



48th Season • 463rd Production
SEGERSTROM STAGE / MAY 11 - JUNE 10, 2012

South Coast Repertory

Marc Masterson
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Paula Tomei
MANAGING DIRECTOR

David Emmes & Martin Benson
FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

presents

August Wilson's

JITNEY

Shaun Motley
SCENIC DESIGN

Dana Rebecca Woods
COSTUME DESIGN

Brian J. Lilienthal
LIGHTING DESIGN

Vincent Olivieri
SOUND DESIGN

Ken Merckx
FIGHT CONSULTANT

Joshua Marchesi
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Jamie A. Tucker
STAGE MANAGER

Directed by

Ron OJ Parson

Laurie Smits Staude
Honorary Producer

Union Bank
Corporate Honorary Associate Producer

August Wilson's JITNEY is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Youngblood/Darnell	<i>Larry Bates*</i>
Turnbo	<i>Ellis E. Williams*</i>
Fielding	<i>David McKnight*</i>
Doub	<i>James A. Watson, Jr.*</i>
Shealy	<i>Rolando Boyce*</i>
Philmore	<i>Gregg Daniel*</i>
Becker	<i>Charlie Robinson*</i>
Rena	<i>Kristy Johnson*</i>
Booster	<i>Montae Russell*</i>

SETTING

Gypsy cab company, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Early fall, 1977.

LENGTH

Approximately two hours and 10 minutes including one intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Casting	<i>Joanne DeNaut, CSA</i>
Dramaturg	<i>Kelly L. Miller</i>
Assistant Stage Manager	<i>Chrissy Church*</i>
Assistant to the Director	<i>Ryan Anderson</i>
Costume Design Assistant	<i>Rachel Stivers</i>
Assistant Sound Designer	<i>Stephen Swift</i>
Stage Management Intern	<i>Cassie Horn</i>
Light Board Operator	<i>Aaron Shetland</i>
Sound Board Operator	<i>Jeff Deckner</i>
Wardrobe Supervisor/Dresser	<i>Bert Henert</i>
Wig and Makeup Technician	<i>Gieselle Blair</i>
Additional Costume Staff	<i>Melody Brocious, Casey Costello, Rachel Engstrom, Pauline Good</i>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Jonathan McIlroy

Please refrain from unwrapping candy or making other noises that may disturb surrounding patrons. The use of cameras, videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited. Cellular phones, beepers and watch alarms should be turned off or set to non-audible mode during the performance. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.



Segerstrom Stage Season Media Partner



Media Partner

Jitney - Where August Wilson Began

August Wilson wrote an early version of *Jitney* (then called *Jitney!*) in 1979. His first full-length play, it was written before Wilson had even imagined what would become his great, enduring achievement—his 10-play Pittsburgh cycle about the lives of African-Americans in each decade of the 20th century. “I didn’t start out with a grand idea,” he explained in a 1991 interview with Sandra G. Shannon. “I wrote a play called *Jitney!* set in 1977 and a play called *Fullerton Street* that I set in ’41. Then I wrote *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, which I set in ’27, and it was after I did that I said, ‘I’ve written three plays in three different decades, so why don’t I just continue to do that.’”

Working with his closest collaborators, led primarily by director Lloyd Richards, Wilson developed each of his plays

over a series of productions at theatres across the country, en route to Broadway. *Jitney*—the only one never (so far) to have had a Broadway production—was first produced at Pittsburgh’s Allegheny Repertory Theatre in 1982. Wilson returned to the play at the invitation of the Pittsburgh Public Theatre in 1996, reworking certain scenes and clarifying relationships, particularly between station owner Becker and his son Booster, and the young lovers Youngblood and Rena. The revised version of the play went on to productions at eight regional companies before opening, to great acclaim, in New York and London.

Jitney is the only one of Wilson’s cycle plays to be written in the decade in which it takes place. Asked years later by interviewer Elizabeth Heard if he would still choose that setting and subject for the play if he were writing from a different time, Wilson said, “It’s not so much *Jitney*, it’s the period of urban renewal that was part of the early seventies and the late seventies. It is just a setting, if you will, an opportunity to use this group of men to expose that culture, to get at some of the ways that this particular community of people solved its problems, abused itself, and all those kinds of things. If I were to do it today I might come up with a different setting, but it would be the same community and [would] concern their struggles to remain whole in the face of all these things that threaten to tear them apart.”



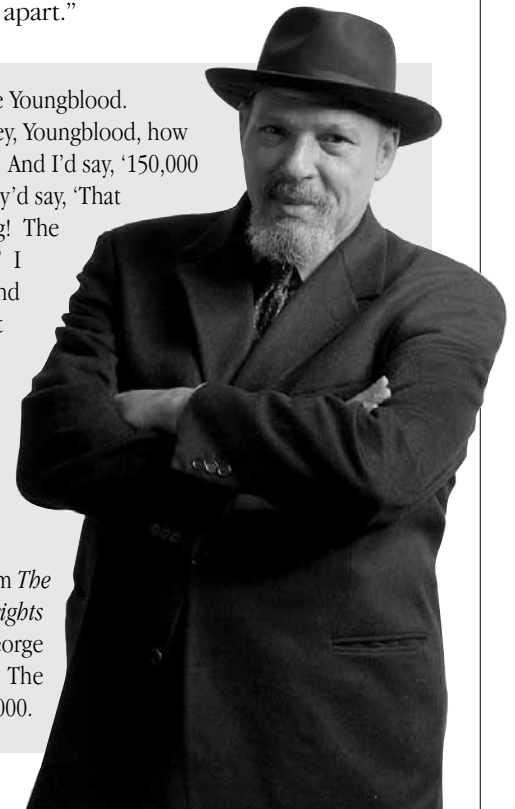
Wilson on Writing

“When I first started writing plays I couldn’t write good dialogue because . . . I thought that in order to make art out of their dialogue I had to change it, make it into something different. Once I learned to value and respect my characters, I could really hear them.”

“The language is defined by those who speak it. There’s a place in Pittsburgh called Pat’s Place, a cigar store, which I read about in Claude McKay’s *Home of Harlem*. It was where the railroad porters would congregate and tell stories. I thought, Hey, I know Pat’s Place. I literally ran there. I was twenty-one at the time and had no idea I was going to write about it. I wasn’t keeping notes. But I loved listening to them. They would argue about how far away the moon was. They’d say, ‘Man, the moon a million miles away.’

They called me Youngblood. They’d say, ‘Hey, Youngblood, how far the moon?’ And I’d say, ‘150,000 miles,’ and they’d say, ‘That boy don’t know nothing! The moon’s a million miles.’ I just loved to hang around those old guys—you got philosophy about life, what a man is, what his duties, his responsibilities are. . . . That’s where I learned how black people talk.”

~ August Wilson from *The Paris Review: Playwrights at Work*, edited by George Plimpton, New York: The Modern Library, 2000.



August Wilson's Century

The Ten-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 287-year-old fiery matriarch, welcomes into her home Solly Two Kings, who was born into slavery and scouted for the Union Army, and 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 boarding 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)

Produced at SCR in 1999, *The Piano Lesson* is set in the house of a family of African-Americans who have migrated from Mississippi. 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 flashback after his untimely death. In the time since recording his first album, Floyd has squandered all his money, left his girlfriend for another woman, 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 sec-



ond chance at success beckons and inspires hope until his life is cut tragically short.

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. And 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 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 twenty-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.



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 in *Gem of the Ocean* is slated for demolition to make way for a slick new real estate venture aimed 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.

Photos on facing page: SCR's 1999 production of *The Piano Lesson*. Top photo, Victor Mack, Ricco Ross, Kim Staunton and Charlie Robinson. Bottom photo, from left to right, Ricco Ross, Ted Lange, Charlie Robinson and Victor Mack. Above: SCR's 2010 production of *Fences*. Top photo, Charlie Robinson and Gregg Daniel and below, Charlie Robinson and Larry Bates.

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.

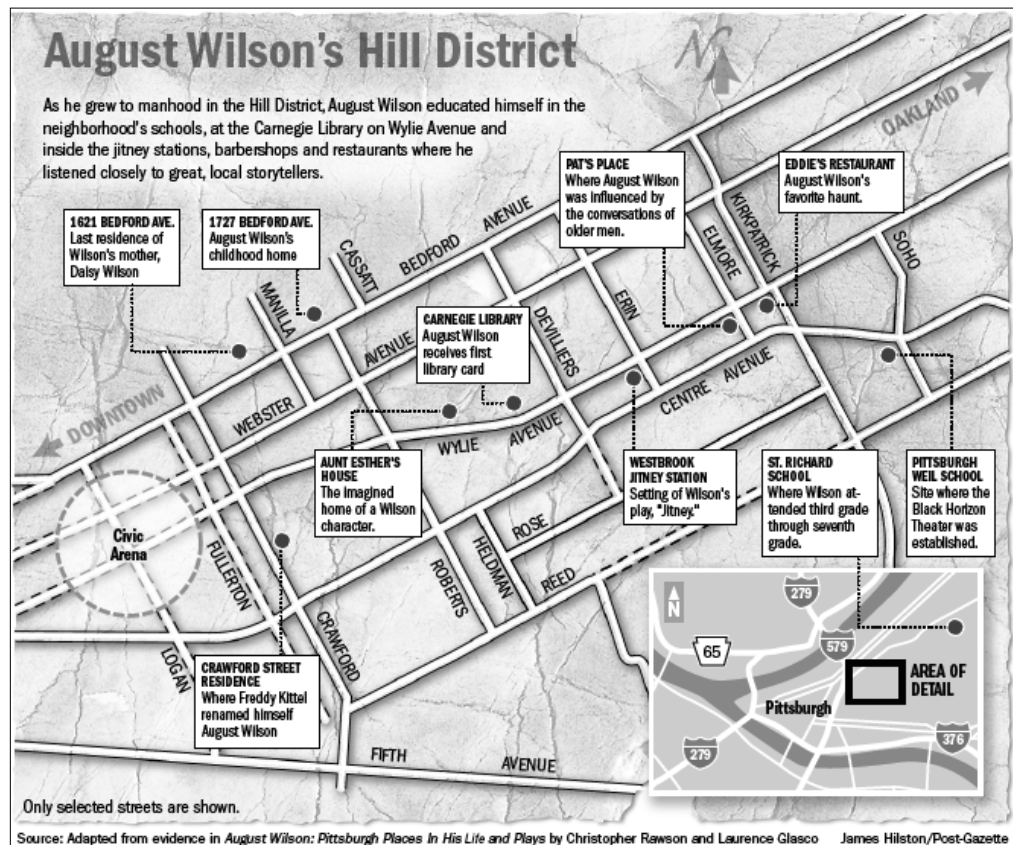
By 1904, the real Hill District had become a multiethnic melting pot. Roughly one-third Eastern European Jews, one-third black and one-third everything else (Italian, Syrian, etc.), its population grew to some 55,000. For blacks, who often weren't welcome elsewhere, it was a city within a city, its commerce 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).

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 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



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

Left, August Wilson in front of his boyhood home on Bedford Street November, 1999. Below, the Hill District today.

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.



(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 Hill District

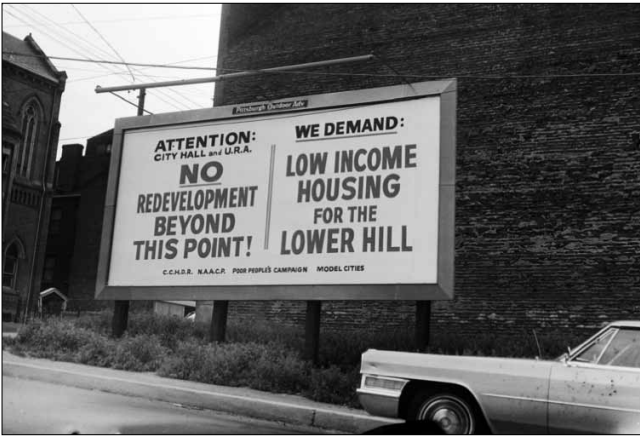
"When I was twenty, I left the library and left my mother's house and went out into the community of the Hill District to learn what it was they had to teach me. I went out on the street corners, the bars and restaurants and barbershops to learn how to be a man, to learn what codes of conduct the community sanctioned and how I might best live a full and dedicated life. What did the community of people among whom I lived and shared a common past expect of me?"

"I moved from Pittsburgh to St. Paul, Minnesota, on March 5, 1978. I left Pittsburgh but Pittsburgh never left me. It was on these streets in this community in this city that I came into manhood and I have a fierce affection for the Hill District and the people who raised me, who have sanctioned my life and ultimately provide it with it's meaning."

~August Wilson, "Feed Your Mind, The Rest Will Follow,"
Pittsburgh-Post Gazette, March 28, 1999

Photos by Charles "Teenie" Harris, who for more than four decades was one of the principal photographers for the *Pittsburgh Courier*, one of the nation's pre-eminent black newspapers. Clockwise from top: Eddie's Restaurant at 2172 Wylie Avenue (c. 1964-1975); Wylie Avenue with Nelson's Quality Market, Crosley Appliances and Mason's Cafe, at intersection of Trent Street (c. 1946-1960); Three men standing outside of Crawford Grill No. 1, one of the Hill's famous jazz clubs, Wylie Avenue and Townsend Street (July, 1951).

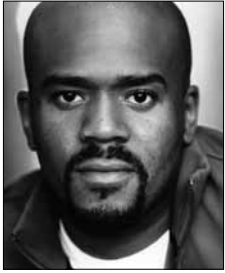




Clockwise from top left: Jazz musicians Billy Eckstine and Lena Horne at a Loendi Club reception in honor of Horne (October 1944); Count Basie seated at piano surrounded by band members with a trophy on piano inscribed "Count Basie King of Pittsburgh Courier Band Contest 1942"; Jazz singer Sarah Vaughan at right, with another woman and man at piano (1950); Eartha Kitt leaping through poster to launch a Citizens Committee on Hill District Renewal program, Vine and Colwell Streets, Hill District (May 1966); Three boys in fashionable outfits posing on steps of brick building (c. 1970-1975); Walter Hamm, owner of Hamm's Barbershop standing in front of Cadillac car (1972); Lynette May, Gerri Walker, Shirley Jenkins and Alberta Thompson hitting golf balls at Washington Plaza putting field with Civic Arena in background (August 1969)—The Lower Hill District was razed to build the Arena in 1961; Billboard demanding the end of redevelopment at Crawford Street near intersection of Centre Avenue, Hill District (1969).



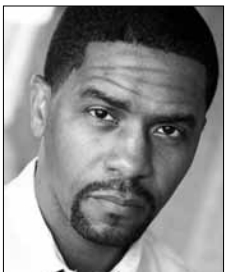
Artist Biographies



LARRY BATES*

Youngblood/Darnell

previously appeared at SCR as Booth in *Topdog/Underdog*, as Cory in *Fences* and in the world premiere of *Mr. Marmalade* by Noah Haidle; the Theatre for Young Audiences productions of *Sideways Stories from Wayside School*, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*, *The BFG (Big Friendly Giant)*, *The Only Child* and *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*; the NewSCRipts readings of *BOB* and *Incendiary*; Hispanic Playwrights Project readings of *The Cry of the Bronx* and *Welcome to Arroyo's*; and the Pacific Playwrights Festival reading of *Eye to Eye*. Other regional theatre credits include *A Christmas Carol* at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. Film and television credits include *Lions for Lambs* directed by Robert Redford, *Lawyers* directed by Roger Donaldson, "Dark Blue," *Sick Puppy*, "The Unit," "Lincoln Heights," "Bones," "CSI: Miami," "Numb3rs," "Huff," "The District," "NYPD Blue," "Boston Public," "JAG," "18 Wheels of Justice" and *Expecting Mary*. Mr. Bates is a graduate of The Theatre School, DePaul University. larrybates.me

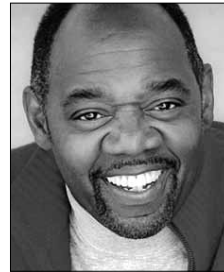


ROLANDO BOYCE*

Shealy

is making his SCR debut. The native Chicagoan made his start at the historic ETA Creative Arts and Black Ensemble Theatres where credits include *Fortunes of the Moor*, *In the Wine Time*, *When the Water Turns Clear* and *The Dreamers* (ETA); and *The Jackie Wilson Story: My Heart is Crying, Crying* and *Unforgettable: The Nat King Cole Story* (BET). Other Midwest credits include *2* (Eclipse Theatre), *Soldiers Play* (Congo Square Theatre), *Lobby Hero* and *Dreams of Sarah Breedlove* (Goodman Theatre), *Topdog/Underdog* (Madison Repertory Theatre) and *Fences* (Court Theatre). Los Angeles credits include *Topdog/Underdog* and *Riff Raff* (Columbia College, Hollywood). Television and film credits include "Prison Break" (Fox), "Numb3rs" (CBS), "Medium" (CBS), "24" (Fox), "Justified" (FX), "Off Their Rockers" (NBC) "Pretty Little Liars" (ABC Family), *The Last Laugh*, *Cornered*, *Talent*, *Someone Heard My Cry*, *Put It in a Book*, *Vile* and

Under the City. Mr. Boyce also has a recurring role in R Kelly's "Trapped in the Closet." He is represented by Reign Agency & Stevenson Talent.



GREGG DANIEL*

Philmore

returns to SCR after appearing in *A Christmas Carol* and August Wilson's *Fences*. Other SCR appearances include the Theatre for Young Audiences production of *James and the Giant Peach* and the NewSCRipts readings of Tanya Barfield's *Blue Door*, Steven Drukman's *The Bullet Round* and Lynn Nottage's *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*. Other regional credits include *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* at The Fountain Theatre, *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare Santa Barbara, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* at Shakespeare Festival L.A., *Master Harold... and the boys* at Cape May Stage and Actors Theatre of Louisville and *Peer Gynt* at Hartford Stage Co. Film credits include *Hancock*, *Spiderman 3*, *Evan Almighty* and *Hollywood Homicide*. Television credits include a recurring role in "True Blood" (Reverend Daniels) and guest starring roles in "Harry's Law," "The Nick Kroll Show," "Kickin' It," "Weeds," "The Sarah Silverman Program," "Saving Grace," "Castle," "Parenthood" and Disney's "Good Luck Charlie." Love to Veralyn and Kennedy.



KRISTY JOHNSON*

Rena

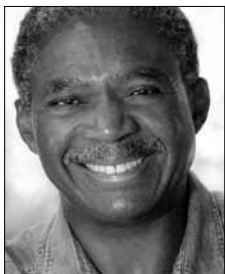
is thrilled to make her SCR debut. Theatre credits include *The Good Negro* (u/s, Goodman Theatre), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Court Theatre), *A Song for Coretta* (Eclipse Theatre Company, Joseph Jefferson Award nominee, Actress in a Supporting Role), *It's a Wonderful Life* (touring company, American Theater Company), *I Am Who I Am: The Story of Teddy Pendergrass* (Black Ensemble Theater), *Let the Circle Be Unbroken* (Apple Tree Theatre) and *The Trial* (ETA Creative Arts.). Film: *Planet B-Boy* (dir. Benson Lee). Television: "House." Ms. Johnson is a graduate of Harvard

University and The University of Chicago Law School.
kristyjohsonactress.com



DAVID MCKNIGHT*
Fielding

has appeared in numerous stage productions in his career and is honored to make his August Wilson and SCR debuts. Mr. McKnight previously worked with his friend Charlie Robinson in *Desire Under the Elms* at Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, where he also performed in *Baba Chops*, written and directed by Pulitzer Prize-winner Charles Gordone. He was also a member of the ITP Co. and the Mark Taper Forum where he trained, performed comedia del arte and appeared in *A Christmas Carol*. He was nominated for a *Drama-Logue* and NAACP Theatre Award for his work in *Soljers* at the West End Playhouse. Recent work includes *Voices, a legacy to remember* at Wilshire Ebell Theatre and Nate Holden Theatre. Mr. McKnight hails from Chicago where he made his television debut in PBS's "Bird of the Iron Feather" (the first Black drama series in U.S. history). He went on to appear in films and in co- and guest starring roles on "Boston Legal," "Mr. Sterling," "ER," "The District," "Moonlighting," "The Client," "Dynasty," "Hill Street Blues," "Roc," "Benson," "Kojak," *Under Siege*, *Superhero Movie*, *Pizzaman*, *J.D.'s Revenge*, *The Glass Shield*, *The Five Heartbeats* and *Hollywood Shuffle* to name a few. He is a proud member of The Actors Studio. Thanks Martin Landau, Mark Rydell and Johnny Ray McGhee. Mr. McKnight proudly embraces the role of Fielding in honor of his late father Edward "Doc" McKnight, who was for years a jitney cab driver in Chicago.



CHARLIE ROBINSON*
Becker

has had a long history with SCR which includes *The Piano Lesson*, *My Wandering Boy* and *Fences*, a play for which he won the 2006 Best Actor in a Play Ovation Award for his portrayal of Troy, which he played again at the PlayMakers Repertory in North Carolina. This past August he won the NAACP's Theatre Image Award for Best Actor in a Play for The Old Globe's production of *The Whipping Man*. He was recently seen in The African Company Presents *Richard III* and *Love's Labors Lost* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. "Soul Man" with Cedric the Entertainer is his most recent pilot. He is best known for his television credits, especially as Mac in "Night Court," as well as regulars in "Buffalo Bill," "Love & War," "Ink" and

Honorary Producer

LAURIE SMITS STAUDE (*Honorary Producer*) is an ardent theatre lover and one of SCR's most generous and passionate supporters. She has attended SCR since the late '70s and first became an Honorary Producer through three years of membership in The Playwrights Circle, which underwrites a world premiere each season. In 2007 she became an exclusive Honorary Producer after seeing a staged reading of Donald Margulies' *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment* at the Pacific Playwrights Festival. She has gone on to underwrite three additional productions: John Kolvenbach's *Goldfish* (2008); Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's *Doctor Cerberus* (2010); and William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* last season. "I love SCR's mission to produce not only the world premieres of first class playwrights, but also classical theatre which enriches the lives of all of us in Orange County. August Wilson is one of the greatest playwrights of the 20th century. I love his lyrical language. To be part of SCR is my pleasure and joy." Ms. Staude, a First Nights subscriber to both stages and the NewSCRipts series of play readings, is on the SCR Board of Trustees, co-chairs the Education & Outreach Committee as well as serving on the Audience Development, Long Range Planning and Gala committees.

"Buddy Faro;" recurring roles in "Home Improvement" and "The Secret Life of the American Teenager." Mr. Robinson has performed countless guest roles in shows such as "House," "Big Love" and "Cold Case." He also is a Cammie Award Winner for the made-for-television movies *Miss Lettie and Me* and *Secret Santa*. Other television movies include *Roots: The Next Generation*, *King and Buffalo Soldiers*. Features, to name a few, include *Apocalypse Now*, *The River*, *Gray Lady Down*, *Beowulf*, *Set It Off*, *Antwone Fisher*, *Even Money*, *Jackson*, *Steam*, *Natural Disasters*, *Sweet Kandy* and *House Bunny*.



MONTAE RUSSELL*
Booster

is a veteran theatre, television and film actor who is pleased to be making his SCR debut. He has guest starred in several television shows, most recently "Detroit 187," and spent several seasons on NBC's "ER" as Paramedic Zadro White. Film credits include

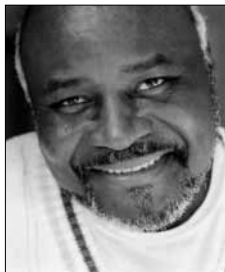
The Player's Club, opposite Lisa Raye; *Banged Out*, *Laurel Avenue* and *Lily in Winter* opposite Natalie Cole. New York credits include Broadway productions of *King Hedley II* and *Prelude to a Kiss*. He has performed in several Off-Broadway and Los Angeles productions, as well as the August Wilson 20th Century Staged Readings at The Kennedy Center, and has performed in all but one of the plays in August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle. For more info about Mr. Russell, visit MontaeRussell.com and LAYoungKnicks.org.



JAMES A. WATSON, JR.*

Doub

is making his SCR debut. He trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (U.S. extension) and was nominated for an Emmy and NAACP Image Awards. Plays include *National Pastime* (The Fremont Centre Theater, Pasadena), *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (Mark Taper Forum), *Lemon Meringue Façade* (Best Supporting Actor nomination, San Fernando Valley Awards), *In White America* and *Room Service* (American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco) and *Rashomon/Outrage*, *Golden Boy* and *Calculated Risk* (Marla Gibbs Theater). In his 33 years as a professional actor, Mr. Watson has been fortunate to co-star or work in a variety of feature films and in more than 90 commercials and television shows with Edward G. Robinson, Leslie Caron, Michael Crichton, Renee Valente, Jamie Foxx, Tom Selleck, Jeff Bridges, Sidney Poitier and James Coburn. Film credits include *Halls of Anger*, *The Organization*, *Golden Girl* and *Airplane II*. Television credits have included "Love American Style," "Kojak," "Quincy," "The Jeffersons," "Back Stairs at The White House" (mini-series), "Columbo," "The Love Boat," "The Rockford Files," "Hill Street Blues," "Gimme a Break," "The District," "Strong Medicine" and "Medium." Mr. Watson has directed his own theater company, been a choreographer and is currently finishing his first novel "Resurrection." jamesawatson.com.



ELLIS E. WILLIAMS*

Turnbo

is making his SCR debut. He has appeared on Broadway in *Once on This Island*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Requiem for a Heavyweight*, *Solomon's Child*, *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel* and the national tour of *Driving Miss Daisy* with Julie Harris and the late Brock Peters. Mr. Williams is a previous winner of the prestigious L.A. Ovation Award for Best Featured Actor in *Distant Fires* and an NAACP Image

Award nominee for Best Featured Actor in *Blade to the Heat*. He has performed at numerous regional theatres including Atlanta's True Colors Theatre, Theatre Company of Boston, Long Wharf Theatre, Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, New York Shakespeare Festival Public Theater and the famed Negro Ensemble Company. Mr. Williams performed in *Radio Golf*, August Wilson's final play, and in August Wilson's 20th Century at The Kennedy Center. Last year, he appeared at the Ebony Repertory Theatre in *A Raisin in the Sun*, which received eight 2011 L.A. Ovation Award nominations; winner for Best Play (Large Theatre) and winner of the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Ensemble Performance.

PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR AND DESIGNERS

AUGUST WILSON (*Playwright*) (April 27, 1947 - October 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 African-Americans, decade-by-decade, over the course of the twentieth century. His plays have been produced at regional theatres across the country and all over the world, as well as on Broadway. In 2003, Mr. Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show, *How I Learned What I Learned*. Mr. Wilson's work garnered many awards including Pulitzer Prizes for *Fences* (1987) and for *The Piano Lesson* (1990); a Tony Award for *Fences*; Great Britain's Olivier Award for *Jitney*; as well as eight 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*, *Jitney* and *Radio Golf*. Additionally, the cast recording of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* received a 1985 Grammy Award, and Mr. Wilson received a 1995 Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of *The Piano Lesson*. Mr. Wilson's early works included 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*. Mr. Wilson received many fellowships and awards, including Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in playwriting, the Whiting Writers Award, and the 2003 Heinz Award. He was awarded a 1999 National Humanities Medal by the President of the United States, and 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 October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theatre located at 245 West 52nd Street The August Wilson Theatre.

Additionally, he was posthumously inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame in 2007. Mr. Wilson was born and raised in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and lived in Seattle, Washington, at the time of his death. He is survived by his two daughters, Sakina Ansari and Azula Carmen Wilson, and his wife, costume designer Constanza Romero.

RON OJ PARSON (*Director*) 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 Chicago's 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 Stratford, Ontario. He is a proud member of AEA, SAG, AFTRA and SDC. ronojparson.com

SHAUN MOTLEY (*Scenic Design*) has worked in theatre, television and film for the last 15 years and he is thrilled to return to SCR again this season. Most recent productions include *Topdog/Underdog* and *Fences* at SCR; *Three Sisters*, Lower Depth Theatre Ensemble (recipient of 2011 NAACP Award for Best Set Design) and *Two Trains Running* at Geva Theatre, NY. Other productions include *Po Boy Tango* at East West Players, L.A.; *Leading Ladies* at Perseverance Theatre, Juneau, Alaska; *The Seagull* at Chance Theatre, Anaheim, CA; *Frau Ohne Schatten* at Zurich Opera House, Switzerland; *Shining City*, The Fountain Theatre, L.A.; *Fences* at Geva Theatre; *Home* and *Zooman and the Sign* at Signature Theatre Company, NY; *Lady Day* and *Cuttin' Up* at Arena Stage, DC; Chuck Mee's *Full Circle* and a new play, *History of Tears*, both at the Abe Burrows Theatre, NYC; and *The Roof* at the Meisner Theater, NY. His film credits as an Art Director include *Mind the Gap*, an Eric Schaffer Film; *The Cry*, a Redbone Productions; and *Nicky's Game*, a Holland Production. Film and television credits as the 2nd Art Director include "The Sopranos," (HBO), "The Book of Daniel" (NBC), "The Bronx is Burning" (ESPN), and *Pride and Glory*, a

New Line Productions. Mr. Motley is currently Supervising Art Director for "Let's Make a Deal" on CBS.

DANA REBECCA WOODS (*Costume Design*) happily returns to SCR to collaborate with the creative team and wonderful cast of SCR's production of *Jitney*. Ms. Woods' stage work includes SCR's *Fences*; *Blues in the Night* at the Post Street Theatre in San Francisco and Pasadena Playhouse productions *Fences*, *Flying West*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Waverly Gallery* and *The Good Doctor*. She has also designed costumes for productions at The Fountain Theatre; The Matrix Theatre; Odyssey Theatre Ensemble; Lillian Theater; A Noise Within; Mark Taper Forum; and The Colony Theatre. She has been a recipient of the Los Angeles *Drama-Logue* Award for *Having Our Say*, *Savage in Limbo* and *Our Country's Good*; a Bay Area Theater Critics Circle nominee for *Blues in the Night*; an NAACP Award nominee for *Central Avenue*; and an Ovation Award nominee for *Our Country's Good*. Ms. Woods designed the costumes for "Watch Over Me" a 66 episode hour long drama and the documentary *From Wharf Rats to Lord of the Docks*. She has also collaborated on many television and film projects. She belongs to the professional organizations United Scenic Artists Local 829; Designers Guild Local 892; and Motion Picture Costumers Local 705.

BRIAN J. LILIENTHAL (*Lighting Design*) has designed over 200 productions across the country, including 50 productions (20 for the Humana Festival of New American Plays) at Actors Theatre of Louisville as the Resident Lighting Designer, which include *Gem of the Ocean*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (both directed by Ron OJ Parson), *The Tempest*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment*, *Mary's Wedding* and *The Kite Runner* (all directed by Marc Masterson). At other theatres: 20 productions at Trinity Repertory Company, six seasons with the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center's National Playwrights' Conference (where he is currently a resident designer), The Evidence Room, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Cleveland Playhouse, Milwaukee Repertory, Arizona Theatre Company, Capital Repertory, The Kennedy Center, Arden Theatre Company, Pig Iron Theatre, New Paradise Labs, La MaMa E.T.C., Cherry Lane Theatre, Capital Repertory Theatre, Bard SummerScape, Long Beach Opera, amongst many. Mr. Lilienthal just accepted a teaching position at Tufts University in Boston. He holds an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. He received a 2005 Los Angeles Ovation Award for the lighting design of *Echo's Hammer* by Ken Roht at the Theatre @ Boston Court.

VINCENT OLIVIERI (*Sound Design*) is pleased to return to SCR for *Jitney*. Previous projects include *The Heir-*

ess, *A Feminine Ending* and *Noises Off*. Broadway credits include a design and score for *High*, which is currently on a national tour. Off-Broadway design credits include *The Water's Edge*, *Omnium-Gatherum*, *The God Botherers* and *Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy*. New York and regional credits include productions with Geffen Playhouse (Ovation nomination), Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (LCT Award), Portland Center Stage, CenterStage (Baltimore), Barrington Stage Company, The Juilliard School, Syracuse Stage, Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati (CEA Award), Virginia Stage Company and Berkshire Theatre Festival. He has created designs for world premiere productions by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, Kirsten Greenidge, Charles L. Mee, Kira Oblensky, Adam Rapp, Theresa Rebeck and August Wilson. For three years, Mr. Olivieri was the Resident Sound Designer at Actors Theatre of Louisville and the Humana Festival of New American Plays. He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and serves on the faculty at University of California, Irvine. soundandstage.net/sound.

KEN MERCKX (*Fight Consultant*) has choreographed fights and taught actors combat for film and television, theatres and universities all across the country. He is presently a faculty member at Cal State Fullerton. He is the resident fight choreographer for the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Great Lakes Theater Festival (Cleveland), Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival and A Noise Within (Los Angeles). Mr. 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*) completed his MFA in dance, specializing in stage management, at UC Irvine in 1994. Since coming to SCR, Mr. Tucker has stage managed or assisted on 54 productions. Some of his favorites have been the world premieres of Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain*, *The Violet Hour* and *The Dazzle*; Rolin Jones' *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*; and Noah Haidle's *Mr. Marmalade*. Other favorites include *A Midsummer Night's*

Dream, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Fences*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, *A View from the Bridge* and *Hamlet*. He has had the pleasure of working seven seasons on *La Posada Mágica* and four 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 down PCH. Mr. Tucker is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

CHRISSEY CHURCH* (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is a native Pittsburgher, who is always excited to re-visit her hometown through the eyes of August Wilson. Previously this season she spent some time "down the lake" with *The Prince of Atlantis*, visited the Vineyard with *Elemeno Pea*, spent her holidays with Scrooge and company for her eighth year of *A Christmas Carol*, went on *The Trip to Bountiful*, and discovered her inner "Janeite" with *Pride and Prejudice*. Last season, she had the pleasure of working on *Three Days of Rain*, *Silent Sky*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Becky Shaw* and *Misalliance*. Previous SCR credits include the world premieres of *The Language Archive*, *Saturn Returns*, *Our Mother's Brief Affair*, *What They Have*, *My Wandering Boy*, *Hitchcock Blonde*, *Mr. Marmalade*, *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards*, *Making It* and productions of *Crimes of the Heart*, *Fences*, *Putting It Together*, *Collected Stories*, *Noises Off*, *The Heiress*, *Taking Steps*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Doubt, a parable*, *Habeus Corpus*, *The Real Thing*, *Born Yesterday*, *Pinocchio*, *The Little Prince*, *Intimate Exchanges*, *La Posada Mágica*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *Proof* and the Pacific Playwrights Festival workshop of *Tough Titty*.

MARC MASTERSON (*Artistic Director*) is pleased to be taking the reins for a new era of leadership for SCR. In eleven seasons as Artistic Director of Actors Theatre of Louisville, he produced more than 200 plays, expanded and deepened arts education programs and spearheaded community-based projects. Recent directing credits include *Elemeno Pea*, *The Kite Runner*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Tempest*,

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Mary's Wedding, The Crucible, Betrayal, As You Like It, The Importance of Being Earnest and *Macbeth*. World premieres directed in the Humana Festival of New American Plays include *Ground, Wild Blessings: A Celebration of Wendell Berry, The Unseen, Natural Selection, The Shaker Chair, After Ashley, Tallgrass Gothic, Limonade Tous les Jours* and *Wonderful World*. He served as Artistic Director of City Theatre in Pittsburgh for 20 years. He was founder and chairman of the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Alliance, a board member of the Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania, and for Leadership Pittsburgh. 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 in 1998, and received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pittsburgh New Works Festival. He is married to Patricia Melvin, and they have two daughters—Laura and Alex.

PAULA TOMEI (*Managing Director*) is responsible for the overall administration of South Coast Repertory and has been Managing Director since 1994. A member of the SCR staff since 1979, she has served in a number of administrative capacities, including Subscriptions Manager, Business Manager and General Manager. She served on the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for theatre, from 1998 to 2006, and was its President for four years. She has also served as Treasurer of TCG, Vice President of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and has been a member of the LORT Negotiating Committee for industry-wide union agreements. In addition, she represents SCR at national conferences of TCG and LORT, is a theatre panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the California Arts Council, and site visitor for the NEA; served on the Advisory Committee for the Arts Administration Certificate Program at UC Irvine; and has been a guest lecturer in the graduate school of business at Stanford and UC Irvine. She is on the board of Arts Orange County, the county-wide arts council, and the board of the Nicholas Endowment. Ms. Tomei graduated from UC Irvine with a degree in Economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance. She also teaches a graduate class in nonprofit management at UC Irvine.

MARTIN BENSON (*Founding Artistic Director*), co-founder of SCR, has directed nearly one-fourth of the plays produced here. In May 2008, he and David Emmes received the Margo Jones Award for their lifetime

commitment to theatre excellence and to fostering the art and craft of American playwriting. Along with Emmes, he accepted SCR's 1988 Tony Award for Outstanding Resident Professional Theatre and won the 1995 Theatre L.A. Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Mr. 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 Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit*, which he also directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Alley Theatre in Houston. He has directed American classics including *Ab, Wilderness!, A Streetcar Named Desire* and *A View from the Bridge*. He has distinguished himself in the staging of contemporary work, including the world premiere of Horton Foote's *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards* and the critically acclaimed California premiere of William Nicholson's *Shadowlands*. Mr. Benson received his BA in Theatre from San Francisco State University.

DAVID EMMES (*Founding Artistic Director*) is co-founder of SCR, and directed last season's successful revival of *Three Days of Rain* by Richard Greenberg. He has received numerous awards for productions he has directed during his SCR career, including a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for the direction of George Bernard Shaw's *The Philanderer*. 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*; the West Coast premieres of C.P. Taylor's *Good* and Harry Kondoleon's *Christmas on Mars*; and the Southland premiere of *Top Girls* (at SCR and the Westwood Playhouse). Other productions include the West Coast premieres of *The Secret Rapture* by David Hare and *New England* by Richard Nelson as well as *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard, *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde, Ayckbourn's *Woman in Mind* and *You Never Can Tell* by George Bernard Shaw, which he restaged for the Singapore Festival of Arts. After attending Orange Coast College, he received his BA and MA from San Francisco State University, and his PhD in theatre and film 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.

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