This entire season sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.
Florida Repertory Theatre is a fully professional non-profit LOA/LORT Theatre company on contract with the Actors’ Equity Association that proudly employs members of the national theatrical labor unions. *Member of Actors’ Equity Association. **Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.
***Member of United Scenic Artists.

August Wilson’s FENCES is presented by special agreement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

FLORIDA REPERTORY THEATRE
GREG LONGENHAGEN, Artistic Director • JOHN MARTIN, Managing Director

2018-2019 SEASON
HISTORIC ARCADE THEATRE • FORT MYERS RIVER DISTRICT

PRESENTS

AUGUST WILSON’S
FENCES

SPONSORED BY WGCU PUBLIC MEDIA
MEDIA SPONSOR LEE PITTS LIVE ON FOX 4

STARRING
MUJAHID ABDUL-RASHID* • JOHN ARCHIE* • BRIAN D. COATS*
MARC ALEXANDER PIERRE* • GAYLE SAMUELS*
DANIEL MORGAN SHELLEY* • JOHNIEANN SMITH

DIRECTED BY BENNY SATO AMBUSH**

SET DESIGNER
RICHARD CROWELL

COSTUME DESIGNER
DANIELLE PRESTON***

LIGHTING DESIGNER
TODD O. WREN***
ensemble member

SOUND DESIGNER
KATIE LOWE

FIGHT
CHOREOGRAPHER
KODY C JONES

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
LISA LAMONT*

ASST. STAGE MANAGER
KATELYNN FOSTER

2018-19 GRAND SEASON SPONSORS

August Wilson’s FENCES is presented by special agreement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.
**CAST**

(in order of appearance)

Troy Maxson.................................................................Mujahid Abdul-Rashid*
Jim Bono.............................................................................John Archie*
Rose..................................................................................Gayle Samuels*
Lyons..................................................................................Daniel Morgan Shelley*
Gabriel..................................................................................Brian D. Coats*
Cory.....................................................................................Marc Alexander Pierre*
Raynell..................................................................................Johnieann Smith

**TIME/PLACE:**
The Maxson household backyard

Wardrobe Supervisor: Allie Dykeman
Lighting and Sound Board Op: Jason Sanchez
Assistant Costume Designer: Anna Barge
Understudy: JoLe Peynado (Raynell)

August Wilson’s FENCES will be performed with one 15-minute intermission.

Originally Produced on Broadway by Carole Shorenstein Hays, in association with Yale Repertory Theatre. World Premiere at Yale Repertory Theatre (Lloyd Richards, Artistic Director; Benjamin Mordecai, Managing Director)
Second Production at the Goodman Theatre (Robert Falls, Artistic Director; Roche Schuffer, Managing Director)
Initially given a staged reading at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center’s National Playwright’s Conference

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

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*Member of Florida Repertory Theatre’s Ensemble of Theatre Artists. See page 25 for the entire ensemble.

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

** The Director is a member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

*** The Designers at this Theatre are represented by United Scenic Artists - Local USA 829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

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**ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

AUGUST WILSON (April 27, 1945- 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, called The American Century Cycle, 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 theaters 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 theater 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.
Perhaps Langston Hughes (1902-1967), the great Harlem Renaissance people’s poet who fashioned such uncommon beauty from the common clay of ordinary black folk, said it best in his signature poem:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore –
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over –
Like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

The Director’s Thoughts on August Wilson (1945-2005)

One of America’s greatest dramatists, August Wilson (born Frederick August Kittel Jr. in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, PA) celebrated the intelligent poetic genius and rich cultural lives of ordinary black folk. He showcased their authentic, hypnotizing, oral brilliance with its distinctive cadences, rhythms, musicality, and muscularity. His canon investigates their triumphs, hopes, dreams, frustrations, expectations of justice, disappointments, truncations of opportunities promised them in the U.S. Constitution, rage, complexities, cultural responses, resilience, and complex human dimensions.

August loved his people. His characters have depth, size, mother wit, and are in search of their song. As a griot of black emotional life, he was a keeper of the communal memories and spiritual legacy of Africans in the New World, determined to protect his people, culture, and to nurture the young.

He once wrote, “The largest idea can be contained by black life.” By valuing its specific uniqueness, he demonstrated its universality and cemented its legitimacy alongside the songs of all people.

—Benny Sato Ambush, Director
December 20, 2018
ABOUT THE CAST

MUJAHID ABDUL-RASHID* (Troy Maxson) is happy to be at Florida Repertory Theatre for the first time. This is his third time climbing into the skin of Troy Maxson, a role he loves. Other August Wilson roles he has performed are Becker in *Jitney* at The American Stage Co, FL; Hedley in *Seven Guitars* at The Artist Rep, in Portland, OR; Bynum in *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* at The American Stage Co, Memphis; Lee in *Two Trains Running* at Theater Works in Palo Alto, CA; Doaker in *The Piano Lesson* at The Portland Playhouse Portland, OR; Caesar Wilkes in *Gem of the Ocean* at The Cygnet Theater in San Diego, CA; Doub in *Jitney* at The Portland Playhouse in Portland, OR; and Canewell in *Seven Guitars* at The Lorraine Hansberry Theater in San Francisco, CA. He most recently appeared as the Pakistani character Imam Saleem in Ayad Akhtar’s *The Invisible Hand* at The Ensemble Theater in Santa Barbara, CA and at The English Theater in Frankfurt, Germany.

JOHN ARCHIE* (Jim Bono) was last seen at Florida Rep in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Dividing the Estate*. He is delighted that Florida Rep is embarking upon August Wilson’s remarkable journey and going places the Rep has not ventured before. John’s stage credits include *Harlem Duet* (M Ensemble), *Sunset Baby* (Primal Stages), *The Whipping Man*, *A Few Good Men*, *Lobby Hero* (Caldwell Theatre), *Split Second*, *Buffalo Soldier* (Hollywood Blvd.), *The Meeting*, *A Lesson Before Dying* (Gable Stage), *Streamers*, *Oedipus*, *Out of Gas* (Coconut Grove Playhouse), *Permanent Collection* (Florida Stage). Other credits include bits of film, TV, commercials, and voice ads. He thanks God, his family, and friends for their support. John is a recipient of the Carbonell, Curtain Up, and Silver Palm Awards.


MARC ALEXANDER PIERRE* (Cory) is absolutely thrilled to make his Florida Rep debut. Most recent credits include *Gloria* (Gamm Theatre), *Brawler* (Kitchen Theatre Company); *Airness* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *When January Feels Like Summer* (Central Square Theatre); *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Lyric Stage Company); *Milk Like Sugar* (Huntington Theatre Company); *The Flick* (Gloucester Stage); *Romeo and Juliet* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company). He has also appeared on Hulu’s *Castle Rock*. Marc received his BFA at Emerson College. He is a recipient of the Isabel Sanford Scholarship and Emerson College’s Acting Area Award.
THE NEGRO NATIONAL LEAGUE
Founded in a Kansas City, Missouri, YMCA in 1920, the Negro National League was where African-American baseball players thrived during America’s Jim Crow segregation era. Kept out of the segregated all-white Major Leagues, some of the best athletes of their generation, regardless of race, competed on Negro National League teams like the Kansas City Monarchs, the Newark Eagles, the Homestead Greys, and the Pittsburgh Crawfords. Among the legendary stars of the Negro League were Josh Gibson, Oscar Charleston, Cool Papa Bell, Judy Johnson, and Satchel Paige. The Negro Leagues Baseball Museum resides in Kansas City, MO.

AUGUST WILSON’S FENCES AND THE AMERICAN CENTURY CYCLE
August Wilson’s The American Century Cycle captures 100 years of African American life during each decade of the 20th century. The American Century Cycle begins in the early 1900s, when wounds from slavery and the Civil War were still fresh, and closes in the 1990s, when even a large and increasingly influential black middle class would not escape persistent racial tensions.

- 10 plays
- 77 characters

August Wilson’s Fences is his play for the 1950s.

1900s: GEM OF THE OCEAN
Premiered: Goodman Theatre, 2003

1910s: JOE TURNER’S COME AND GONE
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 1986

1920s: MA RAINEY’S BLACK BOTTOM
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 1984

1930s: THE PIANO LESSON
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 1987

1940s: SEVEN GUITARS
Premiered: Goodman Theatre, 1995

1950s: FENCES
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 1985

1960s: TWO TRAINS RUNNING
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 1982

1970s: JITNEY
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 1990

1980s: KING HEDLEY II
Premiered: Pittsburgh Public Theatre, 1999

1990s: RADIO GOLF
Premiered: Yale Repertory Theatre, 2005
ABOUT THE CAST

GAYLE SAMUELS* (Rose) earned a Best Actress nomination from the Connecticut Critics Circle for her portrayal of Billie Holiday in Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill and received rave reviews for her portrayal of Louise in Seven Guitars, Nurse O’Neill in The Sunshine Boys and Tina Turner in Beehive. Her Broadway credits include the recent revival of Children of a Lesser God, Sunset Boulevard, Grind and Dancin’. Off-Broadway she played Gloria in Sistas, Ronnette in Little Shop of Horrors, Josephine Baker in The Dark Star from Harlem, and she recently made her Metropolitan Opera debut in Lady Macbeth of Mtsnesk. She toured nationally in Little House on the Prairie (starring Melissa Gilbert), internationally as a featured vocalist with Harry Belafonte and starred in Russia in Sophisticated Ladies. Her television and film credits include Bull, Madam Secretary, The Americans, The Class, Twenty Good Years, Cupid, Black Nativity, Equity, Honeybee and The Tides That Bind.

DANIEL MORGAN SHELLEY* (Lyons) is thrilled to be on the mainstage at Florida Rep after being a part of the PlayLab for the past two seasons in Berta, Berta and Damascus. He was also seen in Classical Theatre of Harlem’s production of Romeo & Juliet which played here at Florida Rep. Other favorite credits include August Wilson’s The Piano Lesson at Hartford Stage; Possessing Harriet at Syracuse Stage; The Way of the World at Folger Theatre; Skeleton Crew at Chester Theatre Company; Othello and Pimm’s Mission with Oberon Theatre Ensemble; Hamlet at Classic Stage Company; Romeo & Juliet, King Lear, The Three Musketeers, and Love’s Labor’s Lost at Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival; Safe House at Repertory Theatre of St. Louis; and Clybourne Park at Geva & Cleveland Playhouse. Mr. Shelley originated roles in the world premieres of The Insurgents at Contemporary American Theatre Festival, Find & Sign at Pioneer Theatre Company, and The Man Who Ate Michael Rockefeller at the ArcLight. TV: Madame Secretary, Mr. Robot, Bull, Person of Interest, Law & Order, Blue Bloods, and Law & Order: SVU. FILM: Sidney Hall. Training: Juilliard. DanielMorganShelley.com “No Day But Today!”

JOHNIEANN SMITH (Raynell) is overjoyed to be back onstage at Florida Rep! Her theatre credits include Wizard of Oz and To Kill a Mockingbird, but her favorite role has been Molly in Annie. She is a second grade Honor Roll student at Bayshore Elementary where she is part of the Bayshore Cloggers. In her spare time she enjoys roller skating, swimming, traveling, singing at Oxford School of Music, and is a member of the Lee County 4H Trail Blazers. She wishes to thank all of her friends, family, and the Florida Rep for their continued love and support.

JoLe PEYNAO (Raynell u/s) is excited to make her theatrical debut at the Florida Repertory Theatre. JoLe received her training at the Alliance of the Arts and the Florida Repertory Theatre. JoLe attends Fort Myers Christian School, and her favorite subject is Art—she won the 2017 and 2018 Golden Halo Art contests. JoLe is free spirited and enjoys swimming, singing and choreographing her own dance moves. JoLe is supported by her family, friends and the staff at the Florida Repertory Theatre.
ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

BENNY SATO AMBUSH** (Director) is a veteran SDC stage director, institutional theatre leader, educator, published commentator and consultant. Formerly: Producing Artistic Director - TheatreVirginia; Producing Director - Oakland Ensemble Theatre; Associate Artistic Director - American Conservatory Theater; Acting Artistic Director - Rites and Reason Theatre Company; PEW Charitable Trust/TCG Director-In-Residence - Florida Stage; Associate Artistic Director - Anna Deavere Smith’s Institute on the Arts & Civic Dialogue at Harvard University; Senior Distinguished Producing Director-In-Residence - Emerson Stage, Emerson College, Boston; Director - Institute for Teledramatic Arts and Technology, California State University, Monterey Bay. Extensive professional directing credits throughout the nation’s professional regional theatres. He teaches acting and directing at the MFA, BFA and BA levels nationally. Emeritus Board Member - Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Member - The National Theatre Conference, founding Steering Committee Member - National Alliance of Acting Teachers, National/International Adjudicator - American Association of Community Theatre, panelist - National Alliance for Musical Theatre. BA, Brown University; MFA, University of California, San Diego.

KODY C JONES (Fight Choreographer) holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in acting from Western Illinois University and Secondary Education and Acting degrees from University of Michigan-Flint. He has acted and directed professionally all over Chicago and the Midwest for the past 10 years and served as the Artistic Director for Shawnee Summer Theatre in Indiana and The Stage at Island Park in Fargo, North Dakota. Kody is the Education Director here at Florida Rep and has directed the world premiere TYA touring production of Refugee adapted by Eric Coble and is directing the upcoming Florida Rep Education Conservatory productions of Newsies and Spring Awakening. Kody has fight choreographed all over the country but most recently served as Fight Director for Florida Rep’s productions of Cabaret and How the Other Half Loves, Noises Off at the Herb Strauss Theatre, and the upcoming production of Marian at Theatre Conspiracy.

LISA LAMONT* (Production Stage Manager) is thrilled to be a part of this production of August Wilson’s Fences. A member of AEA since 1989, Lisa has worked extensively in theatre and film. She started out as a crew person with the Ruth Foreman Theatre in South Florida and worked her way up as costume crew, props misters, and finally, as the resident Stage Manager. Since then, Lisa has been the stage manager for over 150 productions with venues across the country including the national tour of Aida, Zoetic Stage, Caldwell Theatre, Hollywood Playhouse, Gable Stage, Blowing Rock Stage Company, and Florida Repertory Theatre. She was also a primary member of the creative staff for the development of Charles Nelson Reilly’s one man play, Save it for the Stage. Lisa’s “day job” is Managing Director of Ensemble Stage, a professional theatre located in Banner Elk, NC. Love to Gary & Charles.

RICHARD CROWELL (Set Designer) has been designing scenery and lighting for the stage in various parts of the country for over thirty years. He is delighted to be considered a long-time member of Florida Rep’s “Ensemble of Theatre Artists,” designing in the Arcade since the inaugural season. Becky’s New Car, Split in Three, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Arsenic and Old Lace, Tally’s Folly, Red, The Rainmaker, and The Last Romance are among the over 25 designs that have been produced at Florida Rep. Richard received his MFA from the stage design training program at Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University, and his BFA from Memphis State University.

KATIE LOWE (Sound Designer) is thrilled to be a part of this production! She served as an electrics intern last season at Florida Repertory Theatre.
ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Previously, she has been an electrics apprentice at Endstation Theatre Company after graduating from the University of Kentucky. Previous credits include Tenderly, A Christmas Carol: The Tale of Ebenezer Scrooge, Becoming Dr. Ruth, Steel Magnolias, Damascus (Florida Rep, Sound Designer), Cabaret (Florida Rep, A2), Million Dollar Quartet (Endstation Theatre Company, A2), Once On This Island (University of Kentucky, Stage Manager), Sense and Sensibility (University of Kentucky, Sound Designer), She Kills Monsters (University of Kentucky, Stage Manager), In The Red and Brown Water (University of Kentucky, Assistant Stage Manager), and The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (University of Kentucky, Assistant Stage Manager).

DANIELLE PRESTON*** (Costume Designer) is a costume designer based in the DC metro area. Recent design credits include Other Desert Cites (Triad Stage), The Christians, The How & The Why (Theater J), Darius & Twig Where The Words Once Were, All the Way LIVE! (The Kennedy Center), Holiday Memories, Gospel at Colonus. (WSC Avant Bard), A Bid To Save The World (Rorschach Theatre), Br'er Cotton and Picnic (Catholic University of America). Awards/ Fellowships: William R. Kenan Jr. Fellowship at the John F. Kennedy Center, Washington D.C. in Costume Design & A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute Fellowship in Costume Design. Education: MFA in Costume Design from The University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Bachelor of Arts from Meredith College in Theater Production.

TODD O. WREN**** (Lighting Designer) is delighted to participate in Florida Rep’s continued growth as an ensemble member. A special thanks goes to you, the audience, for your support. Todd’s theatrical credits include: Good Speed Musicals, Cleveland Playhouse, People’s Light and Opera Company, The Royal Manitoba Theatre Center, Merrimack Repertory, Barter Theatre, Tennessee Repertory, John F. Kennedy Center, Coconut Grove Playhouse, Charlotte Repertory, North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, Town and Gown Theatre, Casa Manana, and Flat Rock Playhouse. Todd is a member of United Scenic Artists, New York Local #829.

SPECIAL THANKS
Patricia Idlette
Ron Wesorick

ACTORS’ EQUITY ASSOCIATION (AEA) was founded in 1913 as the first of the American Actor unions. Equity’s mission is to advance, promote and foster the art of theatre as an essential component of our society. Today, Equity represents more than 40,000 actors, singers, dancers and stage managers working in hundreds of theatres across the United States. Equity members are dedicated to working in the theatre as a profession, upholding the highest artistic standards. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans for its members. Through its agreement with Equity, this theatre has committed to the fair treatment of the actors and stage managers employed in this production. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. For more information, visit www.actorsequity.org.

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