

54th Season • 513th Production SEGERSTROM STAGE / OCTOBER 14 - NOVEMBER 11, 2017

South Coast Repertory

Marc Masterson

Paula Tomei
MANAGING DIRECTOR

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

David Emmes & Martin Benson

FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

presents

August Wilson's GEM OF THE OCEAN

Edward E. Haynes

SCENIC DESIGN

Susan Tsu

COSTUME DESIGN

Dawn Chiang

Lindsay Jones
ORIGINAL MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN

Shawn Duan PROJECTION DESIGN

Clevant Derricks

MUSIC DIRECTOR & ARRANGEMENTS

Judith Moreland
DIALECT COACH

Ken Merckx FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

Joshua Marchesi PRODUCTION MANAGER

Joanne DeNaut, CSA
CASTING

Jamie A. Tucker

directed by Kent Gash

John & Mary Tu

Honorary Producers

GEM OF THE OCEAN is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

Originally produced on Broadway by Carole Shorenstein Hays Jujamcyn Theaters

Originally presented at National Playwright's Conference of The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Eli	Matt Orduña
Citizen Barlow	Preston Butler III
Aunt Ester	L. Scott Caldwell
Black Mary	Shinelle Azoroh
Rutherford Selig	Hal Landon Jr.
Solly Two Kings	Cleavant Derricks
Caesar	

SETTING

1904, the Hill District, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1839 Wylie Avenue, the parlor of Eli, Aunt Ester and Black Mary's Home.

LENGTH

Approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, including one 15-minute intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Dramaturg	Andy Knight
Assistant Stage Manager	Alyssa Escalante
SDC Foundation Observer/Assistant Dire	ctor Effie Nkrumah
Costume Design Assistant	Megan Knowles
Stage Management Intern	Anna Klevitt
Light Board Operator	Jacqueline Malenke
Sound Board Operator	Jim Lupercio
Video Technician	Vincent Quan
Automation Operator	Ben Morrow
Deck Crew	Steven McFann
Dressers	Bert Henert, Lisa Leonhardt
Wig and Makeup Technician	Gillian Woodson
Additional Costume Staff	Tara Avila, Su Lin Chen, Lalena Hutton
Alexis I	Riggs, Daniel Stonebreaker, Sarah Timm
Costume Shop Interns Laurinde	a Coxson, Huong Hoang, Kaela D. Mayo

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

Please refrain from unwrapping candy or making other noises that may disturb surrounding patrons.

Videotaping and/or recording of this performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited.

Electronic devices should be turned off or set to non-audible mode during the performance.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.





The cast of August Wilson's Gem of the Ocean: Hal Landon Jr, Shinelle Azoroh, Arnell Powell, L. Scott Caldwell, Preston Butler III, Cleavant Derricks and Matt Orduña with director Kent Gash.

A Note from the Director

often think director's notes are redundant, hoping that the production stands for itself and audiences will have some sort of experience and take something valuable away from the event. When directing plays of the late, great August Wilson (this is my fifth), I know the audience will indeed take away something valuable. In writing The American Century Cycle, August Wilson achieved something unequaled in the annals of world theatrical literature: one play for every decade of the last century, chronicling the lives of African Americans. With the completion of *Radio Golf*, Mr. Wilson finished an epic body of work that is an unparalleled celebration of African-American life gifted to all Americans and, ultimately, to the world.

I had the privilege of working with Mr. Wilson on an intimate production of his King Hedley II at the Alliance Theatre. He was a warm, wonderful, funny man. I was struck by how intently he watched and listened to people. Playwrights are often extremely focused and attentive in rehearsal, but it was real life that seemed most important and required his attention and understanding. Mr. Wilson has said he wanted to write plays about the people no one else wrote plays about. He always seemed more interested in what others might have to say, or what others were doing, than he was in himself. Perhaps this is why his plays feel so intimate, so keenly observed, indelibly capturing the nuances of how we express ourselves and how we live our lives. The poetry, pain, struggles, love, music and beauty of everyday life. African lives in America, born out of the brutality of the Middle Passage and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the origin of Black people in this country.

Consider these facts:

According to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Database, 10.7 million people survived the Middle Passage voyages from Africa to North and South America and to the Caribbean.

In the early years alone, conservative estimates number 85,000 Africans lost to the sea. Due to the steady abundance of human flesh in the ocean from the slave ships, sharks and scavenger birds learned to trail the ships in order to feast on the bodies.

The overall slave trade in North and South America resulted in 1.8 million deaths of African people.

This is not Black or African-American history, but an essential part of how America has become America. The story belongs to all of us. How do Black people achieve self-determined freedom and stand as Americans in August Wilson's Pittsburgh of 1904 or anywhere in America in 2017, when we feel we have targets on our back and are often under siege, if we do not collectively engage and attempt to reckon with this origin story? Can we achieve our authentic selves if we do not know who, what and where we come from?

I can think of no other play in world theatrical literature that attempts to untangle the knots, the bloody origins of Black people in America, more beautifully than August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*.

So live!

—Kent Gash

August Wilson and The American Century Cycle

by Andy Knight

etween the years of 1979 and 2005, playwright August Wilson wrote his extraordinary American Century Cycle, a series of 10 plays that offers an expansive look at the black experience in 20th-century America. Wilson set each play in a different decade—the cycle begins with Gem of the Ocean, set in 1904, and ends with Radio Golf, set in 1997—and all but one (Ma Rainey's Black Bottom) take place in Pittsburgh's Hill District, the hub of the city's black culture and Wilson's place of birth.

Wilson, the son of a white German father and a black American mother, was born Frederick August Kittel Jr. in 1945. His father, Frederick Kittel Sr., was absent for most of his childhood, and

to Hazelwood, a neighbor-

hood with a predominantly white population. As the

only black student in his

high school class, Wilson

son's thirst for knowledge led

him to the public library,

where he spent his days

reading books. And

what he couldn't find

in books. Wilson

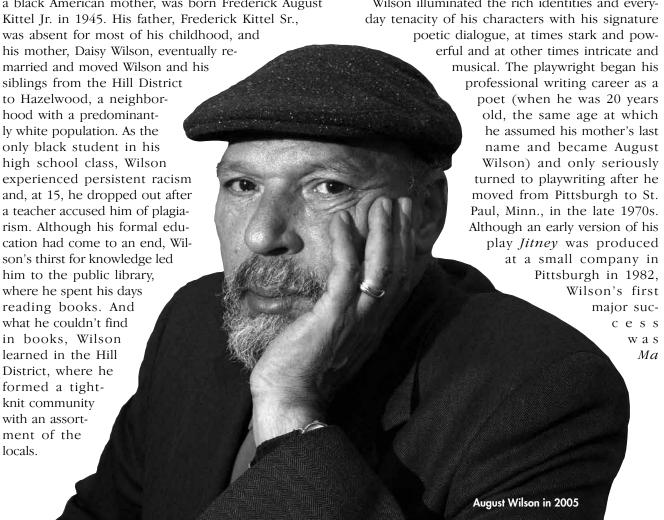
learned in the Hill

District, where he formed a tightknit community with an assortment of the

locals.

vears, the characters in Wilson's 10-play cycle navigate the multifaceted experience of being black in America-from embracing their African roots and cultural touchstones to enduring a racist society to watching their neighborhood change. In a New York Times article published in 2000, Wilson wrote, "I wanted to place [black American] culture on stage in all its richness and fullness and to demonstrate its ability to sustain us in all areas of human life and endeavor and through profound moments of our history in which the larger society has thought less of us than we have thought of ourselves." Wilson illuminated the rich identities and every-

Like the real-life Hill residents from his formative









Rainey's Black Bottom, which premiered at Yale Repertory Theatre in 1984 and then opened on Broadway later that year.

With Ma Rainey, Wilson established himself as a major American playwright. The production was also the start of one of the most important working relationships in Wilson's career—his partnership with Ma Rainey's director, Lloyd Richards. In 1959, Richards broke barriers as the first black director on Broadway with his staging of Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun. By the time Wilson began writing plays, Richards was the artistic director at the National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center and Yale Repertory Theatre, as well as dean of the Yale School of Drama. At each institution, Richards nurtured the careers of playwrights-including Wilson, whom he met when he directed a workshop of Ma Rainey at the O'Neill in 1982. Wilson and Richards continued to collaborate after their initial success, and over the course of Wilson's career, Richards directed six of The American Century Cycle plays' original Broadway productions.







Clockwise from top left: Wilson's mother, Daisy Wilson, in 1965; Wilson's home until he was 13 at 1727 Bedford Avenue in the Crawford-Roberts neighborhood of Pittsburgh; the lower Hill District in 1956; Wilson in a school photo at 15; Wilson at 14. Yale Repertory's 1984 world premiere production of Ma Rainey's Black Bottom.

Although he didn't intend to write a 10-play cycle at the start of his playwriting career, Wilson discovered his artistic mission—which was already underway—after he had completed *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. "I'd written three plays that were all set in different decades," Wilson told playwright Suzan-Lori Parks in a 2005 *American Theatre Magazine* interview. "[I thought] why don't I continue to do that?" Wilson added, "I would just pick a decade and go....It was all one work, and I hadn't finished, so I couldn't stop and rest on my laurels or be satisfied or wonder about where it's gone."

In the fall of 2005, shortly after he finished *Radio Golf*, the final chapter of his master work, Wilson died of liver cancer. His incredible legacy, however, lives on. Of his plays, Wilson said, "I wanted to show the world that there is no idea or concept in the human experience that cannot be examined through black life and culture." The lasting relevance of his work—and its unwavering popularity—proves that he achieved just that.

August Wilson's Century

The 10-Play Cycle

GEM OF THE OCEAN

(set in 1904; completed in 2004)

Bewildered by the collapse of the old slave regime, the first generation of black Americans—recently freed from slavery and unprepared for the backlash by whites against their newly acquired freedom—head north. Aunt Ester, the drama's 285-year-old fiery matriarch, welcomes into her home Citizen Barlow, a young man from Alabama searching for a new life.

JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE (set in 1911; completed in 1988)

Haunted by seven years on a chain gang, Herald Loomis appears in Pittsburgh to reunite his family. Surrounded by the vibrant tenants of a black board-

THEY COULD MAKE A WHOLE PLAY ABOUT THE DAY WE RECORDED

Market Rainey's Black Bottom

NARINEY'S Black

ing house, he fights for his soul and his song in the dawning days of a century without slavery.



MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

(set in 1927; completed in 1984)

The only play in the cycle that takes place outside of Pittsburgh, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom delves into the sultry and dangerous 1920s blues scene in Chicago. Ma Rainey was a renowned vocalist, famous for her deep and forthright interpretation of the

blues. When Levee, a man deeply scarred by the harassment and dismissal of his worth by white society, strays from the group to reach for a solo career, the magic of the band is broken.

THE PIANO LESSON

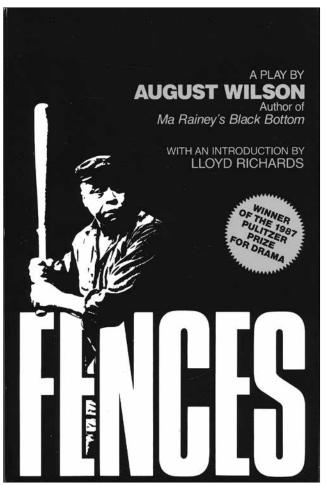
(set in 1936; completed in 1990)

The Piano Lesson is set in the house of a family of black Americans that has migrated from Mississippi to Pittsburg. The conflict centers on a piano that was once traded by the family's white master for two of the family's ancestors. Siblings Boy Willie and Berniece argue about the literal and symbolic worth of the piano and whether or not to sell it.

SEVEN GUITARS

(set in 1948; completed in 1996)

This story of blues guitarist Floyd "Schoolboy" Barton unravels in flashbacks after his untimely death. In the time since recording his first album, Floyd has squandered all his money, left his girlfriend for another woman, and then was left by the other woman, pawned his guitar and spent time in jail after being arrested while walking home from his mother's funeral. Floyd's second chance at success beckons and inspires hope until his life is cut tragically short.



community of folks in Pittsburgh's Hill District. When developers come for the building that houses Memphis' diner, he vows to make the city give him a fair price and is willing to go through fire to get it. No one knows quite what Memphis has been through, but all soon realize that this is his most important stand.

JITNEY

(set in 1977; first written in 1979; rewritten and expanded in 1996)

Eager to gentrify the neighborhood, the city threatens to level a makeshift taxi dispatch office that has served as a community gathering place for years. As he tries to stave off the city, the owner of the cab company faces his own inner struggle. After a 20-year stint in prison for murder, his son is returning home. *Jitney* tells the story of a generation recognizing its mortality while the next must face its responsibility.



KING HEDLEY II (set in 1985; completed in 2001)

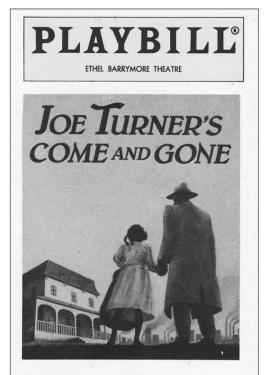
Described as one of Wilson's darkest plays, *King Hedley II* centers on King, the son of Hedley and Ruby from *Seven Guitars*. We meet King as a grown man in 1980s Pittsburgh, fighting to survive a life that seems never to look bright. King is an ex-con; he's trying to save \$10,000 by selling stolen refrigerators so that he can buy a video store. But a secret buried deep in the past becomes the seed for King's doom.

FENCES (set in 1957; completed in 1987)

Baseball always made sense to Troy Maxson: a man gets three strikes and he's out. As a young man, Troy found an opportunity to play by the rules and win in this most American of pastimes. But when his rapid rise through the Negro leagues hit the ceiling of racial prejudice, Troy was forced to let go of his dream of major league success. Now, much older and more bitter, Troy has to figure out how to deal with a son who has dreams of his own.

TWO TRAINS RUNNING (set in 1969; completed in 1992)

Memphis is hardly making a large profit with his modest diner, but the place has long sustained a small



RADIO GOLF (set in 1997; completed in 2005)

Wilson's cycle comes full circle as Aunt Ester's one-time home at 1839 Wylie Avenue from *Gem of the Ocean* is slated for demolition to make way for a slick new real estate venture that aims to boost both the depressed Hill District and Harmond Wilks' chance of becoming the city's first black mayor. *Radio Golf* is a play in which history, memory and legacy challenge notions of progress and country club ideals.

The Middle Passage

n the summer of 1619—285 years before August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* begins—the *White Lion*, an English ship, docked near the Jamestown settlement in the Colony of Virginia. Approximately 20 captives, likely Kimbundu-speaking people from southwest Africa, were aboard the vessel and sold into slavery in exchange for food. The Atlantic slave trade had come to North America.

By the early 17th century, Europeans had already been exporting enslaved Africans to the so-called New World for more than 100 years. The Portuguese, French, English, Dutch and, to a lesser extent, Spanish had profited

greatly from the capture of people along Africa's West Coast, and the labor-intensive crops—such as tobacco, cotton sugarcanegrown in the European colonies across South America and the nearby islands kept the demand for slaves high. By the 18th century, the industry was booming, and England, with colonies across the Americas, had firmly established its preeminence in the barbaric slave trade.

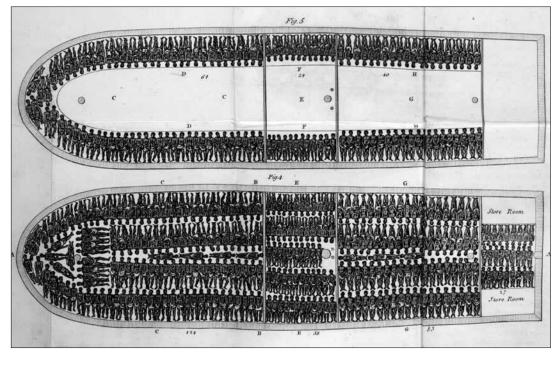
Between 1500 and 1866, 12.5 million

Africans boarded slave ships bound for the Americas, and approximately 15 to 20 percent died before reaching land. The treacherous journey—known as the Middle Passage, because it was the second leg of a European slave ship's triangular trade route—lasted anywhere from five weeks to three months, depending on sailing conditions. Because of the high mortality rate among the imprisoned Africans, many slave captains crammed as much human cargo onto their ships as possible to offset their inevitable losses.

On a typical slave ship, male captives were kept below deck, in the cargo hold, shackled together in pairs to limit mobility; women, also in the hold but in a separate compartment, were often left unshackled; young children, for the most part, were allowed to roam. For 16 hours a day,

the African men and women remained trapped in the dark, fetid hold. The cramped quarters were unventilated, unsanitary and full of rats and fleas. Many died from diseases such as smallpox and dysentery. The eight hours that the captives spent on deck often proved even more unbearable: crew members beat the men and raped the women. They tossed the sick prisoners into the ocean and forced the rest to dance, hoping that physical activity would decrease aggression and prevent an uprising.

While mutinies did occur on slave ships—and were even successful in rare instances—death was the most common and reliable source of liberation for the prisoners.



Images such as white abolitionist Thomas Clarkson's 1789 diagram of captives aboard a slave ship (above) helped shed light on the horrors of the Middle Passage.

Most died from disease or at the hands of their captors, but some used suicide as a form of retaliation. Prisoners threw themselves overboard; others refused to eat. No matter the cause, loss of life was an everyday occurrence, and the bodies thrown into the Atlantic fed the sharks that closely followed the ships.

Once on land, the Africans who survived the Middle Passage faced more horrors. Their harrowing journeys across the ocean ended only in more bondage, abuse and dehumanization. They were now slaves in the Americas.

Pittsburgh on the Eve of the Great Migration

t the start of the 20th century, almost 90 percent of black Americans lived in the South. Many were in rural areas and worked as sharecroppers on land owned by white Americans, to whom they were obligated to sell most of the cotton that they grew. Financial stability proved nearly impossible for sharecroppers: landowners charged a great deal for the use of their farming supplies and then paid very little for the crops. In addition to economic oppression, black Southerners faced injustices in all other aspects of their daily lives. With the Plessy v. Ferguson ruling in 1896, the United States Supreme Court upheld racial segregation in public accommodations, thus giving a rubber stamp to the racist Jim Crow laws that were spreading across the South. But the very lives—not just the livelihoods—of Southern blacks were in danger, too. Lynchings were a perpetual threat and little was done to prevent them.

In search of better futures, black Americans began to leave the rural South in the early 1900s. At first, many moved to Southern cities, but news of more industrial jobs and better wages in the North spread quickly. Soon black migrants set their sights on cities such as New York, Chicago, Detroit and Pittsburgh. By 1916, the Great Migration was underway and, over the next 50 years, approximately six million black Americans would relocate from the South to the Northeast, Midwest and West Coast.

While the Great Migration was still nascent in 1904, when *Gem of the Ocean* takes place, Pittsburgh's black population had already begun to grow. At that time, many of the city's new black residents were men who had come north in search of jobs. Some were single and looking for permanent employment, while others left families behind in search of temporary work. They took on a variety of occupations including day laborer, deliveryman, janitor, barber, porter and waiter. Most of the city's black women worked, as well, making their livings as domestic servants or laundresses. But while Pittsburgh was the country's steel capital, only a small portion of the black population—approximately 11 percent—found jobs in the metal industries.

Historians attribute early black migrants' inability to find work in Pittsburgh's steel mills to racist hiring practices.



Black artist Albert Alexander Smith's political cartoon, *The Reason* (above), was published in the NAACP's *The Crisis* magazine in March 1920. The gruesome image depicts one of the primary reasons black Americans left the South: the fear of lynching. Between 1882 and 1968, almost 3,500 black Americans were lynched, and the majority of these lynchings occurred in the South.

White foremen typically chose white Eastern European immigrants over black Americans, largely based on stereotypes attributed to both groups of people (at the time, many considered Eastern Europeans to be docile and reliable and black Americans to be unstable and inefficient). And unlike their white counterparts, black steel workers rarely saw their family members and friends hired at the same mills. The labor unions that dominated the steel industry in the early 20th century also willfully excluded black workers and, in more than a few instances, black men, desperate for work, took jobs as strikebreakers.

In 1917, the United States entered World War I, and the number of black migrants employed in Pittsburgh's steel mills quickly climbed. In this regard, Pittsburgh was no exception: the need for manufacturing labor during wartime increased black populations across the North. But while many black Americans were able to secure jobs, they remained marginalized and underserved members of society—especially as overtly racist practices, like housing and school segregation, became more widespread in the North.

Wilson at SCR

uring the course of his celebrated career, August Wilson won numerous awards including two Pulitzer Prizes (for *Fences* in 1987 and *The Piano Lesson* in 1990) and the Tony Award for Best Play (*Fences*). As of 2017, all 10 plays in The American Century Cycle have been produced on Broadway and they continue to be seen at theatres across the country.

In 1999, South Coast Repertory produced *The Piano Lesson*, which marked the first time the theatre performed a work by Wilson. Since then, SCR has produced *Fences* (2010) and *Jitney* (2012). Below are some photos from these three productions.















Clockwise from top left: Ellis E. Williams, David McKnight and Larry Bates in *Jitney*; Charlie Robinson and Larry Bates in *Fences*; Larry Bates and Kristy Johnson (foreground) and Ellis E. Williams and James A. Watson Jr. in *Jitney*; Juanita Jennings and Charlie Robinson in *Fences*; Victor Mack, Ricco Ross, Kim Staunton and Charlie Robinson in *The Piano Lesson*; Ricco Ross, Ted Lange, Charlie Robinson and Victor Mack in *The Piano Lesson*; Charlie Robinson and Gregg Daniel in *Fences*; Larry Bates and Kristy Johnson in *Jitney*. Photos by Henry DiRocco.

Artist Biographies



Shinelle Azoroh
Black Mary

is delighted to make her debut at South Coast Repertory in *Gem* of the Ocean. Her credits include Blues for an Alabama Sky (Lorraine Hansberry Theater), Seven Guitars (Marin Theatre Company)

and *Marcus*; or the Secret of Sweet (American Conservatory Theater). Her film and television credits include Only You, Betty and Coretta, "Code Black" and Nostalgia. She is an MFA graduate of the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, Calif. shinelleazoroh.com



PRESTON BUTLER III
Citizen Barlow

is an actor, filmmaker and musician who has worked with an array of extraordinary artists including "Insecure" creator and star Issa Rae; award-winning Chinese director and playwright Stan

Lai; and Def Poetry's Dahlak Brathwaite. In 2016, Butler garnered international acclaim at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for his co-creation and performance in the eerily exciting "concert drama" *Dead Awaken*. Butler will tour France in 2018 with *FORE!*, a new play written by 2017 Relentless Award-winner Aleshea Harris. His credits include *Hecuba* (Agamemnon) at the Stella Adler Theatre in Hollywood and *Cotton Patch Gospel* (John the Baptist) at American Coast Theater Company. He is a graduate of the MFA acting program at the California Institute of the Arts and the performance/directing program at Vanguard University of Southern California. Phil 4:13



L. SCOTT CALDWELL

Aunt Ester

is a Chicago native who started her career as a company member of the famed Negro Ensemble Company and made her Broadway debut in the Tony Award-nominated play *Home*. She starred as

the first black millionaire, Madame CJ Walker, in The

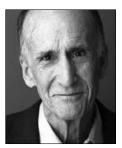
Dreams of Sarah Breedlove at the Goodman Theatre, winning the Ruby Dee Award. She won an Obie Award for her performance in Lee Blessing's Going to St. Ives, a Helen Hayes Award for her critically acclaimed performance in Neil Simon's Proposals and the Tony Award for August Wilson's Joe Turner's Come and Gone. She has starred in world premieres of plays by Wole Soyinka, Athol Fugard and Leslie Lee. Her film credits include The Case for Christ; Concussion; The Perfect Guy; Gridiron Gang; The Fugitive; Waiting to Exhale; Mystery; Alaska; Dragonfly; Devil in the Blue Dress; The Net; and Dutch. Television viewers know her from her portrayal of Rose on ABC's "Lost." She was a series regular on the CBS dramedy "Queens Supreme" and the PBS series "Mercy Street." She has had recurring roles on "The Secret Life of the American Teenager," "Low Winter Sun," "Southland," "The Last Tycoon," "Insecure" and, most recently, "How to Get Away with Murder." She has guest-starred in more than 30 television series including "Brooklyn 99" as Andre Braugher's mother.



CLEAVANT DERRICKS
Solly Two Kings

is making his SCR debut. He created the role of James Thunder Early for *Dreamgirls*, which garnered him Tony and Drama Desk awards for best featured actor as well as the Los Angeles Drama Cir-

cle Award for vocal arrangements. For his work in Bob Fosse's Broadway production Big Deal, Derricks was nominated for Tony and Drama Desk awards for Best Actor. His other Broadway credits include the revival of Hair, Vinette Carroll's Your Arms Too Short to Box with God, But Never Jam Today and Brooklyn the Musical. He received the NAACP Theatre Award for Best Male Performance for his portrayal of Horse in the *Full* Monty national tour. Derricks was awarded the Heroes and Legends Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre; served as composer, musical director and featured actor for the musical When Hell Freezes Over, I'll Skate, which aired as a PBS special; and starred in Cy Coleman's Like Jazz at the Mark Taper Forum. His film roles include Moscow on the Hudson, The Slugger's Wife, Offbeat, Carnival of Souls, Bluffing It, Miami Magma, Basilisk and World Traveler. His appearances as a television series regular include "Sliders," "Thea," "Drexell's Class," "Good Sports" and "Woops!" Some of his television guest appearances include "Touched by an Angel," "Charmed," "The Practice," "The Bernie Mac Show," "Cold Case" and David E. Kelly's "Wedding Bells."



Hal Landon Jr.
Rutherford Selig

is an SCR Founding Artist who has appeared in *All the Way, Going to a Place where you Already Are, Rest, The Fantasticks, The Trip to Bountiful, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Hamlet, Nothing Sacred,*

Man from Nebraska, Born Yesterday, A View from the Bridge, Habeas Corpus, Antigone, The Drawer Boy (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award nomination), Major Barbara and Tartuffe. His other credits include Arcadia, Our Town, Sidney Bechet Killed a Man, BAFO, Six Degrees of Separation, An Ideal Husband, A Mess of Plays by Chris Durang, Faith Healer, Green Icebergs, The Miser, Our Country's Good and Waiting for Godot. He created the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in SCR's A Christmas Carol and has performed it in each of its 37 years. He appeared in *Leander Stillwell* (Mark Taper Forum), Henry V (The Old Globe) and as Polonius in Hamlet (Shakespeare Orange County). Among his television and film credits are "The Closer," "My Name is Earl," "CSI: NY," "Mad Men," The Artist, Trespass, Pacific Heights, Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure, the Netflix film Pee Wee's Big Holiday and the HBO film All the Way.



MATT ORDUÑA

Eli

is very excited to be working with South Coast Repertory. His theatrical roles include Abioseh in *Les Blancs* at Rogue Machine Theatre; Bilal in *Bars & Measures* (*Stage Raw* nominee, Los Angeles Drama

Critics Circle Award nominee for lead performance in a play) at The Theatre @ Boston Court; Gabriel in *Fences* at International City Theatre (Ovation Award nominee for Featured Performance); Teresias in *Oedipus El Rey* and Albert/Kevin in *Clybourne Park* at San Diego Repertory Theatre; Duncan in *Macbeth* at A Noise Within; and Flip in *Stick Fly* at Mo'oelo Performing Arts Company. His film and television credits include *I Don't Feel at Home in This World Anymore* (Sundance Grand Jury Award), *Grace of Jake, Baby Steps, Better Half:*

The Story of Tony & Leo, "NCIS: Los Angeles," "NCIS," "Ironside," "Pretty Little Liars," "The Fosters," "Switched at Birth," "Days of Our Lives," "Sons of Anarchy," "Mob City," "Family Tools" and "Legit." He earned his MFA in 2001 from the University of Washington Professional Actor Training Program. He is very excited to be working with this wonderful cast and crew. Thank you to Tinia and Autumn for their love and support



ARNELL POWELL

Caesar

is making his SCR debut. He appeared off-Broadway in *The Blacks* (The Classical Theatre of Harlem) and *Othello* (Veteran's Center for the Performing Arts) and in the national tour of *Bring in 'da Noise*,

Bring in 'da Funk. Regionally, he has appeared in Pericles Redux (Kirk Douglas Theatre), Antony and Cleopatra (Guthrie Theater) and Black Sheep (Eugene O'Neill Theater Center/National Playwrights Conference). His film credits include Hidden Figures, The Conjuring and Soul Ties. On television, he has had recurring roles on "Greenleaf," "The Mick," "Switched at Birth," "The Red Road" and "Drop Dead Diva" and guest-starring roles on "Lethal Weapon," "Bosch," "Castle," "NCIS," "The Shield" and "Cold Case." He earned his MFA at the NYU Graduate Acting Program. arnellpowell.com

PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR AND DESIGNERS

AUGUST WILSON (Playwright, April 27, 1945-Oct. 2, 2005) authored Gem of the Ocean, Joe Turner's Come and Gone, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, The Piano Lesson, Seven Guitars, Fences, Two Trains Running, Jitney, King Hedley II and Radio Golf. These works explore the heritage and experience of the descendants of Africans in North America, decade-by-decade, over the course of the 20th century, forming the compilation entitled The American Century Cycle. His plays have been produced on Broadway, at regional theatres across the country and all over the world. In 2003, Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show, How I Learned What I Learned, currently touring and featuring Eugene Lee reprising Wilson's role. Wilson's works garnered many awards including Pulitzer Prizes for Fences (1987) and The Piano Lesson (1990); a Tony Award for Fences; Great Britain's Olivier Award for Jitney; as well as seven New York Drama Critics Circle Awards for Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Fences, Joe Turner's Come and Gone, The Piano Lesson, Two Trains Running, Seven Guitars and Jitney. Additionally, the cast recording of Ma Rainey's Black Bottom received a 1985 Grammy Award. In 1995, Wilson received an Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of *The Piano Lesson*. His early works include the one-act plays *The Janitor*, *Recycle*, *The* Coldest Day of the Year, Malcolm X, The Homecoming, and the musical satire, Black Bart and the Sacred Hills. He was the recipient of many fellowships and awards including the Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in Playwriting, the Whiting Writers Award, 2003 Heinz Award and a 1999 National Humanities Medal from President Bill Clinton. Wilson received numerous honorary degrees from colleges and universities, as well as the only high school diploma ever issued by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. He was an alumnus of New Dramatists, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a 1995 inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Letters and on Oct. 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theatre located at 245 West 52nd Street as The August Wilson Theatre. Today, his plays continue to be produced and his place in the American Theatre continues to grow. New York Public Radio recorded all 10 plays in the The American Century Cycle at the Greene Space, casting many of the actors who worked on the original productions and PBS aired a documentary The Ground On Which I Stand, as part of the "American Masters" series. Born and raised in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Penn., Wilson lived in Seattle, Wash., at the time of his death. He was survived by his two daughters, Sakina Ansari and Azula Carmen Wilson, and his wife, costume designer Constanza Romero, who is the executor of his estate.

KENT GASH (*Director*) is making his SCR directorial debut. In addition to directing the acclaimed world premiere of Robert O'Hara's Barbecue (The Public Theater), his other New York productions include Brokeology (The Juilliard School); Miss Evers' Boys (Melting Pot Theatre, off-Broadway premiere); Call the Children Home (Primary Stages); Duke Ellington's Beggars Holiday (York Theatre Company); and the off-Broadway revival of *Home*. His regional productions include *The* Mountaintop (Trinity Repertory Company); The Legend of Georgia McBride (Marin Theatre Company); Wig Out! (Studio Theatre, Washington, D.C.); The Comedy of Errors (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); and in 2018, The Wiz (Ford's Theatre). Gash directed Harriet's Return starring Debbie Allen (Geffen Playhouse-Kennedy Center co-production). Elsewhere, his credits include August Wilson's Seven Guitars (Marin Theatre); Mahalia (Cleveland Play House); The Brothers Size (McCarter Theater IN-Festival); Wig Out! (Sundance Theatre Institute); Native Son (world premiere, adapted and directed for Intiman Theatre); and Ain't Misbehavin' (Arizona Theatre Company). For Theatre Virginia, Gash directed the first African-American production of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. His other directing credits include August Wilson's Radio Golf, Joe Turner's Come and Gone and King Hedley II; and Suzan Lori-Park's Topdog/Underdog (Trinity Repertory Theatre, New Repertory Theatre; winner, Elliot Norton Award, Best Director, 2004-05). Gash is the former associate artistic director of both the Alliance Theatre and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and is founding director of the New Studio on Broadway, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University.

EDWARD E. HAYNES (Scenic Design) is excited to be working on Gem of the Ocean. His regional credits include School for Scandal, Having Our Say and Carpa Clash (Mark Taper Forum); Solomania and All Wear Bowlers (Kirk Douglas Theatre); Two Trains Running, Crowns, Fraternity and The Gospel at Colonus (Ebony Repertory Theatre); *Native Son* (Intiman Theatre); Emergency! (Geffen Playhouse); Voir Dire and From the Mississippi Delta (Trinity Repertory Company); Having Our Say and All Wear Bowlers (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); My Fair Lady (The Hollywood Bowl); God of Carnage, Radio Golf, Gem of the Ocean and Sleuth (Alliance Theatre); Tunisia, Blues for an Alabama Sky and Aaronville Dawning (Alabama Shakespeare Festival); and many productions he can no longer remember. His television credits include MTV's "Spring Break" (2011, 2012); "Hip Hop Harry" (Discovery Kids/TLC); and "Culture Clash" (Fox TV). Haynes is the proud father of twins, Denis and Wesly, and husband to director Elizabeth Bell-Haynes.

Susan Tsu (Costume Design) is an award-winning costume designer whose designs have graced the stages of major League of Resident Theatre venues in the United States as well as international theatres the world over. Her production highlights include the hit musical Godspell, The Joy Luck Club, a first-time collaboration between Chinese and American companies touring the Pacific Rim, and The Balcony at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre. She is the recipient of many awards including the 2016 Irene Sharaff Lifetime Achievement, the NY Drama Desk, NY Drama Critics, NY Young Film Critics, L.A. Distinguished Designer awards and a Kennedy Center Medal of Achievement. Her designs have been seen internationally in China, Russia, the Pacific Rim and the Czech Republic and have been in numerous exhibitions, books and publications. Tsu co-curated the national and student exhibitions for the 2007 Prague Quadrennial, and was artistic director for the USITT-USA-PQ 2011 exhibition. She was co-curator of the USA designers submitted to Costume at the Turn of the Century: 1990-2015 and is chief curator for a new exhibition featuring the work of emerging designers: Innovative Costume of the 21st Century: The Next Generation, premiering in Moscow in 2019. Her current design assignments include *Shakespeare in Love* at South Coast Repertory and *The Book of Will* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Tsu headed the costume programs at Boston University and the University of Texas at Austin before joining the faculty of Carnegie Mellon University, her alma mater.

DAWN CHIANG (Lighting Design) started her lighting design career at South Coast Repertory, where she designed 10 productions including The Time of Your Life, which opened the Fourth Step Theatre (now known as the Segerstrom Stage). On Broadway, she designed the lighting for Zoot Suit, was co-designer for Tango Pasion and associate lighting designer for Show Boat, The Life and the original Broadway production of La Cage Aux Folles. Off-Broadway, she has designed for the Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theatre Club and co-designed the first two seasons of the Encores! concert musical series at City Center. Chiang was resident lighting designer for New York City Opera and has worked for the concert tours of Paul Anka, The Carpenters, Diana Ross and Loggins and Messina. She has designed the lighting at numerous other regional theatres including the Mark Taper Forum, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Guthrie Theater, Alliance Theatre and Arena Stage. She has earned two *Drama-*Logue Critics Awards, two Lighting Designer of the Year awards (Syracuse Area Live Theatre) and nominations for the San Francisco Drama Critics Award, Los Angeles Drama Critics' Award and the Hewes Design Award from American Theatre Wing.

LINDSAY JONES (*Original Music and Sound Design*) returns to SCR where he previously designed *Once*, *The Madwoman in the Volvo*; *One Man, Two Guvnors*; *Smokefall*; and *Vesuvius*. He designed and composed for the Broadway productions of *Bronx Bombers* and *A Time to Kill*. His off-Broadway credits include *Bella*, *Bootycandy* (Playwrights Horizons), *Mr. Joy* (LCT3), *Privacy, Dry Powder, Barbecue* (The Public Theater), *Top Secret* (New York Theatre Workshop) and *Discord* (Primary Stages). His regional credits include the Guth-

rie Theater, Hartford Stage, Alliance Theatre, Goodman Theatre, American Conservatory Theater, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse and Arena Stage. His international work includes Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Canada and Royal Shakespeare Company in the U.K. He has received seven Joseph Jefferson Awards and 24 nominations; two Ovation Awards and three nominations; a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award; three Drama Desk Award nominations; two Helen Hayes Award nominations; and many others. His film scoring credits include Magnolia Pictures' *The Brass Teapot* and HBO Films' *A Note of Triumph: The Golden Age of Norman Corwin* (2006 Academy Award for Best Documentary, Short Subject). lindsayjones.com.

Shawn Duan (*Projection Design*) is a New York-based projection designer and media consultant. He was the video designer for Chinglish on Broadway and for the SCR and Berkeley Repertory Theatre co-production of the show. His off-Broadway and New York credits include Knickerbocker and Before Your Eyes (The Public Theater). His regional credits include Chasing Rainbows, FLY and Miss Saigon (Flat Rock Playhouse), Refugia (The Guthrie Theater), Tarzan (North Shore Music Theatre), Buyer and Cellar (Pittsburgh Public Theater), Shakespeare in Love, Twelfth Night, Vietgone and The Comedy of Errors (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), I Sing the Rising Sea, The Great Gatsby and The Other Place (Virginia Stage Company), Vietgone (Seattle Repertory Theatre) and *The Mountaintop* (Trinity Repertory Company). His opera credits include Prima Donna (New York City Opera) and Benjamin Button the Opera (Symphony Space). He designed for national and international tours for An Evening with Pacino, PJ Masks Live!, Alvin and the Chipmunks Live!, Super Why! Live!, Yo Gabba Gabba! Live! and for the Las Vegas shows Frankie Moreno: Under the Influence, Paul Zerdin: Mouthing Off and Puppet Up: Uncensored.

JUDITH MORELAND (*Dialect Coach*) has performed as an actor both on and off-Broadway and has worked



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with many theatre companies including the New York Shakespeare Festival, Playwrights Horizons, Ensemble Studio Theater Los Angeles and Shakespeare Festival/ LA. This past spring, she originated the role of Gloria in the Fountain Theatre's world premiere of Building the Wall by Robert Schenkkan. She was a company member at San Francisco's American Conservatory Theater for many years and won a Bay Area Theater Critics Award for her performance in ACT's production of Miss Evers' Boys. She just finished directing Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' An Octoroon for Capital Stage Company in Sacramento. Her other directing credits include *Three Sisters* and *The* Kentucky Cycle at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, where she is currently a faculty member and teaches acting, voice, speech and dialects. She is the cocreator of UCLA's Professional Program in Acting for the Camera. Moreland has also taught at Stanford University, the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and the British-American Drama Academy in Oxford, England. judithmoreland.com

KEN MERCKX (Fight Choreographer) has choreographed fights and taught actors combat for film, television, and at universities all across the country. He is presently a faculty member at AMDA College and Conservatory of Performing Arts (Hollywood). He is the resident fight choreographer for the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Great Lakes Theater (Cleveland), Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival and A Noise Within (Los Angeles). Merckx received his MFA in acting from University of Illinois and his BA in theatre studies from the University of Washington.

JAMIE A. TUCKER (*Stage Manager*) is excited to be returning to SCR after three years away. Tucker completed his MFA in dance, specializing in stage management, at UC Irvine in 1994, and his MBA in marketing from the University of Redlands in 2014. He is currently a professor of stage management and production management at CSU Fullerton. At SCR, he has stage-managed or assisted on more than 60 productions. Some of his favorites have been the world premieres of *Three Days of Rain, The*

Violet Hour, The Dazzle, The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow and Mr. Marmalade. His other favorites include Elemeno Pea, Jitney, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Crimes of the Heart, Fences, Anna in the Tropics, The Trip to Bountiful, A View from the Bridge, Chinglish, Death of a Salesman, Hamlet and The Light in the Piazza. He had the pleasure of working seven seasons on La Posada Mágica and six seasons at the helm of A Christmas Carol. If you can't find him in the theatre, he is likely to be riding his bike through the canyons of south Orange County. He is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

ALYSSA ESCALANTE (Assistant Stage Manager) is excited to be working on her first SCR production. Her stage management credits include Hold These Truths (Pasadena Playhouse), The House in Scarsdale, My Barking Dog, The Missing Pages of Lewis Carroll, Happy Days, Se Llama Cristina, R2, Cassiopeia, Creation (Theatre @ Boston Court), The Secret Garden (MainStreet Theatre Company), The Haunted House Party, Mojada: a Medea in Los Angeles (Getty Villa), Criers for Hire (East West Players) and Cash on Delivery (El Portal Theatre). She also toured the U.S. with *Placas: the Most Danger*ous Tattoo. Additionally, Escalante is the database manager and administrative associate at Cornerstone Theater Company. She graduated from Occidental College with a BA in theatre. She is tremendously grateful to her family for their constant love and support.

MARC MASTERSON (Artistic Director) has expanded the theatre's community and artistic initiatives and produced dozens of world premieres including A Doll's House, Part 2 by Lucas Hnath, Vietgone by Qui Nguyen, Mr. Wolf by Rajiv Joseph and Office Hour by Julia Cho. In recent years, SCR productions have transferred to some of the leading theatres in the country including Manhattan Theatre Club, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and The Goodman Theatre. His recent directing credits include All the Way, Going to a Place where you Already Are, Zealot, Death of a Salesman, Eurydice and Elemeno Pea at SCR; Bybalia, Mississippi by Evan Linder at the Contemporary American Theatre Festival; As You



Like It for the Houston Shakespeare Festival; and The Kite Runner at Actors Theatre of Louisville and the Cleveland Play House. He served for 11 years as artistic director of Actors Theatre of Louisville and produced the Humana Festival of New American Plays, where he produced more than 100 world premieres, expanded audiences and the repertoire, deepened arts education programs and spearheaded numerous community-based projects. The world premieres he directed at the Humana Festival include works by Charles Mee, Wendell Berry, Craig Wright, Eric Coble, Adam Bock, Gina Gionfriddo, Melanie Marnich, and Rick Dresser. His other Louisville directing credits include A Midsummer Night's Dream, Shipwrecked! An Entertainment, Glengarry Glen Ross, The Tempest, Mary's Wedding and The Crucible. He served as artistic director of City Theatre in Pittsburgh for 20 years and was founder and chairman of the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Alliance. He has served as a theatre advisory panel member for the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as numerous foundations. He won the Man of the Year Vectors Award, and received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pittsburgh New Works Festival.

PAULA TOMEI (Managing Director) is responsible for the overall administration of SCR. She has been managing director since 1994 and a member of SCR's staff since 1979. She is a past president of the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for theatre. In addition, she served as treasurer of TCG, vice president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and as a member of the LORT Negotiating Committee for industry-wide union agreements. She represents SCR at national conferences of TCG and LORT and served as a theatre panelist and site visitor for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the California Arts Council. Her teaching background includes a graduate class in non profit management at UC Irvine (UCI) and as a guest lecturer in the graduate school of business at Stanford. She was appointed by the chancellor to UCI's Community Arts Council, serves on the Dean's Leadership Society Executive Committee for the School of Social Sciences at UCI and is a member of the College of Arts Dean's Task Force for California State University, Fullerton. She is also on the board of Arts Orange County, the county-wide arts council, and the board of the Nicholas Endowment. She graduated from UCI with a degree in economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance. In March 2017, she received the Mayor's Award from the City of Costa Mesa for her contributions to the arts community.

MARTIN BENSON (Founding Artistic Director), cofounder of SCR, has directed nearly one-fourth of SCR's productions. In 2008, he and David Emmes received the Margo Jones Award for their lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and fostering the art and craft of American playwriting. They also accepted SCR's 1988 Tony Award for Outstanding Resident Professional Theatre and won the 1995 Theatre L.A. Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Benson has received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Distinguished Achievement in Directing an unparalleled seven times for George Bernard Shaw's Major Barbara, Misalliance and Heartbreak House; John Millington Synge's Playboy of the Western World; Arthur Miller's The Crucible; Sally Nemeth's *Holy Days*; and the world premiere of Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning Wit, which he also directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre and Houston's Alley Theatre. He has directed American classics such as A Streetcar Named Desire and has distinguished himself in staging contemporary work including the critically acclaimed California premiere of William Nicholson's *Shadowlands*. He directed revivals of Beth Henley's Abundance and Horton Foote's The Trip to Bountiful; and Samuel D. Hunter's The Whale and Rest (world premiere); The Whipping Man by Matthew Lopez; and The Roommate by Jen Silverman (west coast premiere). Benson received his BA in theatre from San Francisco State University.

DAVID EMMES (Founding Artistic Director) is co-founder of South Coast Repertory. He received the Margo Jones Award for his lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and to fostering the art of American playwriting. In addition, he has received numerous awards for productions he has directed during his SCR career. He directed the world premieres of Amy Freed's Safe in Hell, The Beard of Avon and Freedomland; Thomas Babe's Great Day in the Morning; Keith Reddin's Rum and Coke and But Not for Me; and Neal Bell's Cold Sweat; the American premieres of Terry Johnson's Unsuitable for Adults; and Joe Penhall's Dumb Show; and the Southland premiere of *Top Girls* (at SCR and the Westwood Playhouse). Other productions he has directed include Red, New England, Arcadia, The Importance of Being Earnest, Woman in Mind and You Never Can Tell, which he restaged for the Singapore Festival of Arts. He has served as a theatre panelist and onsite evaluator for the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as a panelist for the California Arts Council. After attending Orange Coast College, he received his BA and MA from San Francisco State University and his PhD from USC.



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



The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers in LORT theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



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