

# TAPER

49<sup>TH</sup> SEASON 2016

First Season Production

## **THE MYSTERY OF LOVE & SEX**

By Bathsheba Doran

Directed by Robert Egan

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Feb 10 – Mar 20, 2016

Second Season Production

## **FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS (PARTS 1, 2 & 3)**

By Suzan-Lori Parks

Directed by Jo Bonney

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Apr 5 – May 15, 2016

Third Season Production

## **DISGRACED**

By Ayad Akhtar

Directed by Kimberly Senior

Jun 8 – Jul 17, 2016

Fourth Season Production

## **AUGUST WILSON'S MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM**

Directed by Phylicia Rashad

Sep 1 – Oct 16, 2016

Fifth Season Production

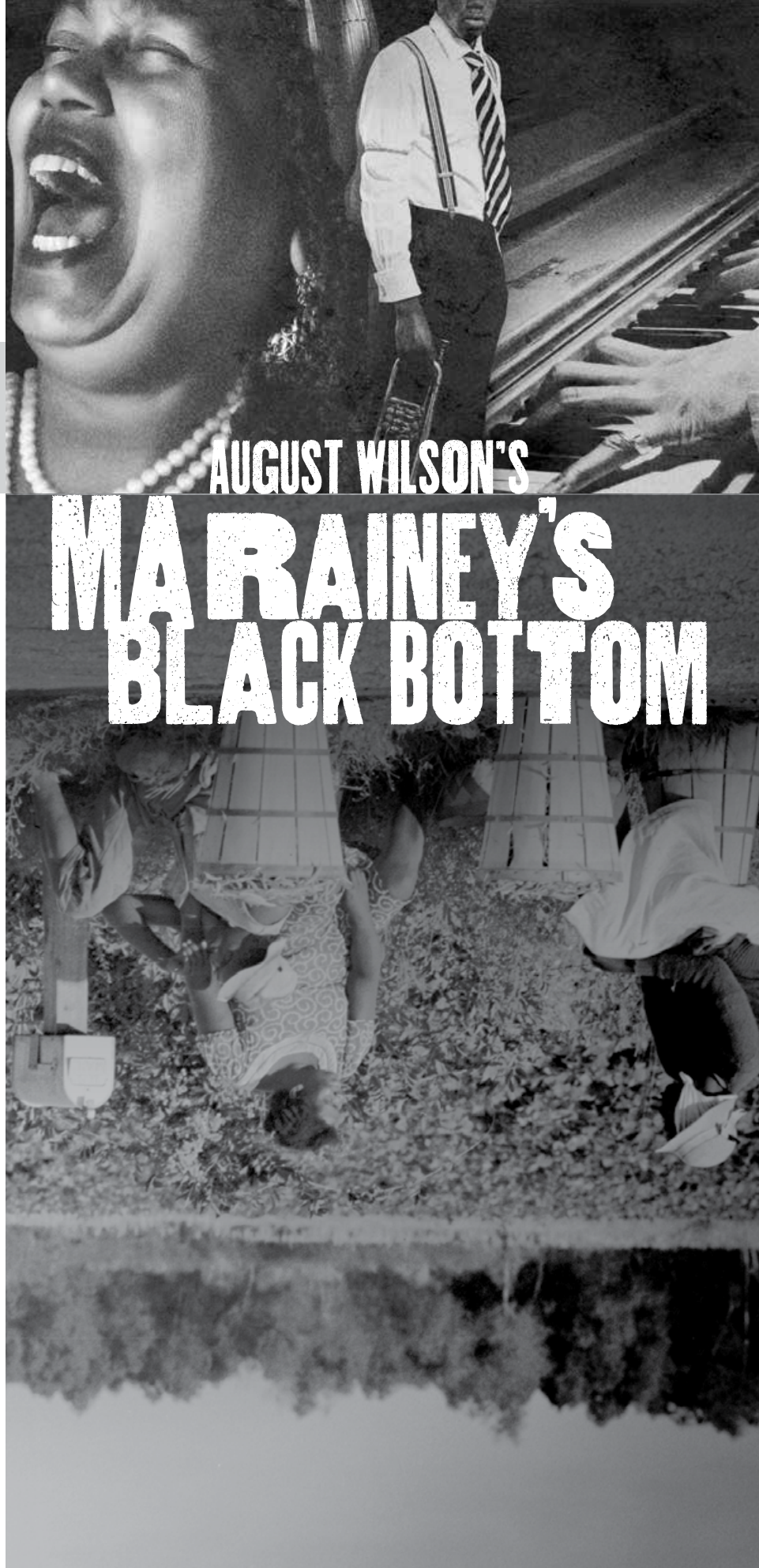
DRUID PRODUCTION OF

## **THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE**

By Martin McDonagh

Directed by Garry Hynes

Nov 9 – Dec 18, 2016



AUGUST WILSON'S

# MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

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**MICHAEL RITCHIE** Artistic Director | **STEPHEN D. ROUNTREE** Managing Director | **DOUGLAS C. BAKER** Producing Director  
**GORDON DAVIDSON** Founding Artistic Director

Presents

# AUGUST WILSON'S MA RAINY'S BLACK BOTTOM

With

**Greg Bryan Keith David Jason Dirden Damon Gupton Matthew Henerson**  
**Nija Okoro Lamar Richardson Ed Swidey Glynn Turman Lillias White**

Scenic Design

**John Iacovelli**

Costume Design

**Emilio Sosa**

Lighting Design

**Elizabeth Harper**

Sound Design

**Dan Moses Schreier**

Music Direction, Arrangements  
& Additional Music

**Steven Bargonetti**

Hair & Wig Design

**Carol F. Doran**

Fight Director

**Steve Rankin**

Associate  
Artistic Director

**Kelley Kirkpatrick**

Production  
Stage Manager

**David Blackwell**

Directed By

**Phylicia Rashad**

SEPTEMBER 1 – OCTOBER 16, 2016 **MARK TAPER FORUM**

Originally produced by YALE REPERTORY THEATRE, Lloyd Richards, Artistic Director.

# CAST

## IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Sturdyvant ..... **Matthew Henerson**  
Irvin ..... **Ed Swidey**  
Cutler..... **Damon Gupton**  
Toledo..... **Glynn Turman**  
Slow Drag ..... **Keith David**  
Levee..... **Jason Dirden**  
Ma Rainey ..... **Lillias White**  
Dussie Mae..... **Nija Okoro**  
Sylvester ..... **Lamar Richardson**  
Policeman..... **Greg Bryan**

## UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies never substitute for listed performers unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance.

Ma Rainey / Dussie Mae – **LeShay Tomlinson Boyce**  
Cutler / Levee / Sylvester – **Michael Sapp**  
Toledo / Slow Drag – **Thomas Silcott**  
Sturdyvant / Irvin / Policeman – **Robert Yacko**

## STAGE MANAGER

**Michelle Blair**

## INTERMISSION

*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* is performed with one intermission.

## TIME/PLACE

The bandroom and recording studio of a record company in Chicago.  
The “Race” Division.  
Early March 1927.

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Please turn off all electronic devices such as cellular phones, PDAs, beepers, and watch alarms. The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, with or without flash, is strictly prohibited.







*Lillias White*  
*Plays the Mother of the Blues*  
*in August Wilson's*  
*'Ma Rainey's Black Bottom'*





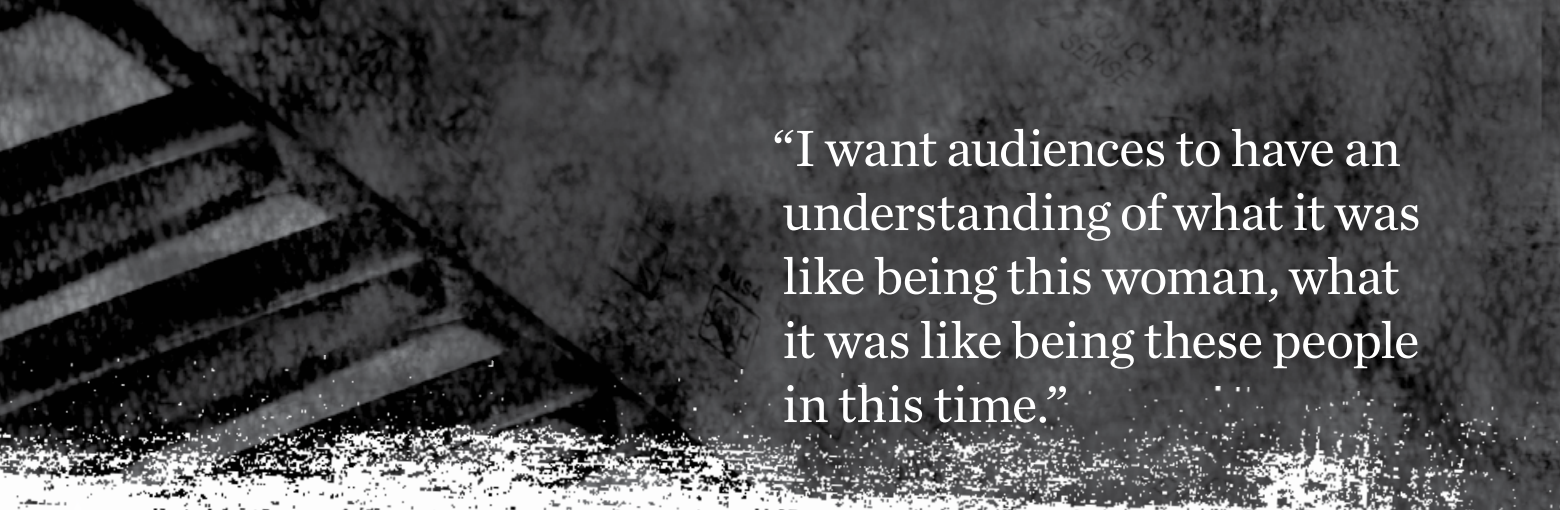
Lillias White in rehearsal. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

## Lillias White has wanted to play Ma Rainey for a long time.

There's a lot for her to love in the role of the title character in August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, who in real life was known as the "mother of the blues": the respect Wilson gives musicians; the blend of acting and singing the part requires; the example Ma Rainey sets as a black woman with serious business acumen who demanded to be treated well; the light this play shines on a period when it could be dangerous to be African-American; and the humor Wilson injects into a dark story. And as a bonus, this production reunites her with many members of the cast and creative team of Center Theatre Group's 2013 production of August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, also at the Mark Taper Forum.

White has immersed herself in Rainey's backstory in preparation for the role, reading about her life and times, looking at photos of the clothing of the period, and listening to the music that might have come out of a recording session like the one at the center of this story.

**"Ma Rainey was very good at what she did. She was a businesswoman. And she refused to be disrespected or treated badly,"** said White. Rainey was born in Georgia in 1886 and made a name for herself performing



“I want audiences to have an understanding of what it was like being this woman, what it was like being these people in this time.”

with black vaudeville troupes that toured the American South. “No doubt she witnessed a lot of terrible things that happened in the South during that period,” said White. “It was a dangerous time for black people who were free, and who knew and understood what that really meant, but who still didn’t get the treatment they deserved—or the respect.”

White was first introduced to August Wilson’s work 20 years ago, in 1996, when she saw her friend Keith David on Broadway in *Seven Guitars*. (David, who plays Slow Drag in *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, also appeared with White in *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*.) She was immediately fascinated by Wilson and his work. “I love the way he exposes the black experience in America,” she said. “I really enjoy how he injects a sense of humor into these sometimes horrific stories—or horrific experiences—that black Americans have been through over the centuries. And he doesn’t make light of it, but he finds moments of humor.”

Wilson’s work also speaks to White as a musician. “He acknowledges and respects music and musicians. I think that he understood how vital it was to have musicians, to have music, in the lives of African-Americans,” she said.

**“I feel like the music is kind of a cotton on some of the wounds that have been inflicted on African-Americans in this country. It’s a balm. It helps the healing process, which is ongoing.”**

White, a musical theatre veteran of four decades, spent the weeks before arriving in Los Angeles singing in concert performances around the country—in New York City, Orlando, and Massachusetts. Playing *Ma Rainey* gives her a chance to both sing and act; concerts aside, she has been focused on the latter lately thanks to Baz Luhrmann’s new Netflix series, *The Get Down*, where she plays a

notorious club owner and drug boss in South Bronx in the 1970s. “I’m in a play that I wish had more music,” she joked about *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*. “But I really am loving the fact that this is an acting role primarily.”

She is full of high praise and admiration for her fellow actors. “It’s a great cast,” she said. And Phylicia Rashad is a “wonderful director” who “has a very quiet, gentle strength and understanding of the material that helps put things in perspective and helps the actors to move through with a certain kind of grace and power and freedom.”

For White, freedom and the lack thereof are ultimately at the center of *Ma Rainey’s* story. “A lot of people don’t know enough about the history of African-Americans in this society, and the impact that slavery has had, the impact that racism has had and is still having,” said White. Coming away from this play, “I want audiences to have an understanding of what it was like being this woman, what it was like being these people in this time.”

She thinks younger audiences will be particularly impacted by this show. “I think it’s a great play for younger people of all ethnicities to experience because there are lots of great stories within the story of *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom* that are compelling and thought-provoking and hopefully will spur the interests of young people to really dig into the history of this country as it pertains to black Americans,” she said. She pointed out that this is important to her character—who brings her nephew Sylvester and a young woman named Dussie Mae into the recording studio—as well. “The fact that she has two young people with her, and she’s kind of showing them how she gets along on a daily basis...is important,” said White. “Because they need to see a woman—a black woman—being treated well, and being respected.”

White is looking forward to four Student Matinee performances with local high school students in the audience. But every performance of this play is going to be meaningful. “It’s really nice to be able to do this kind of work, and present this kind of truth, on the stage,” she said.

# WHO'S WHO



**GREG BRYAN** (*Policeman*). Regional: *Holiday*, *Anna Christie* (San Jose Rep); *Mere Mortals* (Marin Theatre Company); *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Comedy of Errors* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival); *Romeo and Juliet*, *12th Night*, *Othello*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Greater Tuna* (Lake Tahoe

Shakespeare Festival); *The Complete History of America (abridged)* (Foothill Theatre); *Shear Madness* (Mason Street Theatre, SF); Title role in *Richard III* (American Studio Theatre). Center Theatre Group: Understudy roles in *iWitness*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Mark Taper Forum). Los Angeles: *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson*, *Charles Dickens and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord* (Geffen Playhouse); *Tickled Pink* (Laguna Playhouse); *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Zoo Story* (Deaf West); *The Gingerbread Man* (Main Street Theater). TV: *Castle*, *Bones*, *Justified*, *Kickin' It*, *The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story*, *Sam & Cat*, *iCarly*, *Game Shakers*, and *Shameless*. He is a graduate of Pitzer College and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.



**KEITH DAVID** (*Slow Drag*). Broadway: *August Wilson's Seven Guitars*, *Hot Feet*, *Jelly's Last Jam* (Tony Nomination). Off-Broadway: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Waiting for Godot*. Regional: *Paul Robeson*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Mark Taper Forum). Film:

*The Nice Guys*, *Platoon*, *There's Something About Mary*, *Requiem for a Dream*, *Crash*, *Barbershop*, *The Chronicles of Riddick*, *Armageddon*, *Pitch Black*. TV: *Greenleaf*, *Community*, *Enlisted*, *The Cape*, *Big Time in Hollywood FL*, *Gargoyles*, *The War* (Emmy Award), *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson* (Emmy Award).



**JASON DIRDEN** (*Levee*). Broadway: *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Fences*. Off-Broadway: *The First Breeze of Summer*, *The Piano Lesson* (Signature Theatre); *Skeleton Crew* (World premiere—Atlantic Theater Company). Regional: *Seven Guitars*, *Topdog/Underdog* (Two River Theater); *A Raisin in the Sun* (Ebony Repertory Theatre); *August Wilson's*

*Century Cycle* (Kennedy Center); *Every Tongue Confess* (World premiere—Arena Stage); *Stick Fly* (Huntington Theatre); *Fences* (Geva Theatre Center); *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men* (True Colors Theatre Company). TV: *Greenleaf*, *Elementary*. Twitter/Instagram: @jasondirden.



**DAMON GUPTON** (*Cutler*). A native of Detroit, Michigan, stage appearances include the Tony-winning *Clybourne Park* (Broadway/Mark Taper Forum), *Superior Donuts* (Geffen), *The Story* (Public Theater). TV credits include *The Divide*, *Bates Motel*, *The Player*, *The Newsroom*, *Prime Suspect*, *Suits*, *Empire*, *Rake*, *Deadline*, *Law & Order*,

and *Goliath*. Film credits include the Academy Award-winning *Whiplash*, *This Is 40*, *The Last Airbender*, *Unfaithful*, *The Loretta Claiborne Story*, and the upcoming *La La Land*. A winner of the 3rd Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition, he has conducted over 30 ensembles worldwide including Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops, Baltimore Symphony, Houston Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Brass Band of Battle Creek, and the Seventh Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition with the Fort Worth Symphony. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School Drama Division and the University of Michigan School of Music.



**MATTHEW HENERSON** (*Sturdyvant*). CTG: *Romeo and Juliet* (Ahmanson), *Lily Plants a Garden* (P.L.A.Y. tour). Los Angeles: *My Fair Lady*, *Woyzeck*, *The Heir Apparent*, *What's Wrong with Angry*, *M. Butterfly* (East West Players), *Pinocchio* (Deaf West), *The Threepenny Opera*, *Richard III*, and *Winter's Tale* (A Noise Within), *Serrano*,

*Under Milk Wood*, *Treasure Island*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, *Candida*. Regional: *Indian Ink* (ACT), *The Good Person of Szechwan* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Hamlet* (South Coast Repertory), *Romance*, *Brooklyn Boy*, and *King Lear* (San Diego Repertory), *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cyrano De Bergerac*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Secret Garden* (Utah Shakespeare), *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz), *Life of Galileo*, *Henry V*, *The Birthday Party*, *The Underpants*, *Three Sisters*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Lights*, *Firebugs*, *The Doctor in Spite of Himself*. National Tour: *Flashdance the Musical*. Film: *Jungle Book*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Mars Needs Moms*, *Ticking Clock*. Television: *Modern Family*, *Hung*, *Torn Apart*, *The Bernie Mac Show*.



**NIYA OKORO** (*Dussie Mae*). Regional: *The Mountaintop* (Cape May Stage), *Bossa Nova* (Sundance Theatre Lab), *For Colored Girls...*, *Gallathea*, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (Aaron Davis Theatre), *Blueprints to Freedom* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Part of Me and Echo In Silence* (McCarte



Theatre). Los Angeles: *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Mark Taper Forum). TV: *Southland*, *Monday Mornings*, *Hail Mary*, *ER*, *Medium*. Upcoming Film: *A Doll's House* and *Fachada*. Graduate of The Juilliard School (Group 37) and member of the Marjorie Ballentine Studio. Nija wishes to thank her mother, Louisia Watkins, for everything.



**LAMAR RICHARDSON** (*Sylvester*). Lamar Richardson is a Caribbean American actor from Charlotte, North Carolina. He is a recent 2015 graduate of Columbia University in the City of New York. Upon graduation, Lamar began training with Susan Batson at the Susan Batson Studio in New York. He believes that his life's

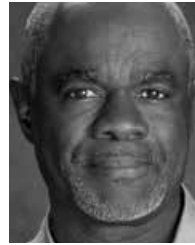
purpose is to serve as a source of inspiration and joy. In particular, he prides himself on being an "actor on a faith journey to spread light and laughter in the industry." Ultimately, Lamar strives to become an accomplished artist and hopes to serve as an example that dreams are indeed possible with unshakeable faith and hard work. His most recent credits include *Slow Bullet*, *My Three Loves* at the Manhattan Repertory Theatre, and *Black Footnotes* at the Nuyorican Poets Café in New York City. He greatly appreciates everyone who believes in his talent, especially Phylicia Rashad. Stay tuned! @Lamar\_Alphonso



**ED SWIDEY** (*Irvin*). The Wilma Theater, Philadelphia, Hothouse Acting Company Member: *An Octoroon*, *Antigone*, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* (Barrymore Award Nomination), *Hamlet*, *Under the Whaleback*, *Curse of the Starving Class*, *Our Class*, and *Macbeth*. EgoPo Classic Theater, Philadelphia, Ensemble

Member: *The Lydie Breeze Cycle* (2016 Pew Center For Arts & Heritage Grant), *The Seagull*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Death of a Salesman*, *GINT*, and *The Lady from the Sea*. Other Philadelphia: *Aladdin: A Musical Panto* (People's Light & Theatre); *The Hostage*, *She Stoops to Conquer* (Resident Ensemble Players, University of Delaware); *Bathtub Moby Dick* (Renegade Company). Regional: *Waiting for Godot* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors' Theatre); IL, CO, TX, and PA Shakespeare Festivals. MFA: University of Delaware. Awards: 2015 Lunt-Fontanne Acting Fellow.

**GLYNN TURMAN** (*Toledo*). Broadway: *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959), *What the Wine-Sellers Buy*. Off-Broadway: *Do Lord Remember Me* (American Place Theatre). Regional: *My Children! My Africa!*, *Good Boys* (Guthrie Theater), *A Moon*



*for the Misbegotten* (2015 Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (LA Stage Ovation Award, Mark Taper Forum), *Two Trains Running* (LA Stage Ovation Award, Ebony Repertory Theater), *Eyes of the American* (Drama-Logue Critics Award, Los Angeles Theatre Center), *Deadwood Dick* (NAACP Image Award,

Inner City Cultural Center). Tour: *Movin' Man*, *I'm Not Rappaport*. Film: *Race*, *John Dies at the End*, *Super 8*, *Burlesque*, *Takers*, *Sahara*, *Men of Honor*, *Gremlins*, *Cooley High*. TV: *Queen Sugar*, *House of Lies* (NAACP Image Award nomination), HBO's *In Treatment* (Emmy Award), *A Different World*, *The Wire* (NAACP Image Award nomination), *NCIS: Los Angeles*, *CSI*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Revolution*, *Scrubs*, *Buffalo Soldiers*, *The Minstrel Man*, *Peyton Place*. Awards: NAACP Theatre Lifetime Achievement Award, National Black Theatre Festival Sidney Poitier Lifelong Achievement Award.



**LILLIAS WHITE** (*Ma Rainey*). Broadway: Select credits include *Fela!* (Tony nomination), *The Life* (Tony Award), *Chicago*, *How to Succeed in Business...*, *Cats*, *Once on This Island*, and *Dreamgirls* (Drama-Logue Award). Film/TV: Lillias can currently be seen recurring on Netflix's *The Get Down*. Other film/TV credits include

*Gotham*, *Person of Interest*, *Nasty Baby*, *Smash*, *Pieces of April*, *Gloria*, Disney's animated *Hercules*, *Sesame Street* (Emmy Award), and *Law & Order*. Off-Broadway/Regional: Numerous credits include *Texas in Paris* (Lortel nomination); *While I Yet Live*; *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*; *The Best Is Yet to Come*; *Dinah Was*; *Gem of the Ocean*; *Crowns*; *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*; *Big Maybelle: Soul of the Blues*; *Vagina Monologues*; and *Romance in Hard Times* (Obie Award). Lillias most recently appeared in Chicago in the World premiere of *Gotta Dance (Half Time)*.



**LESHAY TOMLINSON BOYCE** (*Understudy for Ma Rainey, Dussie Mae*). In Los Angeles she has performed in *Seven Redneck Cheerleaders*, *Hellcab*, *The Girls of Summer*, *The Little Flower of East Orange*, and *Our Lady of 121<sup>st</sup> Street*. She was nominated for the NAACP Theatre Award for Best Supporting Actress in *Insurrection: Holding History*. In Chicago, she performed at the Tony Award-winning regional theatre Victory Gardens in *Knock Me A Kiss*, for which she won the Black Theater Alliance Award for Best Featured Actress. Television and film credits: *Doubt*,

*Major Crimes, Sam & Cat, The Wizards of Waverly Place, Trapped In the Closet, Strong Medicine, MadTV, After the Sunset, What Women Want, A Mighty Wind, and People Like Us.*



**MICHAEL SAPP** (*Understudy for Cutler, Levee, Sylvester*). Michael Sapp appeared in eight of the 10 plays in August Wilson's *American Century Cycle* produced by Seminole State College of Florida's Fine Arts Theatre in Orlando, including playing King in *King Hedley II* (directed by Tony Major), Boy Willie in *The Piano Lesson* (directed by

Woodie King Jr.), and Roosevelt Hicks in *Radio Golf* (directed by Elizabeth Van Dyke). Sapp is a graduate of Seminole State, which as of 2015 was the only college in the country to stage all 10 plays of Wilson's *Cycle*.



**THOMAS SILCOTT** (*Understudy for Toledo, Slow Drag*). National & International Tours: *Bring In Da Noise/Bring In Da Funk*. Regional: *To Kill A Mockingbird* (The Alliance Theatre); *As You Like It & Hamlet* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival). Los Angeles: West Coast premieres of Athol Fugard's *The Painted Rocks at*

*Revolver Creek & Coming Home* (Fountain Theatre); *Master Harold...and the Boys* (Colony Theatre Co.); *Othello* (Kingsmen Shakespeare Co.); *Coming Home* (Berkeley Rep). Film: *Gods and Generals, Anonymous Killers, Life Couch*. TV: *Hand of God, Heartbeat, Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders, Rosewood, Raising the Bar, Desperate Housewives, Dirt, Girlfriends, Entourage, Standoff, The Others, Get Real*. Ovation Award Winner: *Noise/Funk* (Ensemble). L.A. Weekly Award Winner: *Coming Home* (Ensemble, Best Supporting). N.A.A.C.P. Award Nominee: *Master Harold...and the Boys* (Best Supporting), *Coming Home* (Best Actor).



**ROBERT YACKO** (*Understudy for Sturdyvant, Irvin, Policeman*). Broadway and National Tour: *Fiddler on the Roof* (w/ Herschel Bernardi). Off-Broadway: *Oh, What A Lovely War!*; *The Miser*. CTG: *The Price; Parade* (Mark Taper Forum); *A Little Night Music* (Doolittle Theatre); *Undiscovered Country; Measure for Measure; Wild Oats; American*

*Clock; Moby Dick Rehearsed* (Taper Rep). Regional: *The Addams Family; Ragtime; Parade; Tickled Pink* (w/Rita Rudner); *Distracted; Chicago; Bernstein's Peter Pan; Splitting Infinity; Sylvia* (w/Cathy Rigby); *Can Can* (Revised); *Five Course Love; The Real Thing; Company* (w/Carol Burnett); *Into the Woods*

(w/Leslie Uggams); *The Secret Garden; Marry Me a Little*; L.A. premieres: *Sunday in the Park with George; Chess*. West Coast premieres: *Legacy of Light; Romance / Romance*. Film: *Raising Helen; Life in a Perfect World*. TV: *The Closer; General Hospital; Pickett Fences; Golden Girls; Get A Life*.



**AUGUST WILSON** (*Playwright—born April 27, 1945 – died 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 works 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, 2003 Heinz Award, 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, Mr. Wilson 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 immediately survived by his two daughters, Sakina Ansari and Azula Carmen Wilson, and his wife, costume designer Constanza Romero.



**PHYLICIA RASHAD** (*Director*). Ms. Rashad directed *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* and Paul Oakley Stovall's *Immediate Family* at the Mark Taper Forum and Goodman Theatre, *Fences* at the Long Wharf Theatre and McCarter Theatre, Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* at Ebony Repertory Theatre, Kirk Douglas Theatre,

and Westport Country Playhouse, August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* at Seattle Repertory Theatre, and *Four Little Girls* at the Kennedy Center. As an actress—Broadway: *August: Osage County*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Cymbeline* (Lincoln Center Theater), August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* (Tony nomination), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Tony and Drama Desk Awards), *Into the Woods*, *Dreamgirls*, *The Wiz*. Off-Broadway: *Head of Passes* (Lucille Lortel Award), *The Story*, *Helen*, *Everybody's Ruby*, *Blue*, *Bernarda*. Regional: *Every Tongue Confess*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, *Medea*. Film: *Creed*, *Good Deeds*, *For Colored Girls*, *Frankie and Alice*, *Just Wright*, *Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored*, *Loving Jezebel*, *The Visit*. Television: *A Raisin in the Sun* (NAACP Image Award, Emmy and SAG nominations), *The Old Settler*, *Free of Eden*, *The Cosby Show*, *Cosby*.

**JOHN IACOVELLI** (*Scenic Design*). Broadway: *Peter Pan* starring Cathy Rigby (Emmy Award), *The Twilight of the Gods*. National Tour: *Camelot*. Regional: Over 300 productions—Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, Pasadena Playhouse, Berkeley Rep, McCarter Theatre, Denver Center, Long Wharf, and Seattle Rep. Center Theatre Group: *Immediate Family*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Waiting for Godot*, and *Temptation* at the Taper, *Endgame* at the Douglas, and *Largo Desolato*, *The Dream Coast*, and *Making Noise Quietly* at Taper, Too! International: *A Slight Ache* in Barcelona, *Casablanca* in Beijing, and *Oedipus at Colonus* in Delphi. Film: Production designer on *Ruby in Paradise* starring Ashley Judd. Art director on *Honey*, *I Shrunk the Kids*. TV: *Beckett Directs Beckett: Endgame*, *The Old Settler* starring Phylicia Rashad and Debbie Allen, *The Gin* starring Mary Tyler Moore and Dick Van Dyke, *Babylon 5*, *Ed*, *Resurrection Blvd.*, *Lincoln Heights*. MFA: NYU Tisch. Awards: LADCC for Career Achievement. Website: [www.iacovelli.com](http://www.iacovelli.com).

**EMILIO SOSA** (*Costume Design*). *Radio City Spectacular* (2015–2016). Broadway: *On Your Feet!*; *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, *Motown: The Musical* (West End, national tour); *Porgy and Bess* (Tony nomination, NAACP Theatre Award), *Topdog/Underdog*. Off-Broadway: *By the Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (Lucille Lortel Award, NAACP Theatre Award), *Invisible Thread*, *Sex With Strangers*, *Crowns*, *The Invisible Hand*, *Sunset Baby*,

*Detroit '67*, *The Misanthrope*. Regional: *Father Comes Home From The Wars* (Parts 1, 2 & 3), *Twist* (L.A. Ovation Award), *Immediate Family*, *Marley*, *American Night: The Ballad of Juan José*, *Ruined*, *Cutting Up*, *Señor Discretion Himself* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Witness Uganda*, *Fences*, *Turandot: The Rumble for the Ring*, *Pippin*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Sense & Sensibility The Musical*. *Project Runway* finalist; Board of Trustees, American Theatre Wing.

**ELIZABETH HARPER** (*Lighting Design*). Previously at Center Theatre Group: *Women Laughing Alone With Salad*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, and *Immediate Family*. Regional credits include *Office Hour*, *Venus in Fur*, *Reunion*, and *tokyo fish story* (South Coast Repertory), *Play Dead*, *Wait Until Dark*, *Bad Jews*, and *Good People* (Geffen Playhouse). She is a five-time Ovation Award nominee, a nominee for the NAACP Theatre Award, and an LA Weekly Theater Award winner. She has served as a lighting consultant for art installations at LACMA and Greene Naftali. Her industrial lighting projects include events for Microsoft, Ubisoft, and Universal Studios. Harper is a guest lighting design instructor and lecturer at California Institute of the Arts.

**DAN MOSES SCHREIER** (*Sound Design*). Broadway: *American Psycho*, *The Visit*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder*, *Act One*, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *A Little Night Music*, *Gypsy* (Patti LuPone), *Radio Golf*, John Doyle's production of *Sweeney Todd*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Pacific Overtures*, *Assassins*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Into the Woods*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *Dirty Blonde*, *Bring in 'da Noise/Funk*. Off-Broadway: *Father Comes Home From The Wars*, *Passion*, *Road Show*, *Floyd Collins*, many others. He has composed scores for: *King Lear* (John Lithgow), the Broadway productions of *The Merchant of Venice* (Al Pacino), *Julius Caesar* (Denzel Washington), *The Tempest* (Patrick Stewart), and Dan Hurlin's *Disfarmer* at St. Ann's Warehouse. Awards: Four Tony Award nominations, four Drama Desk Awards, Obie Award for Sustained Excellence, 2013 Dreyfus Fellow at The MacDowell Colony. He has recently been commissioned to compose a musical with Brian Selznick (*The Invention of Hugo Cabret*) based on Brian's book, *The Houdini Box*.

**STEVEN BARGONETTI** (*Music Direction, Arrangements and Additional Music*). Musician/Music Director/Arranger for *Father Comes Home From The Wars* at the Mark Taper Forum. Winner of The Boston Theater Critics Association 2015 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actor for *Father Comes Home From The Wars* (Public Theater, American Repertory Theater). Lead Guitar/Guitar Synthesizer: *Disaster!*, *Holler if Ya Hear Me* (Tupac Shakur), *Hair* on Broadway. Broadway: *The Color Purple*; *Caroline, or Change*; *The Full*



*Monty*; *Starlight Express*; etc. Steven can be heard on *Sesame Street* playing guitar, banjo, mandolin, etc. Other composer/performer credits include commercials for Chase Bank, Volvo, McDonalds; *In Our Time*, *The Great War At 100* (Harvard Humanities Center); Sam Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class* (Yale Rep); Michael Ondaatje's *Billy the Kid*; *Whoa Jack* and *Uncle Jack* (Tribeca Theater). Steve has played with such notables as Eric Clapton, B.B. King, Johnny Cash, Lena Horne, Faith Hill, Chuck Berry, Renee Fleming, Eartha Kitt, Beyonce, etc. He is the recipient of ASCAP and Billboard songwriting awards. Graduate of Columbia University.

**CAROL F. DORAN** (*Wig and Hair Designer*). CTG: Over 60 productions, including *Bent*, *Immediate Family*, *What the Butler Saw*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Raisin in the Sun*, *Lt. of Inishmore*, *Parade*, *Pippin*. Regional: Deaf West Theatre (*Spring Awakening*, *Pinocchio*, *Krapp's Last Tape*, and more), Pasadena Playhouse (*Pygmalion*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *Mask*; *Sister Act*; *Stormy Weather*), The Geffen Playhouse, Asolo Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory (resident Hair and Wig Designer, seven years), La Jolla Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, ACT, and Ford's Theatre. Also Cirque du Soleil (Las Vegas and touring companies). Broadway: *Spring Awakening*, *Big River*, *King Hedley II*, *Seven Guitars*. Internationally: England and South Africa. Film: Over 80 feature films including *Interstellar*, *American Sniper*, *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Thor*, *Borat*, *For Your Consideration*, *Mission: Impossible III*, *The Alamo*, *Bad Santa*, *Adaptation*. TV: *The Walking Dead*, *Hell on Wheels*, *Fargo*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *House*, and many more. Ms. Doran serves on the Advisory Board of Deaf West Theatre. [www.caroldoranwiggedout.com](http://www.caroldoranwiggedout.com).

**STEVE RANKIN** (*Fight Director*). Mark Taper Forum: *Immediate Family*, *What the Butler Saw*, *Burn This*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Palestine*, *New Mexico*, *The House of Blue Leaves*, *The School of Night*, *Water & Power*, *Electricidad*, *The Talking Cure*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Mules*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Other Theatre: Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Ahmanson Theatre, Kirk Douglas Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe (Associate Artist), Actors Theatre of Louisville, Asolo, San Diego Opera, Seattle Opera, Metropolitan Opera. Broadway: *Dr. Zhivago*, *Macbeth*, *Memphis*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Farnsworth Invention*, *Jersey Boys*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Getting Away With Murder*, *Two Shakespearean Actors*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *Anna Christie*, *Dracula*. Off-Broadway: *The Third Story*, *Pig Farm*, *The Night Hank Williams Died*, *Below The Belt*. Mr. Rankin played Poins and staged the fights for *Henry IV, Parts I and II* (Lincoln Center). He plays mandolin with Susie Glaze and the New Folk Ensemble.

**DAVID BLACKWELL** (*Production Stage Manager*). David Blackwell historically became the youngest stage manager on Broadway at age 16! His work on original Broadway and national tour productions includes *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Dreamgirls*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Wiz*, *Timbuktu*, *Showboat*, *Sophisticated Ladies*, *Beauty and the Beast*. In 1988 David moved into his television career as key stage manager/guest director for *A Different World*, *Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, *Sister, Sister*, and *Last Comic Standing*. David is delighted to accompany Phylicia on this journey as they explore the complexities of human nature, with a shared vehemence for the arts. He brings to every project approached the gifts of a culturally rich childhood, and the invaluable professional and ethical lessons learned from his phenomenal parents, the beloved Mr. Charles and Mrs. Frances Butler Blackwell.

**MICHELLE BLAIR** (*Stage Manager*) has worked on over 30 productions for Center Theatre Group. Some highlights include *The Mystery of Love & Sex*, *Immediate Family*, *The Christians*, *Bent*, *What the Butler Saw*, *Marjorie Prime*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *The Sunshine Boys*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Backbeat*, *Red*, *Vigil*, *Leap of Faith*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Parade*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *Nightingale*, *all wear bowlers*, *Flight*, *Nothing But The Truth*, *Stones in His Pockets*, *Topdog/Underdog*, and "QED" at Lincoln Center Theater. Other favorites include *The Pee-wee Herman Show* at Club Nokia, *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* with Cornerstone Theater Company, and *Jersey Boys* in Las Vegas. Graduate of the University of Southern California and the University of Amsterdam. Mom to eight-year-old Liam and four-year old Imogen.



**MICHAEL RITCHIE** (*Artistic Director*) is in his 11th season as Center Theatre Group's Artistic Director, and has led over 190 productions to the Ahmanson, Taper, and Douglas stages since his arrival in 2005. From 1996 to 2004 Michael was the Producer of the Williamstown Theatre Festival and prior to that he was a Production Stage Manager in NYC. At Center Theatre Group, he premiered six musicals that moved to Broadway—*The Drowsy Chaperone* (which won 13 Tony Award nominations), *Curtains* (eight Tony nominations), *13, 9 to 5: The Musical*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, and *Leap of Faith*. He has produced 40 World premieres including the musicals *Minsky's*, *Venice*, and *Sleeping Beauty Wakes*, and the plays *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (a Pulitzer Prize finalist that also moved to Broadway), *Water & Power*, and *Yellow Face*, and he presented a broad range of plays and musicals ranging

from *Dead End* to *The Black Rider* to *Edward Scissorhands* to blockbusters such as *God of Carnage*, *Mary Poppins*, *Jersey Boys*, and *August: Osage County*. In addition, Michael inaugurated Center Theatre Group's Artistic Development Program, designed to foster the development and production of new work.



**STEPHEN D. ROUNTREE** (*Managing Director*) joined Center Theatre Group last year as its new Managing Director. He was previously the President and CEO of The Music Center (2002–2014) and held the position of CEO of the Los Angeles Opera concurrently from 2008–2012. Prior to The Music Center, Rountree served the J. Paul Getty Trust for

22 years, starting in 1980 as Deputy Director of the Getty Museum. In 1984, he was appointed Director of the Getty Center Building Program, with responsibility for managing all aspects of project development, design, and construction of the Getty Center in Los Angeles. In January 1998, he was named Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Getty Trust. He currently serves as a Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Occidental College and is a trustee of The Ahmanson Foundation, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, and the Grand Park Foundation. He advises numerous nonprofit institutions on matters relating to nonprofit management and building programs. His involvement was critical to the building of Walt Disney Concert Hall at The Music Center, serving on the boards of the LA Phil and Walt Disney Concert Hall, Inc.



**DOUGLAS C. BAKER** (*Producing Director*) is now in his 26th season at Center Theatre Group. Previously, he managed Broadway and touring productions including *Tru*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Annie*, *A Chorus Line*, *Working*, *The Wiz*, and *Legends!*, which premiered at the Ahmanson Theatre in 1986 and starred

Mary Martin and Carol Channing. Doug is a member of the Achievement Hall of Fame of Chagrin Falls Schools in Ohio and a graduate of Albion College. He is an active member of the Broadway League and the Independent Presenters Network and is a proud member of the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers. In May 2013 Doug received the Broadway League's prestigious Outstanding Achievement in Presenter Management Award.



**KELLEY KIRKPATRICK** (*Associate Artistic Director*). Since arriving at Center Theatre Group in 2005, Kelley has produced over 60 productions at the Ahmanson Theatre, Mark Taper Forum and Kirk Douglas Theatre, many of which have gone on to future lives on Broadway, off-Broadway and beyond. In addition to producing shows

across Center Theatre Group's three stages, he has had the privilege of collaborating with numerous local and national artists to commission and develop new works.



**NAUSICIA STERGIU** (*General Manager, Mark Taper Forum and Kirk Douglas Theatre*) has worked professionally supporting artists in theatres of all shapes, sizes, and locales including many seasons at Center Theatre Group as General Manager and, previously, as Audience Development Director. She oversees main

stage productions at the Taper and Douglas, as well as new play commissions and developmental productions through Center Theatre Group's New Play Development. Nausica has taught at USC's School of Dramatic Arts, and advises and works with local nonprofits including Hollywood Orchard.



**GORDON DAVIDSON** (*Founding Artistic Director*) led the Taper throughout its first 38 seasons, guiding over 300 productions to its stage and winning countless awards for himself and the theatre—including the Tony Award for theatrical excellence, Margo Jones Award, The Governor's Award for the Arts, and a Guggenheim fellowship.

*The Kentucky Cycle* and *Angels in America* (Part One) won the Pulitzer in consecutive years and, in 1994, three of the four plays nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play were from the Taper (*Angels in America* won). In 1989 Gordon took over the Ahmanson and, in 2004, he produced the inaugural season in the Kirk Douglas Theatre.



**ADDITIONAL STAFF FOR MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM**

Additional Casting..... Meg Fister  
Assistant Scenic Designers..... J. Michael Riha, Davis Nessl  
Scenic Research Assistant..... Rosemarie Knopka  
Resident Assistant Costume Design..... Kathryn M. Poppen  
Resident Assistant Lighting Design..... Heather Graff  
Assistant Sound Designer..... Jonathan Burke  
Prop Artisans..... Eric Babb, Mara Holland, Donavan Martinelli, Patrick Smith  
Prop Shopper..... Erin Walley  
Production Assistant..... Charlie Nelson  
Pre-recorded Guitar..... Steven Bargonetti

**CREDITS**

Costumes provided by the Center Theatre Costume Shop and additional staff: Draper—Charlotte Stratton; First Hand—Pamela Walt; Stitchers—Lydia Harmon, Bert Henert, Suzanne Mayberry, Ashley Rigg. Set construction by F&D Scene Changes. Rehearsal and production photos by Craig Schwartz.

**SPECIAL THANKS**

Billy Mitchell, Greg Poree, Eartha Robinson, Bobby Rodriguez, Karl Vincent, Harold Wheeler.

*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

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The Press Agents, Company and House Managers employed in this production are represented by the Association of Theatrical Press Agents & Managers.



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

Center Theatre Group is a member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the American Arts Alliance, the Broadway League, Independent Producers' Network (IPN), LA Stage Alliance, National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT) and the Theatre Communications Group (TCG).







In the rehearsal room for

# AUGUST WILSON'S MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

1. L-R: front, Jason Dirden, Glynn Turman, Lillias White, Nija Okoro, Matthew Henerson; rear, Damon Gupton, Greg Bryan, Ed Swidey, Keith David, and Lamar Richardson.

2. Phylicia Rashad.

3. L-R: Glynn Turman, Lillias White, and Keith David.

4. Damon Gupton.

5. Jason Dirden.

Photos by Craig Schwartz.



**MICHAEL RITCHIE** Artistic Director | **STEPHEN D. ROUNTREE** Managing Director  
**DOUGLAS C. BAKER** Producing Director

Center Theatre Group would like to thank its exceptional staff for their ongoing commitment, dedication and extraordinary efforts.

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 KELLEY KIRKPATRICK ..... Associate Artistic Director  
 DIANE RODRIGUEZ ..... Associate Artistic Director  
 LINDSAY ALLBAUGH ..... Associate Producer  
 PATRICIA GARZA ..... Artistic Development Program Manager  
 JOY MEADS ... Literary Manager/Artistic Engagement Strategist

DAVID ADJMI (FADIMAN), SHEILA CALLAGHAN (FADIMAN), STEVE CUIFFO, JUSTIN ELLINGTON, WILL ENO (FADIMAN), MATT GOULD, DANAI GURIRA, JENNIFER HALEY, DAVID HENRY HWANG, JOE ICONIS, BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS, RAJIV JOSEPH, KIMBER LEE, GRIFFIN MATTHEWS, LAURAL MEADE, RICHARD MONTOYA, DAN O'BRIEN, DENIS O'HARE, LEE OVERTREE, LISA PETERSON, PLAYWRIGHTS ARENA, WILL POWER (FADIMAN), RIMINI PROTOKOLL, RAINPAN 43, MARCO RAMIREZ, KEN ROHT, MATT SAX, ROGER GUENVEUR SMITH, RIPE TIME, TRACEY SCOTT WILSON (FADIMAN) ..... Commissioned Artists

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