. That *Jitney* experience never left me. Understudying can be a very frustrating and difficult job, but it was such a family atmosphere that it was a joy and pleasure to be around in whatever capacity. I felt like a sponge soaking it up. My mother fell ill during the run, and again it felt like I was with family during that trying time. Working on this production of *Jitney*, and all of August's plays, I feel that his spirit exists in the room at all times. Watching August and my friend and mentor Marion McClinton work their magic was an experience I can never replace. Thank you, Marion. That experience has given me some insight that I know has helped in every Wilson play I have directed or acted in since.

Finally, I have to say a special thank you to Steve Henderson for pushing me and giving me the confidence to continue my career when I was about to chuck it in, and I would also like to dedicate this production to Israel Hicks, Paul Butler, and Willis Burks II, three pioneers in the business who influenced me without even knowing it. They left us too soon. And of course, thank you August for making all our lives richer.

Peace,

Ron OJ Parson

Footlights Ad 1: Metropro

The Pittsburgh Cycle

By Christopher Rawson

The ten plays with which August Wilson conquered the American theater have been sometimes called his Century Cycle, since each is set in a different decade of the twentieth century. But they are better called the Pittsburgh Cycle, since nine are set in a square mile or so of that city's Hill District and all ten are rich with the voices, stories and passions that Wilson absorbed in the years that he spent walking the Hill's streets and listening to the talk in its diners, barbershops, numbers joints, and jitney stations. The hill is an active character as well as a literal crossroads and metaphoric microcosm of black America.

By 1904, the real Hill District had become a multiethnic melting pot. Roughly one-third Eastern European Jews, one-third black and one-third everything else (Italian, Syrian, etc.), its population grew to some 55,000. For blacks, who often weren't welcome elsewhere, it was a city within a city, its commerce and entertainment spiced with music (a dozen native jazz greats), sports (baseball's Josh Gibson and the Negro National League Team, the Crawfords), and journalism (the Pittsburgh Courier, once the nation's largest black newspaper, with nationwide circulation).



August Wilson's childhood home in the Hill District of Pittsburgh.

But at mid-century the aging Hill was torn apart, first by "urban renewal," as some 15,000 were displaced from the lower Hill to make room for a new Civic Arena, and then by the fires that protested the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Born in 1945, Wilson witnessed this decline up close. He had dropped out of school at fifteen after bouts with racism, then educated himself at the Carnegie Library before doing his graduate studies in culture, politics and art on the streets of the hill. By the time he moved to St. Paul, Minn., in 1978, the Hill was

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Hill District, Pittsburgh.

broken, its population shrunk to the vicinity of 12,000. In recent years it has started to come back. But, as if in cosmic compensation for history's cruelty, it already lives in Wilson's art.

The result is that we now speak of August Wilson's Hill, a gritty urban landscape transformed by art into something mythic, like Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County or Friel's Ballybeg. Writing from St. Paul and later Seattle, Wilson said that he heard more clearly the voices from the street corners and cigar stores of his youth. And he kept coming back to Pittsburgh to dip the ladle of his art into this crucible of memory and inspiration. The outcome is stories rich in the "love, honor, duty, and betrayal" that Wilson said are at the heart of all his plays.

Along the way, hill names, shops, streets, and even addresses are adapted, hinted at, or disguised. First comes 1727 Bedford Avenue, where Wilson lived until he was thirteen with his family in two back rooms, later four—a family that grew to include six children. His memories of the gossip and the card playing mark that backyard as the setting for *Seven Guitars*. In front was Bela's Market, run by Eastern European Jews, and next door was the watch and shoe-repair shop of the Italian Butera brothers, making the two houses an epitome of the multi-ethnic hill of Wilson's youth.

Back in Pittsburgh, working on the 1999 premier of *King Hedley II*, Wilson identified its setting with the backyard of his mother's final house, just down Bedford. For the cycle's other backyard play, *Fences*, the best guess is across Bedford at the house of the former prizefighter Charlie Burley, a close historical model for Troy Maxson.

The cycle's second most important location is 1839 Wylie Avenue, the faded mansion that is home to Aunt Ester, the seer supposedly born in 1619, when the first African slaves reached Virginia. In *Gem of the Ocean*, Aunt Ester's house serves as a modern station on the underground railroad of black empowerment, and in *Radio Golf* it is central to the conflict between that past and the rising black middle class. Today 1839 Wylie Avenue is a grassy hillside. Whether or not a mansion ever stood there, it is an evocative space, but fictional: Wilson actually chose 1839 because it was the year of the famous Amistad slave-ship revolt.

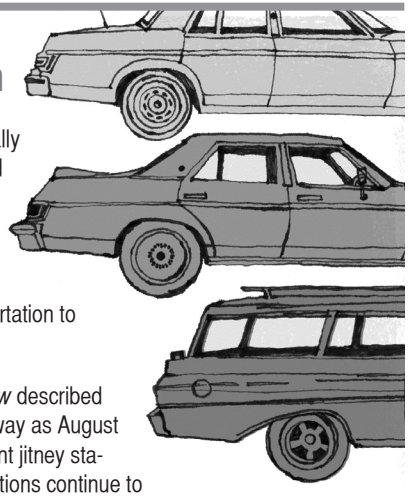
The three hill plays set in public spaces are naturally located in the business district on Wylie and Centre Avenues. In *Two Trains Running*, Memphis's diner is near Eddie's Diner, Lutz's Meat Market (which still stands on Centre), and the West Funeral home. The diner's address is later given as 1621 Wylie Avenue, many blocks away, but that number is Wilson's tribute to the Bedford address where his mother died. The most specific location belongs to *Jitney*, which Wilson imagined as set in a jitney (gypsy cab) station, either one now gone, or its successor at the corner of Wylie Avenue and Erin Street, which still has the same phone number used in the play. Less specific is *Radio Golf*, set in a storefront office somewhere on Centre Avenue. For *The Piano Lesson*, the only clue is that Berniece and Avery drop Maretha off at the Irene Kaufman Settlement house on their way downtown, so their house must be east of there.

As for *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, since the hill slopes down toward the southwest, references to "up on Bedford" and "down on Wylie" suggest that the Holly boarding house is between them, on Webster, where Loomis could watch the house from the corner "right up there on Manilla Street." Wilson's only play not set on the hill is *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. He later said that he set the play in Chicago because, being from Pittsburgh, he didn't think the Hill sounded important enough. But he soon realized that it could stand for all black America.

Jitney has a special place in the Pittsburgh Cycle because it was the first play written, in 1979, when Wilson still fancied himself primarily a poet, and the first produced, in a small Pittsburgh theater in 1982. When *Ma Rainey* debuted on Broadway in 1984, followed quickly by *Fences* and *Joe Turner*, *Jitney* waited in a drawer. But in 1996 Wilson returned to Pittsburgh to expand *Jitney*, specifically to dig deeper into the relationships between Becker and Booster (father and son) and Rena and Youngblood (the young couple). Wilson's experience can be seen in both: his relationship with his own father was fraught, and his nickname was once Youngblood. All the plays are rich with the 33 years of Wilson's experience in Pittsburgh. He was often furious with the city, with an anger that came from its streets, where each day could be a fresh negotiation with danger. But as in the blues, his characters turn that pain into hope. Wielding comedy and tragedy, often simultaneously, Wilson speaks with prophetic passion across the great American racial divide. ■

Christopher Rawson is immediate past chair of the American Theatre Critics Association and serves on the boards of the Theatre Hall of Fame and Best Plays Theater Yearbook. Now senior theater critic for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and KDKA-TV, he has reviewed, interviewed, and chronicled August Wilson since 1984. Some of the *Post-Gazette*'s extensive Wilson coverage is available at www.post-gazette.com/theater. With historian Lawrence Glasco, Rawson has written a compact introduction to Wilson's life, works and their Hill District background, *August Wilson: Pittsburgh Places in His Life and Plays* (Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2011).

The Jitneys of Pittsburgh



"Jitney" is the term used for a cab that is operated illegally without a municipal or state license. Jitneys served, and continue to serve, an essential role in black communities like Pittsburgh's Hill district, which are typically woefully underserved by licensed taxis. Local police rarely enforce the law against unlicensed cabs in the Hill district, as the jitneys provide much-needed transportation to residents at an affordable rate.

In a 2004 story on jitneys, the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* described present-day jitney drivers operating in much the same way as August Wilson portrays them in the 1970s. Though the storefront jitney station that was most familiar to Wilson is gone, similar stations continue to operate in the area, including one at 2046 Wylie Avenue where drivers sit and wait for calls from a pay phone, just as they do in Wilson's *Jitney*. Each driver pays a regular fee to a station manager for the use of the station's phone; there are rules in place to make sure no driver tarnishes the reputation of that number.

In Chicago, where jitney cabs have fulfilled a similar purpose for decades, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Alderman Anthony Beale (9th Ward) introduced a series of city taxi reforms earlier this year that included the creation of a new kind of license for jitney cabs, allowing the drivers for the first time to operate legally within the neighborhoods—but barring them from competing with large cab companies in the downtown business district and the airports. ■



Wilson at his childhood home in Pittsburgh's Hill District.

"There were a lot of jitney stations in Pittsburgh, located in storefronts with a pay phone. It was a perfect place for a play because you had a set and a community of players who work together and have created something out of nothing, having no jobs. They are generally older men who had jobs working in the steel mills and on the railroad. If they were lucky enough to have a pension, there was a need to supplement with additional income, so they drove jitneys. And I think they do it because they enjoy the company of each other; they have something to do and it's a place to belong. They are a microcosm of the community at large." *-August Wilson*

Contributed by **Drew Dir, Resident Dramaturg** at Court Theatre.

'Something Out of Nothing'— The Origins of *Jitney*

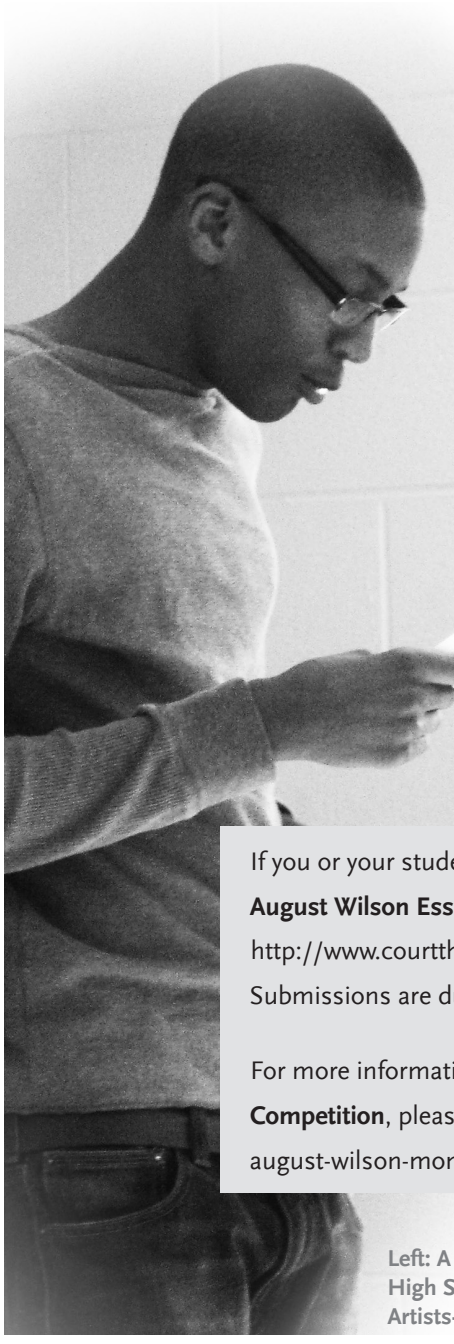
When Wilson wrote *Jitney* in 1979, the playwright hadn't yet conceived of his Century Cycle, the series of ten plays that would come to define his career. "Somewhere along the way it dawned on me that I was writing one play for each decade," Wilson would recall, years later. "Once I became conscious of that, I realized I was trying to focus on what I felt were the most important issues confronting black Americans for that decade, so ultimately they could stand as a record of black experience over the past hundred years." Wilson managed to complete his Century Cycle two years before his death, concluding the cycle with the century's beginning in the play *Gem of the Ocean*, set in 1904. The ten plays that August Wilson left behind stand as a formidable monument, one of the most ambitious contributions to the American theatre of his generation. Only a few theatres around the country have produced all ten plays in the Century Cycle, but more will surely follow as the recognition of Wilson's impact on the American theatre continues to grow and appreciate after his death. (As for Court Theatre, this is our fourth August Wilson production—and counting.)

Jitney, however, had modest beginnings. At the time, living in his home town of Pittsburgh, Wilson considered himself a poet; he'd dabbled in theatre, even helped co-found a company in the 1960s, but by his own admission didn't know much about playwriting. At the encouragement of a friend, he moved to St. Paul, Minnesota and took a job writing short educational plays for the Science Museum of Minnesota. Leaving Pittsburgh turned out to be a fortuitous move for Wilson's career. "There weren't many black folks around," Wilson recalled, and living in a city that was, by comparison to Pittsburgh, predominately white allowed him to hear black voices more clearly, including his own. "In that silence," he said, "I could hear the language for the first time." The move to St. Paul also brought him to the Minnesota Playwrights Center, whose two-hundred dollar fellowship gave him the opportunity to write *Jitney*. The inspiration for the play came from a trip back home to Pittsburgh; as Wilson explained the Hill District's jitney cabs to his wife (who had never ridden in one before), and reminisced about the jitney drivers he'd known, they revealed themselves to him as the subject for a new play. Back in Minnesota, sitting down to write *Jitney* at Arthur Treacher's Fish and Chips, Wilson found himself reproducing the Pittsburgh voices he'd known since childhood. "It felt like this was what I'd been looking for," Wilson recalled, "something that was mine, that would enable me to say anything."



Wilson wrote *Jitney* in only ten days; "when I sat down to write *Jitney*," he recalled, "I didn't know you weren't supposed to write it in ten days." Regrettably, the play was rejected twice by the O'Neill Playwrights Conference. *Jitney* ran to sold-out houses, but when no other theatres showed any interest in the play, Wilson became discouraged and put it away. His break-out success would come in 1982 not with *Jitney*, but with *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*.

In 1996, August Wilson would revisit *Jitney* at the encouragement of the Pittsburgh Public Theater. In a reading one day, one of the actors told him, "Say August. They ain't gonna know this is your play… You ain't got no monologues in it." The play that Wilson had written in 1979 was the work of a young playwright just discovering his voice; seventeen years later, a more mature Wilson would enrich his characters with more detailed personal histories (some through monologues, including Shealy's monologue about his ex-lover Rosie), as well as flesh out the relationship between the station manager Becker and his son, Booster. This process of rewriting was accomplished by responding to the actors' work on the play in rehearsal, a new practice he'd developed rehearsing and rewriting *Seven Guitars* at the Goodman Theatre. Finally re-premiering in Pittsburgh where it began, *Jitney* found a new life in the American theatre. Though it remains the only Century Cycle play that never made it to Broadway, it won London's Olivier Award for Best New Play, and continues to be one of Wilson's most popular plays in regional theatres across the country. ■



While August Wilson may be a familiar name to Court Theatre's audiences, Artists-in-the-Schools (AIS) Director Cree Rankin is working to introduce the playwright to students on Chicago's South Side. Court's Student Education Program puts theatre professionals in the classrooms of six local schools to teach residencies focused on text analysis, acting technique, and scenic design. The newest of these residencies are the August Wilson Monologue Competition Workshop and the August Wilson Essay Competition, which give over 200 students annually the chance to explore and study Wilson's work.

If you or your students are interested in entering the **August Wilson Essay Contest**, please visit http://www.courttheatre.org/essaycontest for details. Submissions are due December 7, 2012.

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For more information on the **August Wilson Monologue Competition**, please visit http://www.chicagoplays.com/august-wilson-monologue-competition.html.

Left: A student from King College Prep High School participating in Court Theatre's Artists-in-the-Schools program

The August Wilson Monologue Competition

The Monologue Competition was founded in 2008 by Kenny Leon of True Colors Theatre Company in Atlanta, Georgia. Students perform two- to three-minute monologues from Wilson's plays for judges at a regional and then national level, and have an opportunity to win an all-expenses paid trip to New York City for the final as well as scholarships at the regional and national level. Court, in cooperation with the Chicago-area AWMC, was one of the first theatres in the nation to incorporate the Monologue Competition into its educational programming, and our residency is being used as an example for other theatres who are interested in implementing a similar program. Court's teaching artists run workshops focused on auditioning and preparing monologues, working with students on character development, text analysis, and memorization. Each student receives individual coaching in and out of the classroom, and this personalized attention coupled with the chance to compete in a national competition has made the program a favorite among students: 62 chose to compete in the preliminary competition, and their responses to the residency have been overwhelmingly positive.

The popularity of the program seems to be directly related to its subject matter. Many students said in their post-residency interviews that August Wilson is "relatable," "understandable," and that he writes work that "isn't like other plays." The students report that they feel like August Wilson is speaking to them—his characters are people they know and he is writing about situations from their own lives. The residency is not just another drama class for the students: "[The teaching artists] made me think drama was interesting for the first time," said one student. ■

August Wilson and the Century Cycle Essay Contest

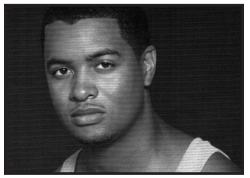
For the first time this year, Court Theatre is launching a new student essay contest inspired by August Wilson's Century Cycle, the playwright's collection of ten full-length plays set in each decade of the twentieth century. The Essay Contest builds upon the work of the Monologue Competition by giving students the opportunity to voice their own point of view, making connections to their studies in history and literature. The essays will be reviewed by a panel of faculty and staff from the University of Chicago. Winners will be announced in January, and the top students will receive awards at the Hyde Park Bank High School Performance Festival in February 2013. ■

Contributed by **Erin Kelsey,** Development Assistant at Court Theatre.

PROFILES



CAREN BLACKMORE *(Rena)* is originally from Philadelphia but loves Chicago and feels blessed to work with Court Theatre. Other Chicago productions include: *goodness* (Clockwise Theatre), *This* (Theatre Wit), *The Gimmick* and 24th and 25th Annual Young Playwright's Festivals (Pegasus Players), *I Gotcha!: The Story of Joe Tex and the Soul Clan* and *I Am Who I Am: The Teddy Pendergrass Story* (Black Ensemble Theatre), *Checkmates* (eta Creative Arts), *Bodies* and *MiLK* (MPAACT), where she received a BTAA nomination and Jeff nomination for Best Actress in a Play. Caren has attended Freedom Theatre and the Eugene O'Neill National Theatre Institute and is a graduate of Oberlin College. She would like to thank Ron OJ, her cast mates, and production team, and sends love to her family and friends. *Isaiah 49*



KAMAL ANGELO BOLDEN *(Youngblood)* is amped to be back at Court Theatre where he appeared in *Home*. Just recently, he was seen at Goodman Theatre in *Immediate Family*, and before that in the world premiere of *We Are Proud to Present...* at Victory Gardens Theater. Kamal originated the roles of Jackie Robinson in the Chicago Children's Theatre's world premiere of *Jackie and Me* and Chad Deity in Victory Gardens Theater's world premiere of *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*. He has also worked at Actors Theatre of Louisville (*The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*) and won a BTAA for Best Leading Actor for his work in Athol Fugard's *The Island* at Remy Bumppo Theatre. Kamal has appeared in many independent films and national commercials, and has made guest appearances on *BOSS, Lights Out,* and *The Row*. He holds a B.S. in Business Administration-Entrepreneurship from Bradley University and is a proud Artistic Associate of Erasing the Distance.



ANTHONY FLEMING III *(Booster)* is a proud member of Actors Equity and is very pleased to return Court Theatre. His first appearance at Court was in the 2006 Jeff Award-winning production of *Fences*. He was last seen onstage earlier this year in *Mr. Rickey Calls a Meeting* at Lookingglass Theater, where he is an Artistic Associate. Other Lookingglass credits include *The Arabian Nights, Fedra, 1984, Race, Icarus,* and *Lookingglass Alice*. A native Chicagoan, other local credits *Camino Real* (Goodman Theatre), *Division St: America,* and *The Glass Menagerie* (Steppenwolf), *Hambone, Free Man of Color,* and *Denmark* (Victory Gardens Theater), *Journal of Ordinary Thought* and *Cut Flowers* (Chicago Theatre Company), *Orlando* (Piven Theatre), and *The Cider House Rules* (Famous Door). Regional credits include *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Actor's Theatre of Louisville and Milwaukee Repertory Theatre), McCarter Theatre, New Victory Theatre, Arden Theatre, Syracuse Stage, and Alliance Theatre (*Lookingglass Alice*). When not onstage Mr. Fleming works as a voiceover artist with Naked Voices and also, usually on beautiful Chicago summer days, as a bike messenger. This fall he will be in an independent film titled *Mother of War*.



ALLEN GILMORE *(Turnbo)* was last seen in Chicago at Court Theatre as Sizwe Banzi in *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, directed by Ron OJ Parson. He has more recently performed at Yale Repertory Theatre and Berkeley Repertory Theatre in *A Doctor In Spite of Himself*. He just completed the run of *A Servant of Two Masters* at The Shakespeare Theater in Washington, D.C., and following *Jitney*, he will perform *A Servant of Two Masters* at Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. Allen returns to Court in the spring for the Molière comedies *The Misanthrope* and *Tartuffe*. He is a proud artistic associate of Next Theatre and a proud ensemble member of Congo Square Theater Company.



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PROFILES



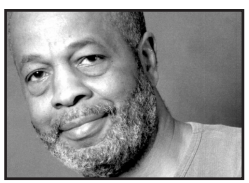
A.C. SMITH *(Becker)* is overjoyed to back at Court Theatre and shot out of the August Wilson cannon once again in this production of *Jitney*. Other shows at Court Theatre include *Invisible Man, Ma Rainey's Black Botttom, The Piano Lesson, The First Breeze of Summer,* and *Fences* for which he received the prestigious Jeff Award for Lead Actor in a drama for his portrayal of Troy Maxon. A native of Chicago, Smith has performed at many theaters here including Victory Gardens, Timeline Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Chicago Theatre for the Performing Arts, Illinois Theatre Centre, Second City, and Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Regional theater credits include The Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, Portland Stage, Geva Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and Saint Louis Black Repertory Company where he has been a company member for the past 18 years (nine-time Woodie King, Jr. Award winner). In addition, A.C. has done film, television, radio, commercials, and voiceovers, and he has appeared in *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines. He is represented by Paonessa Talent Agency. God Bless!



ANDRÉ TEAMER *(Philmore)* is thankful for the opportunity to work at Court Theatre once again. He is a company member of MPAACT (Ma'at Production Association of Afrikan Centered Theatre). Chicago credits include: *Wait Until Dark* (Court Theatre); *Bodies, Speaking in Tongues, Tad in Fifth City, First Words* (BTAA nomination), *Ten Square, Trouble the Water, Kosi-Dasa, Kiwi Black, Fascia,* and *Notes from the Bottletree* (MPAACT); WELL (Next Theatre); *Weekend* and *Martin Fuery's Shot* (Timeline Theatre); *Hope VI* (Chicago Dramatists); *The Upper Room* (BTAA nomination), *Two Trains Running, Pantomime* (Jeff nomination), and *Black Caesar* (Pegasus Players). Andre' is a graduate of Northeastern Illinois University with a B.F.A in Speech and Performing Arts.



BRIAN WEDDINGTON *(Shealy)* loves being back at Court Theatre, where he was last seen in *The Piano Lesson* and *The First Breeze of Summer*. Some of his other creative works include the film *Barbershop 2*, ABC's *One Life to Live*, *The People Who Could Fly* (National Black Arts Theater Festival), *The Darker Face of the Earth* (Kennedy Center), and *Thieves Carnival* (Theatre of Southwest Moscow.) He has several national and regional television commercials to his credit including All State Insurance, McDonald's, and Century 21. He is the Director of Theatre Arts and Co-Founder of the HHW School for the Performing Arts, Director of Programming at Lifevine Works, and has presently completed a book of scenes and monologues from the Christian experience entitled *LIFTED*. He holds a B.A. from the University of Illinois at Chicago and M.F.A. from Rutgers University. He thanks his loving wife, Chamille and three children, Omani, Neena, and Isaiah, for all of their love and support.



ALFRED WILSON *(Fielding)* Recent credits: *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (University of Wisconsin-Madison), *The Exonerated* (Next Act Theatre), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Actor's Theatre of Louisville and Milwaukee Repertory Theatre), *The Etiquette of Vigilance* (Steppenwolf Theatre), *Two Trains Running* (Geva Theatre), *Master Harold and the Boys* (Timeline Theatre), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *The Piano Lesson* (Court Theatre), *Gem of the Ocean* and *Radio Golf* (Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati), *Radio Golf* (Pittsburgh Public Theatre). Other Chicago credits include: *Bourbon at the Border* (Eclipse Theatre), *Jitney* and *Two Trains Running* (Jeff Citation-Best Acto–Pegasus Players), *Panther Burn* (MMPAACT), and productions at Goodman Theatre and Victory Gardens Theatre. He was also a co-founder of Onyx Theatre Ensemble.



CEDRIC YOUNG *(Doub)* has worked at most of Chicago's theatres as well as many regional houses for nearly thirty years. *Jitney* is his second appearance on Court's Theatre's stage—the first being *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. Cedric has performed in numerous August Wilson plays and *Jitney* is his favorite. Some previous roles include Troy in *Fences* (also directed by Ron OJ Parson), Walter Lee in *A Raisin In the Sun*, Crixus in *Coming of the Hurricane* and Sam in *Master Harold and the Boys*. He has also appeared in numerous films and television series. He would like to thank his lovely wife Mary for her love and support. "241 in time."

AUGUST WILSON *(Playwright, 1945-2005)* was an American playwright. His literary legacy is the ten play series, The Century Cycle, for which he received two Pulitzer Prizes. It consists of ten plays, nine of which are set in Pittsburgh's Hill District, an African-American neighborhood that takes on a mythic literary significance like Thomas Hardy's Wessex, William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, or Irish playwright Brian Friel's Ballybeg. Each is set in a different decade, depicting the comic and tragic aspects of the African-American experience in the twentieth century. His best known plays are *Fences* (1985) (which won a Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award), *The Piano Lesson* (1990) (a Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*.



RON OJ PARSON *(Director / Resident Artist)* is a native of Buffalo, New York and a graduate of the University of Michigan's professional theatre program. He is a co-founder and former artistic director of The Onyx Theatre Ensemble of Chicago. Mr. Parson is a resident artist at Court Theatre. He has worked as an actor and director. Chicago directing credits include Chicago Theatre Company, Victory Gardens Theater, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Northlight Theatre, Court Theatre, Black Ensemble Theatre, eta Creative Arts Foundation, City Lit Theater, Writers' Theatre, Urban Theater Company, and Congo Square Theatre Company. Regional credits include Virginia Stage Company, Portland Stage Company, Studio Arena Theatre, Roundabout Theatre, Wilshire Theatre, The Mechanic Theatre, CenterStage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Repertory, St. Louis Black Repertory, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre, Geva Theatre, Signature Theatre, and Alliance Theatre. In Canada, he directed the world premiere of *Palmer Park* by Joanna McClelland Glass at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario. Most recently, Ron directed *Blue* (South Bend Civic Theatre), *I Just Stopped by to See the Man* (Alliance Theatre), and *Jitney* (South Coast Rep and Pasadena Playhouse). He is a proud member of AEA, SAG, AFTRA, and SDC. Visit www.ronojparson.com.

JACK MAGAW *(Scenic Design)* most recently designed scenery for *Home* and *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* at Court Theatre. Other Chicago and regional theatre design credits include *Broke* and *I Just Stopped By to See the Man* (Alliance Theatre), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Superior Donuts* (Geva Theatre), *Gee's Bend* (Cincinnati Playhouse), *Black Pearl Sings* (Northlight Theatre), *Murder on the Nile* and *Opus* (Peninsula Players Theatre), *In the Next Room* (Victory Gardens), *The Caretaker* (Writers' Theatre), *Radio Golf* (Pittsburgh Public Theatre), *Cabaret* and *The Whipping Man* (Kansas City Repertory), and *Bug* (Redtwist Theatre), which he co-directed and designed with Kimberly Senior. He received Joseph Jefferson nominations for *Picnic* and *Bus Stop* (Writers' Theatre), *Fences* (Court), and *Seven Guitars* (Congo Square). Upcoming projects include *Pippin* (Kansas City Repertory) and *The Letters* (Writers' Theatre). Jack lives in Evanston with his wife, director Kimberly Senior, and teaches design at both DePaul and Northwestern universities. Visit www.jackmagaw.com.

MELISSA TORCHIA *(Costume Design)* is designing for Court Theatre for the first time. Other credits include: *Iron Stag King* (The House Theatre of Chicago), *The Verona Project* (California Shakespeare Theater), *My Fair Lady, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,* and *Hair* (Paramount Theatre), *Grease* (American Theatre Project), *Gypsy, Aida,* and *Sugar* (Drury Lane Oakbrook), *Peter Pan* (Lookingglass Theatre), *Samuel J and K* (Steppenwolf Theatre), *Not Wanted on the Voyage* (American Musical Theatre Project, Northwestern University), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Remy Bumppo Theatre), and *Abigail's Party* and *Butcher of Baraboo* (A Red Orchid Theater). Ms. Torchia has completed her Masters in Costume Design at Northwestern University and in June of 2011 presented her design work at the Prague Quadrennial, an international scenography conference. Upcoming: *The Verona Project*, (AMPT, Northwestern University) and *Welcome Home Jenny Sutter* (Next Theater.)

MARC STUBBLEFIELD *(Lighting Design)* served as Court Theatre's Director of Production for eleven seasons. Marc now resides in California and is the Associate Production Manager for La Jolla Playhouse. *Jitney* is Marc's eighth design for Court Theatre, having previously worked with Artistic Director Charlie Newell on *Glass Menagerie, Arcadia,* and *Three Tall Women*, and Director Ron OJ Parson on *Spunk, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, The Piano Lesson,* and *The First Breeze of Summer*. He has worked at the Geffen Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, and the Alley Theatre among others. He received a dual MFA in Production Management and Scenic Design from UCLA's school of Theatre, Film and Television, and his BA in Technical Theatre from Rice University.

JOSH HORVATH *(Sound Design)* Court: *Angels in America, Invisible Man, Spunk, Porgy and Bess, The Illusion, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Wait Until Dark, Caroline or Change, The First Breeze of Summer, Carousel, Titus Andronicus, Arcadia, Flyin' West, Raisin, Lettice and Lovage, Fences, Man of La Mancha, Endgame, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Fraulein Else, Guys and Dolls,* and *The Romance Cycle*. Chicago credits: Goodman, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, Northlight, Next, Lookingglass, About Face, The House Theatre of Chicago, Congo Square, Steep, Lifeline, Eclipse, Shattered Globe, Drury Lane Oakbrook, and TimeLine. Regional: Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Long Wharf, Centerstage, Hartford Stage, The Alliance, Milwaukee Rep, Milwaukee Shakespeare, Madison Rep, Illinois Shakespeare, Great River Shakespeare, Kansas City Rep, Center Theatre Group, and California Shakespeare. Mr. Horvath has garnered four Joseph Jefferson Awards along with eleven nominations, an LA Ovation Award, is an artistic associate of Lookingglass, a co-owner of Aria Music Designs, LLC, and teaches sound for theatre and film at Northwestern University. Current and upcoming shows: *Little Shop of Horrors* (Kansas City Rep), *Eastland* (Lookingglass), *The Verona Project* (The American Musical Theatre Project).

DREW DIR *(Resident Dramaturg)* is in his fourth season as the resident dramaturg of Court Theatre and a lecturer of Theater and Performance Studies at the University of Chicago. In the past, Drew has worked as a playwright, dramaturg, director, and puppeteer in Chicago and London. His writing has been called "daring" by the *Chicago Tribune* and "ballsy" by *Time Out Chicago*. His short play *The Lurker Radio Hour* was recently remounted at Chicago's Sketchbook Reverb. He also creates and performs shadow puppetry for his company, Manual Cinema. Drew holds a master's degree in Text and Performance Studies from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts.

SARA GAMMAGE *(Production Stage Manager)* is delighted to return to Court Theatre. Credits here include *Flyin' West, What the Butler Saw, The First Breeze of Summer, Wait Until Dark, The Mystery of Irma Vep, The Illusion, Sizwe Banzi is Dead, Home, Orlando, Porgy and Bess, Spunk, An Iliad,* and *Invisible Man*. Other credits include productions with Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Greenhouse Theater, Theatre at the Center, Marriot Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre, and Redmoon Theater. She spent several seasons at Peninsula Players Theatre in Door Country, WI; credits there include *A Little Night Music, Comic Potential, Wait Until Dark, Is He Dead?, Rumors,* and *The Lady's Not for Burning*. Sara is a proud graduate of Northwestern University.

AMBER JOHNSON *(Stage Manager)* is very excited to be back at Court Theatre this season. Court credits include *Angels in America, Spunk, Comedy of Errors,* and *Three Tall Women*. Other Chicago stage management credits: *A Girl With Sun in Her Eyes* (Pine Box Theatre), *The Colored Museum* (Congo Square Theatre Co.), *The MLK Project* (Writers' Theatre), *Jersey Boys* (Sub SM, Broadway in Chicago), *It's a Wonderful Life: Live at the Biograph!* (American Blues Theatre), *Dreamlandia, La Posada Magica* (Teatro Vista), *Three Sisters* (Strawdog Theatre Co.), *As Much As You Can, Clouds* (Dog & Pony Theatre Company), and *Orange Flower Water* (Steppenwolf). Regional credits include: Williamstown Theatre Festival and Antelope Valley Ballet. Amber graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a BFA in Theatre with Stage Management emphasis. As always, Boomer Sooner!

MYRA SU *(Assistant Director)* is a senior at the University of Chicago double majoring in Theater and Anthropology. She grew up attending international school in Hong Kong and is now a director and designer at University Theater. She directed *Victoria Station* in autumn '10, wrote and directed *Midnight Snack* in winter '12, and is currently adapting *University of Laughs* for fall '12. Design credits include: assistant costume for *Fefu and Her Friends, The Flu Season,* and *The Rose Tatoo*; assistant sound for *Big Love*; sound for *The Physicists*; props for *Red Light Winter* and *Oedipus*. She is honored to be working with Ron and such a wonderful cast and staff!



CHARLES NEWELL *(Artistic Director)* has been Artistic Director of Court Theatre since 1994, where he has directed over 30 productions. He made his Chicago directorial debut in 1993 with *The Triumph of Love*, which won the Joseph Jefferson Award for Best Production. Directorial highlights at Court Theatre include *Angels in America, An Iliad, Porgy and Bess, Three Tall Women, The Year of Magical Thinking, The Wild Duck, Caroline, or Change, Titus Andronicus, Arcadia, Man of La Mancha, Uncle Vanya, Raisin, The Glass Menagerie, Travesties, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Hamlet,* and *The Invention of Love.* Charlie has also directed at the Goodman Theatre (*Rock 'n' Roll*), the Guthrie Theater (Resident Director: *The History Cycle, Cymbeline*), Arena Stage, John Houseman's The Acting Company (Staff Repertory Director), the California and Alabama Shakespeare Festivals, Juilliard, and New York University. He is the recipient of the 1992 TCG Alan Schneider Director Award. He has served on the Board of Theatre Communications Group, as well as on several panels for the National Endowment for the Arts. Opera directing credits include Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and *Rigoletto* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Charlie is a multiple Joseph Jefferson Award nominee and recipient.



STEPHEN J. ALBERT *(Executive Director)* is a founding partner in Albert Hall & Associates, LLC, a leading arts consulting firm. Prior to forming the consulting practice, Albert was recognized as a leading arts manager. He has led some of America's most prestigious theatres, including the Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group, Alley Theatre, and Hartford Stage Company. Albert began his career with the Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles where he worked in senior management positions for over a decade, rising to Managing Director. He went on to become Executive Director of Houston's Alley Theatre where he led a turnaround that stabilized the organization, enabling the Alley to return to national standing and drove a capital campaign that secured the organization's future. At Hartford Stage, his partnership with Mark Lamos resulted in some of the theatre's most successful seasons and reinforced Hartford Stage's position at the forefront of the regional theatre movement. In Hartford, Mr. Albert led the initiative to create a 25,000 square foot, state-of-the-art production center, securing the donation of the facility and the funding for its renovation. Albert has served as President and of the League of Resident Theatres

(LORT) and as a board member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG). He has also written and produced for television, is an ACE award nominee, and has been an associate producer of numerous acclaimed Broadway productions. He is a Senior Fellow with the American Leadership Forum, a graduate of the University of Southern California, and holds an MBA from the UCLA Graduate School of Management.

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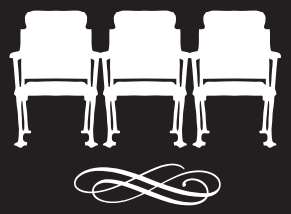
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Gilbert Kanter
Robert Kapoun

Footlights ad half 1: Smart Museum

Mr. Norman Kohn
Arieh Konigl and Alice Roston
Ms. Anne Lang,
in honor of Peggy Zagel on her retirement
Ms. Mary Jo LaViolette
Charles and Fran Licht
Bruce Lockwitz
James and Katharine Mann
Mr. and Mrs. McKim Marriott
Michelle Maton and Mike Schaeffer
Mrs. Ann Maxwell,
in honor of Peggy Zagel on her retirement
Stacey and Patrick McCusker
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Marianne Nathan and James Hugunin
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Ms. Joan Pantsios
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Drs. Donald A. and Janet Rowley
Manfred Ruddat
Carolyn O. Rusnak
Martha Sabransky
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Footlights ad half 2: Sit Down Cafe

Footlights Ad Available Space

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