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# SEATTLE REP

Part theater, part revival, and all power – Seattle Rep  
prepares for its first production of 2022,

## FANNIE: THE MUSIC AND LIFE OF FANNIE LOU HAMER

By Cheryl L. West

Directed by Henry Godinez

A Seattle Rep co-commission with Goodman Theatre

**“A richly layered performance that is both welcoming to all people and highly  
entertaining” -*Chicago Tribune***



*E. Faye Butler stars in "Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer" at the Goodman Theatre. (Liz Lauren)*

**SEATTLE, WA (January 5, 2022)** – Happy New Year! Seattle Rep is thrilled to be preparing for their first production of 2022, [Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer](#), a play with music by award-winning local playwright **Cheryl L. West** (*Pullman Porter Blues*, *Shout Sister Shout!*), and directed by Goodman Theatre Artistic Associate **Henry Godinez**. Featuring music direction and arrangements by guitarist and composer **Felton Offard**, and performances from

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acclaimed actor **E. Faye Butler**, recently named “Chicagoan of the Year” by the *Chicago Tribune*, tickets to *Fannie* are on sale now. This show will be performed on the newly renovated Bagley Wright stage from January 14-February 13, 2022 (media invite night is January 19, 2022) and tickets may be purchased online at *SeattleRep.org*, or by calling the Patron Services Office at 206.443.2224.

*Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* tells the impassioned story of American civil rights activist and hero, Fannie Lou Hamer. From her humble origins as the daughter of a Mississippi sharecropper to co-founding the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and demanding recognition at the National Democratic Convention, hers is a story of justice that will not be denied. A co-commission with the Goodman Theatre of Chicago, *Fannie* was well-received during its October-November 2021 performance run. *Chicago Tribune* named the Goodman production a **top 10 theater Chicago experience of 2021** and published that the show was “a stirring experience that not only honored its subject but the social activism of the year itself.”

Seattle Rep’s production will also feature award-winning performer, **E. Faye Butler** in the titular role. Butler’s career spans over 40 years; she has performed and directed both musicals and plays in theaters across the country and internationally. She has won many awards for her work including nine Joseph Jefferson Awards, two Helen Hayes Awards, four Black Theatre Alliance Awards, an Ovation Award, a Sarah Siddons Leading Lady Award, an Excellence in the Arts, R.A.M.I. Award, Two Black Excellence Awards, and many others. Seattle Rep audiences know Butler from her stand-out performance in Cheryl L. West’s *Pullman Porter Blues* in 2012.

“We are a nation bereft of hope. The play, which speaks to Fannie Lou Hamer’s life and mission, is a testament to hope renewed. It is my hope that her words will continue to inspire and remind us that we are one United States of America,” playwright Cheryl L. West said.

## COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AT SEATTLE REP

For the most up-to-date information about what to expect during your visit to Seattle Rep, please visit >> <https://www.seattlerep.org/plan-your-visit/covid-protocols/>

## ABOUT CHERYL L. WEST (Playwright)

Cheryl L. West’s plays have been seen in England, Off-Broadway, on Broadway (Play On!), and in numerous regional theaters including Minneapolis Children’s Theatre, Seattle Children’s Theatre, Seattle Rep, Arena Stage, Old Globe, Goodman Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Bay Street Theatre Festival, Syracuse Stage, Cleveland Play House, South Coast Rep, Merrimack, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, and Off-Broadway’s Manhattan Theatre

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Club, Second Stage, Atlantic Theater Company, and Primary Stages. Her plays include: *Fannie*; *Shout Sister Shout!*; *Last Stop on Market Street*; *The Watsons Go To Birmingham, 1963*; *Akeelah and the Bee*; *Pullman Porter Blues*; *Motherhood Out Loud* (co-author); *Addie*, *American Girl Story* (21-city tour); and *Jar the Floor*. She has written TV and film projects at Disney, Paramount, MTV Films, Showtime, TNT, HBO, CBS, and is the Webby-nominated writer for the original web series "Diary of a Single Mom." Ms. West is currently working on commissions for Chicago's Goodman Theatre, Seattle Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Minneapolis Children's Theater, and Seattle Children's Theatre.

## **ABOUT E. FAYE BUTLER (Fannie Lou Hamer)**

E. Faye's career spans over 30 years performing in plays, musicals, concerts, and cabarets, nationally and internationally. Seattle Rep: *Pullman Porter Blues*. National and Regional Tours: *Mamma Mia!*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Cope...*, *Dinah Was*, *Nunsense*. Internationally: Performing with Washington Ballet's *Blues Until June* at Teatro La Habana, Cuba; Hong Kong Ballet's *The Great Gatsby*, Performing Arts Center Hong Kong and Shanghai Oriental Arts Center, China. Regional: Goodman Theatre, Arena Stage, Kennedy Center, Steppenwolf Theatre, Court Theatre, Porchlight Theatre, Victory Gardens, Chicago Shakespeare, Shakespeare Theatre Company in D.C., St. Louis Rep, Yale Rep. Milwaukee Rep, Asolo Rep, Drury Lane, MSMT, Fulton Theatre, Arkansas Rep, Dallas Theater Center, Congo Square, Woolly Mammoth, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Old Globe, Pasadena Playhouse, Baltimore Centerstage, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Paper Mill Playhouse, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, Olney Theatre, The MUNY, Northlight Theatre. Recipient of nine Jeff Awards, two Helen Hayes, R.A.M.I., Ovation, Sarah Siddons, Excellence in the Arts, Kathy V. Lampkey, Rosetta LeNoire, After Dark, Guy Adkins, John Barrymore, and two Black Excellence Awards. Inducted into both The Fine Arts Hall of Fame and Women in the Arts Museum, and a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow. E. Faye was honored to be 2020 Chicagoan of the Year.  
[e-fayebutler.com](http://e-fayebutler.com)

## **ABOUT HENRY GODINEZ (Director)**

Henry Godinez is Resident Artistic Associate at Goodman Theatre, where he recently directed *American Mariachi* and *Fannie* (also Oregon Shakespeare Festival and ASOLO Rep). Other directing includes projects for Studio Theatre, Court Theatre, Victory Gardens, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Signature Theatre, The O'Neill, Portland Center Stage, and Dallas Theater Center. As an actor he was recently seen in *The Winter's Tale* and *2666* at Goodman Theatre, and on television in "Chicago PD," "Chicago Fire," "Boss," "The Beast," and the films *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Above the Law*, *The Fugitive*, and *The Package*. Born in Havana, Cuba, Godinez is the co-founder and former artistic director of Teatro

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Vista and serves on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Arts Council Agency. He is interim-chair and professor in the Department of Theater at Northwestern University.

## **ABOUT FELTON OFFARD (Music Director)**

Felton Offard is a guitarist, composer, producer, and educator. He is a versatile artist who has worked with diverse acts from pop star Barry Manilow to Peabo Bryson to jazz legend Clark Terry. He was a touring and house guitarist for several Broadway shows including *Hamilton* (Chicago), Oprah Winfrey's Presents: *The Color Purple*, *Jersey Boys*, *Standing In The Shadows of Motown Live* with Peabo Bryson and Leela James, *The Addams Family*, *Crowns*, and numerous others.

Offard has written for TV and radio including HBO, Food Network, Centric, and numerous others. His TV appearances include NBC's "The Playboy Club" and "Three Mo' Divas". Offard teaches guitar, jazz, and popular music as well as music business at Chicago State University.

## **FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS**

### **WHAT:**

***Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer***

By Cheryl L. West

Directed by Henry Godinez

A Seattle Rep co-commission with Goodman Theatre

Part theater, part revival, and all power – this one-woman show with music will have your head nodding and hands clapping from start to finish.

*Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* tells the impassioned story of American civil rights activist and hero, Fannie Lou Hamer. From her humble origins as the daughter of a Mississippi sharecropper to co-founding the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and demanding recognition at the National Democratic Convention, hers is a story of justice that will not be denied.

### **WHEN:**

**January 14 – February 13, 2022**

Performance times: Tuesday–Sunday

Select Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday matinees at 2:00 p.m. and evening performances at 7:30 p.m. (no matinees during previews)

Press Invite Night: Wednesday, January 19 at 7:30 p.m.

### **WHERE:**

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**Seattle Rep's Bagley Wright Theater**, located at Seattle Center at the corner of Second Ave. and Mercer St., Seattle, Washington

## **TICKETS:**

### **Start at \$17 – ON SALE NOW**

Discounted tickets for groups of 10+ may be purchased by calling 206.443.2224.

For ticket reservations, call the Seattle Rep Patron Services Office at 206.443.2222 or toll-free at 877.900.9285, or go online at [seattlerep.org](http://seattlerep.org)

Seattle Rep offers Pay What You Choose tickets for all of our performances.

Pay What You Choose seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis with a minimum donation of \$5 per person over the phone, and a minimum of \$1 in person. Tickets are also available with our digital partner TodayTix 24 hours in advance or you may pre-order your tickets by phone at 206-443-2222. In person purchases will be available starting January 14, 2022.

*There is a limit of 4 Pay What You Choose tickets per person. (Full price tickets may be reserved in advance in any quantity.)*

## **PHOTOS:**

Production images will become available in the coming weeks. For available pre-production images or artwork, please visit our online [Press Room here >>](#)

## **SOCIAL:**

**[SeattleRep.org](http://SeattleRep.org)**

Facebook - /SeattleRep

Instagram - @SeattleRep

Twitter - @SeattleRep

#SeattleRep #FannieSREP

## **About Seattle Rep**

Seattle Rep puts theater at the heart of public life. Founded in 1963 and winner of the 1990 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, Seattle Rep is currently led by Artistic Director Braden Abraham and Managing Director Jeffrey Herrmann. Over a season and throughout the year, Seattle Rep collaborates with extraordinary artists to create productions and programs that reflect and elevate the diverse cultures, perspectives, and life experiences of the Pacific Northwest. Seattle Rep's nationally recognized programs include the New Play Program, Seattle Rep's Public Works, Youth Engagement programs, Pay What You Choose ticketing options, and numerous audience enrichment and engagement opportunities including post-play panels, discussions, and community events and presentations.

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*The Associate Sponsors for Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer are Bank of America, The Boeing Company, and Baird. The 2021/22 Season Sponsor is ArtsFund.*

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**For more information:**

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