

For Immediate Release
August 18, 2026

**YALE REPERTORY THEATRE PRESENTS AUGUST WILSON'S
MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM, DIRECTED BY
TIMOTHY DOUGLAS, OCTOBER 2-24**

With this production, Douglas, who was an understudy in Yale Rep's world premiere of the play in 1984, will have directed each play in Wilson's epic American Century Cycle

Wilson's fictional dramatization of a studio session with the "Mother of the Blues" is a raw and razor-sharp look at Black artists' struggles to exist, create, and thrive

Cast includes Terence Archie, Peter Bisgaier, Brittany Antoinette Davis, Dion Graham, Jimmie J.J. Jeter, Neal Lerner, Maiesha McQueen, Jeff Parker, Ray Anthony Thomas, and Mark Yarde

Yale Repertory Theatre (Evan Yionoulis, Artistic Director; Florie Seery, Managing Director) presents **August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom***, directed by **Timothy Douglas**, October 2-24 at the **University Theatre** (222 York Street, New Haven). Wilson's 1984 masterpiece takes audiences into a recording studio in 1927 Chicago, where temperatures rise over the course of a blistering session. As the legendary "Mother of the Blues," Ma Rainey, a group of three veteran musicians, and an ambitious young trumpeter attempt to immortalize their music via recording, tensions over control of her music expose the emotional and economic exploitation faced by Black artists in America. The electrifying play is an exploration of dreams deferred, cultural identity, and the power of the blues, now with a striking vision from one of the great interpreters of Wilson's work.

This new production of Wilson's play—so knottily engaged with the idea of legacy in its portrait of a real-life musical legend and her fictionalized band—is itself a multilayered revisitation of a monumental legacy fostered at Yale Rep. August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* first raised the roof of the American theater in its 1984 world premiere production, staged by Lloyd

Richards at Yale Rep. Frank Rich in *The New York Times* raved: “Within this footnote to cultural history, Mr. Wilson has lighted a dramatic fuse that snakes and hisses through several anguished eras of American life. When the fuse reaches its explosive final destination, the audience is impaled by the impact.”

One person who was present for that momentous production: Timothy Douglas, then a first-year acting student at Yale School of Drama (now the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale), and an understudy for the part of Sylvester. Douglas has, across his own illustrious career, been in constant engagement with Wilson’s work. He also understudied in two other pivotal Wilson world premieres at Yale Rep: *Fences* in 1985 and *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* in 1986. Nearly 20 years later, Douglas directed the world premiere of *Radio Golf*, the final play in Wilson’s cycle, at Yale Rep. Now, in a full-circle moment, he returns to Yale to complete a chapter in his accomplished career: *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom* is the last of Wilson’s plays he has yet to stage.

Douglas recalls the impact of first encountering August Wilson’s *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*: “I’m grateful that I didn’t fully grasp the brilliance and coming legacy of August Wilson because I wouldn’t have been able to handle it and absorb what I was able to absorb sitting in those rehearsals. But as a Black actor-in-training, it was this promise that there would be authentic Black characters to play, authentic Black words to speak, the likes of which, with the exception of *A Raisin in the Sun*, I had not witnessed before. Coming back to Yale to work on *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom* is a testament and a tribute to many things, including starting to understand how important it is for my journey to have had the great blessing to midwife the final play in the Cycle, *Radio Golf*, at Yale.”

While Douglas agrees with how Wilson would come to be frequently compared to Shakespeare “in terms of the heft and rigor of his language use and rhythms, while honoring this very specific Black rhythm of speaking that August captures,” the director here finds himself interested in the Chekhovian nature of Wilson’s work. A key focus for him in *Ma Rainey* is on “the fineness and nooks and crannies of the individual characters” and the intricacies of their interactions, their fortitude, and their struggles.

August Wilson’s *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom* opens Yale Rep’s 2026-27 season, the first to be overseen by Artistic Director **Evan Yionoulis** who assumed that role, as well as Elizabeth Parker Ware Dean of David Geffen School of Drama, on July 1. She says, “I’m thrilled to bring back to Yale Rep Wilson’s momentous and affecting play and to introduce it to a new generation of audiences.”

Actors and designers across generations—whether accomplished artists with long working relationships with Douglas, or the next wave of visionaries as students of the Geffen School—come together to create the world that unfolds around a room of artistic collaborators. The cast includes **Terence Archie** (Broadway: *Company*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Rocky*) as Cutler, **Peter Bisgaier** (Off-Broadway: *Reservoir Dogs*, *Roberto Zucco*, *Patience*) as Policeman/understudy for Sturdyvant and Irwin, **Brittany Antoinette Davis** (Yale Rep: *Furlough's Paradise*; Off-Broadway: *Push Party*; Regional: *A Raisin in the Sun*) as Dussie Mae, **Dion Graham** (Broadway: *Machinal*; Off-Broadway: *Let's Love!*; TV: *The Wire*) as Toledo, **Jimmie J.J. Jeter** (Broadway: *Hamilton*; Regional: *Fences*; Film: *Hold On*) as Levee Green, **Neal Lerner** (Off-Broadway: *Stuff Happens*, *Julius Caesar*, *Fuddy Meers*) as Sturdyvant, **Maiesha McQueen** (Broadway: *Waitress*; Regional: *The Color Purple*, *Come From Away*) as Ma Rainey, **Jeff Parker** (Regional: *safronia*, *Iceboy!*, *Betrayal*) as Irvin, **Ray Anthony Thomas** (Broadway: *I Need That*, *American Buffalo*, *Jitney*) as Slow Drag, and **Mark Yarde** (Yale Rep: *Hedda Gabler*; the Geffen School: *Three Sisters*) as Sylvester. The creative team is **John Bronston** (Music Director), **Richard Lee** (Scenic Designer), **Toni-Leslie James** (Costume Designer), **Amanda Burtness** (Lighting Designer), **Robert Salerno** (Sound Designer), **Matthew Armentrout** (Hair Designer), **Eric M. Glover** and **Layla Williams** (Production Dramaturgs), **Cat Slanski** (Technical Director), **Kelsey Rainwater** (Fight and Intimacy Director), **Julie Foh** (Vocal Coach), **Calleri Jensen Davis** (Casting Director), and **Payton Gunner** (Stage Manager).

August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* is presented by arrangement with **Concord Theatricals** on behalf of **Samuel French, Inc.** www.concordtheatricals.com

August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* Tickets & Performance Schedule

Tickets for August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* will be available beginning August 24: \$20 and \$40 for all previews, \$20 and \$50 on weeknights after opening, and \$20 and \$65 on weekends and matinees after opening. Student tickets are \$20 for all performances.

Performances take place October 2-24 at the **University Theatre** (222 York Street, New Haven):

Friday, October 2 at 8pm (Preview)
Saturday, October 3 at 8pm (Preview)
Monday, October 5 at 8pm (Preview)
Tuesday, October 6 at 8pm (Preview)
Wednesday, October 7 at 8pm (Preview)
Thursday, October 8 at 8pm (Opening Night)

Friday, October 9 at 8pm
Saturday, October 10 at 2pm
Saturday, October 10 at 8pm
Tuesday, October 13 at 8pm
Wednesday, October 14 at 2pm (Pre-Performance Discussion)
Wednesday, October 14 at 8pm
Thursday, October 15 at 8pm
Friday, October 16 at 8pm
Saturday, October 17 at 2pm (Touch Tour at 1pm; Audio Described Performance; Post-show Talkback)
Saturday, October 17 at 8pm (ASL Interpreted Performance)
Wednesday, October 21 at 8pm
Thursday, October 22 at 8pm
Friday, October 23 at 8pm (Spanish Language Open Captioned Performance)
Saturday October 24 at 2pm (Open Captioned Performance; Relaxed Performance)
Saturday October 24 at 8pm (Closing Night)

Yale Rep's 2026–27 **WILL POWER!** education program will include a 10am performance of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* on October 20 for high school students from New Haven Public Schools, entirely free of charge. Education booking, available to New Haven Public School students, will begin in early September. Teachers may contact Yale Rep's Education and Community Programs Manager Elizabeth Nearing elizabeth.nearing@yale.edu for more information.

About August Wilson

August Wilson (Playwright) One of American theater's foremost dramatists, August Wilson (1945–2005) authored the *American Century Cycle*, ten plays chronicling Black American life across each decade of the twentieth century. Centering Black American heritage and experience, August wrote by channeling what he described as “the blood’s memory,” the “deepest part of yourself where the ancestors are talking.” The entire cycle has been produced on Broadway and across national and international stages. Wilson’s works have garnered numerous awards, including Pulitzer Prizes for *Fences* (1987) and *The Piano Lesson* (1990), a Tony Award for Best Play for *Fences*, Great Britain’s Olivier Award for *Jitney*, and eight New York Drama Critics Circle Awards. Wilson is survived immediately by his daughters, Sakina Ansari and Azula Carmen Wilson, and his wife, costume designer and Executive Director of August’s artistic estate, Constanza Romero. The realization of August’s theatrical breadth and legacy would not exist without the extraordinary talent and boundless dedication of the artists who bring it to life. In their hands, Wilson’s body of work is a dynamic force, an ever-spinning cycle finding new

dimensions of meaning for our world today. In the playwright's words, "I believe in the American Theater, I believe in its power to inform about the human condition, its power to heal...its power to uncover the truths we wrestle from uncertain and sometimes unyielding realities."

About Timothy Douglas

Timothy Douglas (Director) has previously directed August Wilson's *Seven Guitars* and the world premiere of *Radio Golf* for Yale Rep. He has over 150 productions of plays, musicals, and opera to his credit, including the Helen Hayes Award winner for Best Musical *The Color Purple* (Signature Theatre). Recent productions include the world premieres of *Safronia* (Lyric Opera of Chicago) and *She Who Dared* (Chicago Opera Theater), as well as new productions of *Champion* (Boston Lyric Opera) and *Blue* (New Orleans Opera). Some representative projects are the world premiere of Jason Reynolds's *Long Way Down* (Kennedy Center); *As You Like It, Much Ado About Nothing, Richard III* (Folger Shakespeare Theatre); *Frankenstein* (Classic Stage Company); *Nina Simone: Four Women, King Hedley II* (Arena Stage); *In The Blood* (Guthrie Theater); *Sally and Tom, Nine Night, Gem of the Ocean, Two Trains Running, Father Comes Home From the Wars* (Roundhouse); *The Hot Wing King, The Color Purple* (Denver Center), *An Octoroon* (NIDA/Sydney); *Rosmersholm* (Nationaltheatret/Oslo); *Disgraced* (Great Theatre of China); *Mules* (Downstage/New Zealand); *Primary Trust* (McCarter), *Jitney, The North Pool, Mothers and Sons*, and *The Trip to Bountiful* for Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park where he also serves on the board of trustees. As a Linklater-designated voice instructor he has served on the faculties of University of Southern California, Emerson College, American Conservatory Theater, UNC School of the Arts, Birmingham School of Acting (UK), and Toi Whakaari (New Zealand Drama School). Upcoming, Timothy will stage the world premieres of both Maria Thompson Corley/Diane Soloman-Glover's *John Lewis: Good Trouble* and Michael Abels/James iJames *Good Bones* for Cincinnati Opera. With this production of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, Timothy will have staged each of the ten plays in August Wilson's *American Century Cycle*.

About the Cast

Terence Archie (Cutler). Broadway: *Company; Kiss Me, Kate; Rocky; Ragtime*. International: *Rocky Das Musical*. Off-Broadway: *Joan of Arc: Into the Fire* (The Public Theater); *1776* (Encores!); *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Second Stage); *Romeo and Juliet* (Classical Theatre of Harlem); Regional: *Noises Off* (Pioneer); *Dear Everything* (BAM); *La Cage Aux Folles* (MUNY), *The Hot Wing King, All the Way, The Twelve* (DCPA); *Guys and Dolls, Twelfth Night* (Old Globe); *Romeo and Juliet* (A.R.T.); *Hippest Trip* (A.C.T.); *The Odyssey* (Seattle Rep, Artpark); *Tamburlaine the Great, Edward II, The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (STC). Film and television:

Raising Kanan, Manhattan Love Story, The Blacklist, Blindspot, For Life, Elementary, Blue Bloods, The Mysteries of Laura. B.F.A, drama, North Carolina School of the Arts.

Peter Bisgaier (Policeman; understudy for Sturdyvant and Irwin) (*he/him*). Off-Broadway: *Reservoir Dogs, Roberto Zucco* (Empire Theatre Company); and *Patience* (Boomerang Theatre Company). Regional: Cincinnati Playhouse, Syracuse Stage, Indiana Rep, McCarter Theatre Center, Arden Theatre, Quintessence Theatre, InterAct Theatre, Pegasus Theatre, The Fulton, Delaware Theater Company, Act II Playhouse, Passage Theatre, Kentucky Repertory Theatre, Phoenix Theatre Company, Stella Adler Theater, and Lincoln Amphitheatre. Peter is Co-Artistic Director of Pegasus Theatre Company. He is also a director, playwright, screenwriter, teacher, and a member of the improv teams Peter & Matt and The Alexanders. As always, a huge thank you to Corinna, Milo, Monica, and Mom who help make all this possible.

Brittany Antoinette Davis (Dussie Mae) is a second-year actor at David Geffen School of Drama. Her credits include *Furlough's Paradise* (understudy, Yale Rep), the world premiere of *Push Party* (The Hearth), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Bristol Riverside Theatre), *Torn Asunder* (Luna Stage), and *The Glass Menagerie* (Rep Stage). She earned her B.F.A. in acting from Howard University. Brittany is honored to be part of this cast and deeply grateful to August Wilson, whose poetry inspired her to become a vessel for storytelling. She is especially grateful to her family for their unwavering love and support.

Dion Graham (Toledo), from HBO's *The Wire* (Rupert Bond), is thrilled to be part of this production at Yale Rep with director Timothy Douglas, having previously done August Wilson's *Jitney* together. Recent: *The History of Sound* with Paul Mescal and Josh O'Connor and Ethan Coen's *Let's Love* with Aubrey Plaza. Broadway: *Machinal* with Rebecca Hall and *Not About Nightingales* (also London's Royal National Theatre, directed by Trevor Nunn). The Kennedy Center: *The Movement Revisited* with Christian McBride. International: *The Gospel at Colonus* (Edinburgh Festival, directed by Lee Breuer) and *Pillars* (Ibsen Conference, Norway). Off-Broadway: *Hang Time, Lobby Hero* (Lortel nomination), *On the Levee, 10 Things to do Before I Die, When January Feels Like Summer, A Hard Heart, Washington Square Moves, A View of the Dome, Elliot Loves*, among others. Premieres and classics in NYC and at various leading regional theaters. Film and television: *Madam Secretary* (Fred Cole), *The Blacklist, Elementary, The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, Malcom X, Mercy, The Good Wife, Gossip Girl, NYPD Blue, Homicide, Hoop Life, Hacks, Law & Order*, and more. In addition, he's an award-winning and highly esteemed audiobook narrator, who has narrated six Pulitzer Prize winners. He's also the series narrator for A&E's *The First 48*. Critically acclaimed, his performances have been praised as thoughtful and compelling, vivid and full of life.

Jimmie “JJ” Jeter (Levee Green) is a Winston-Salem, North Carolina native, Juilliard School alumnus (Group 45), and previously starred as Alexander Hamilton in *Hamilton* on Broadway. He also served as principal standby and assistant director for the original Australian company and all U.S. National Tours. Screen credits include *Hold On* (Sundance 2017), *Campfire Alfa*, and *The Chi* (Season 2). Regional credits include *Fences* at Pioneer Theatre Company, *Romeo and Juliet* at Shakespeare Theatre Company, and the world premiere of Craig Lucas’s *Prelude to a Kiss* musical at South Coast Repertory. @jimmiejeter

Neal Lerner (Sturdyvant) (*he/him*) is delighted to make his Yale Rep debut. A graduate of David Geffen School of Drama, his recent screen credits include *American Fiction* (Academy Award winner for Best Adapted Screenplay), Ryan Murphy’s *Feud: Capote vs. The Swans* (FX), *Orange Is the New Black*, *Girls*, *The Good Fight*, *Blue Bloods*, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, and multiple *Law & Order* series. His film work includes *The Visitor*, *Our Idiot Brother*, *Boiler Room*, *Batman Returns*, *Demolition Man*, and *And the Band Played On*. New York theater credits include productions with The Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre Company, and New York Shakespeare Festival, with additional regional work at the Mark Taper Forum, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and George Street Playhouse. Neal is currently developing his solo play, *What Would Meryl Do?*, which recently received a successful developmental reading and continues toward full production.

Maiesha McQueen (Ma Rainey) is an award-winning performer, director, educator, and producer. Broadway credits include *Waitress* and the *Waitress* First National Tour. Regional credits include *The Color Purple*, *Fannie*, *Clyde’s*, *Come from Away*, *Ain’t Misbehavin’*, and *His Eye Is on the Sparrow*. She recently made her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in *safronia*. A Henry Award and Suzi Bass Award recipient, Maiesha is the founder of A Bite Out of Broadway, where she mentors the next generation of artists through professional-level musical theater training and arts education.

Jeff Parker (Irvin) is making his Yale Rep debut. Recent credits include *safronia* at Lyric Opera of Chicago directed by Timothy Douglas as well as the new musical *Iceboy!* starring Megan Mullally and Nick Offerman and *Betrayal*, both at the Goodman Theatre. Chicago: Steppenwolf (part of the Jeff Award winning ensemble of Tarell Alvin McCraney’s *The Brother/Sister Plays*), Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Writers Theatre, Court Theatre, Northlight, Victory Gardens, and Porchlight (Jeff Award nomination for his performance of Guido in the musical *Nine*), among others. Regional: A.C.T, Asolo Rep, Huntington Theatre, KCRep, Milwaukee Rep, and the Kennedy Center, among others. Television: *Chicago Fire*, *Chicago P.D.*, *Chicago Med* (NBC); *Empire*, *Prison Break* (Fox); and *The Chi* (Paramount+), among others. B.F.A., University of Southern California, acting. @jeffparkeractor

Ray Anthony Thomas (Slow Drag) is known as a Wilsonian Warrior for his work in the canon of August Wilson, having done six plays of *The American Century Cycle*. Broadway: *I Need That*, *American Buffalo*, *Trouble in Mind*, *The Crucible*, *Jitney* (also the National Tour), and *Race*. Ray has also created roles in two Pulitzer Prize-winning plays, *Water by the Spoonful* and *Between Riverside and Crazy*, and received an Obie for *Volunteer Man* (Rattlestick Theater). He recently starred with Debra Jo Rupp in *Driving Miss Daisy* (Palm Beach Dramaworks, Barrington Stage, Williamstown). Film and television: *Spicy Bob*, *Eleanor the Great*, *American Fiction*, *The Harbinger*, *Isn't it Romantic?*, *Shutter Island*, *Trouble with the Curve*; *Flatbush Misdemeanors*, *High Maintenance*, *Law & Order*, *New Amsterdam*, *The Last OG*. Ray is a company member of the Atlantic Theater Company in NYC.

Mark Yarde (Sylvester) is a third-year actor at David Geffen School of Drama, where he was recently seen in *Three Sisters*. He also understudied for *Hedda Gabler* at Yale Rep. You may also recognize him from his work at Yale Cabaret, *Is this Mom?* and *it's not you, it's the end of the world*.

About the Creative Team

John Bronston (Music Director) served as Music Direction Fellow, rehearsal pianist, and sub Key II player on *TINA— The Tina Turner Musical* on Broadway. Off-Broadway he was the musical director on *The Harder They Come* (The Public Theater) and associate music director for *A Man of No Importance* (Classic Stage). Additional New York credits include developmental work at Roundabout Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, and Prospect Musicals. Touring credits include *Hair*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Favorite regional credits include *Spunk*, *Macbeth in Stride* (Yale Rep); *Smokey Joe's Café* (Long Wharf); and *The Color Purple* (Goodman Theatre).

Richard Lee (Scenic Designer) is a Taiwan-born-and-raised theater artist who is currently pursuing his M.F.A. in set design at David Geffen School of Drama, where his credits include *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. With his commitment to re-imagine classical texts and explore new works, he develops his unique perspectives by integrating both scenery and lighting into storytelling. His recent works as both scenic and lighting designer include *Pool (No Water)* (Yale Cabaret), *Save the Cave!*, and *it's not you, it's the end of the world* (Yale Summer Cabaret). Assistant/associate design credits include *Our Town* (Cleveland Playhouse), *Chiaroscuro* (The Flea), *Eden* (Yale Repertory Theatre), *Swan Lake* (Sydney Opera House, Melbourne Arts Center, Australia), *Sleeping Beauty* (Bunkamura Orchard Hall, Japan). richardleedesign.com @richard.lee.design

Toni-Leslie James (Costume Designer) has designed costumes nationally and internationally for theater, film, opera, dance, and television. She has been nominated for four Tony Awards and has designed over 31 Broadway productions including *Take a Banana for a Ride*, *Redwood*, *Gypsy* (Drama Desk nomination), *A Wonderful World*, *Mother Play*, *Paradise Square* (Tony nomination), *The Piano Lesson*, *Bernhardt/Hamlet* (Drama Desk Award, Tony nomination), *Come From Away* (Drama Desk nomination), August Wilson's *Jitney* (Tony and Drama Desk nominations), *Flying Over Sunset* (Hewes Design nomination), and *Jelly's Last Jam* (Tony nomination), among others. Also Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ballet Hispanico, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Houston Grand Opera, along with productions in almost every major off-Broadway and regional theater. International: West End; Royal Court Theatre; Chichester Festival Theatre, The Abbey in Dublin, Ireland; and throughout Australia. Netflix: *Rustin* (Black Reel Award, NAACP Image Award nomination), *Jeff Ross: Take a Banana for a Ride*, *Mike Birbiglia: The Old Man and the Pool*, and *Come From Away*. Other television: six WNET/13 *Great Performances* specials, 22 episodes of *Whoopi* (NBC), and over 400 episodes of *As the World Turns*. Ms. James has garnered over 54 awards and nominations, including Drama Desk, Lorte, Hewes Design Award, Obie, Lily Award, Ming Cho Lee Lifetime Achievement Award, USITT Distinguished Achievement in Education, and an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from Sewanee, The University of the South. She was an Associate Professor and Director of Costume Design at Virginia Commonwealth University from 2007–16 (Head of Design, 2016–19). She joined the faculty of David Geffen School of Drama in 2019 and was co-chair of Design from 2021–26, and is currently Professor in the Practice and Head of Costume Design.

Amanda Burtness (Lighting Designer) (she/her) is a third-year M.F.A. candidate at David Geffen School of Drama, where her credits include *What Rough Beast*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, and *Macbeth*. Other credits include *DinDin*, *Twink Death*, *A Spider Learns to Dance*, and *Dragaret* ('26) at Yale Cabaret. She is the design representative for the Geffen School's Student Government. She is originally from the Bay Area, California, and is a graduate of Chapman University. She is so grateful to be a part of this production, and hopes you enjoy it!

Robert Salerno (Sound Designer) is a third-year M.F.A. candidate in sound design at David Geffen School of Drama, where his credits include *What Rough Beast* and *The Life and Death of King Richard the Second*. He was assistant sound designer for *Measure for Measure* and *Ain't No Mo'* (Geffen School) and *The Far Country* (Yale Rep). Other sound design credits include *Beautiful*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *A Chorus Line*, *Blood Brothers*, *A Class Act*, *Million Dollar Quartet* (Weathervane Theatre); *Mouth/Full*, *Beinecke Plaza*, *BAKSA*, *True Scum*, *Life is a Drag*, *The Wish* (Yale Cabaret).

Matthew Armentrout (Hair Designer). Broadway: *Redwood*, *A Wonderful World*, *The Mother Play*, *Paradise Square* (Drama Desk nominee), *Birthday Candles*, *Flying Over Sunset*, *The Sound Inside*, *Bernhardt/Hamlet*. Off-Broadway: *The Last Bimbo of the Apocalypse* (The New Group); *The Gardens of Anuncia* (Lincoln Center Theater); *Dear World* (NYCC Encores!); *Suffs*, *The Visitor* (The Public); *Merrily We Roll Along* (Roundabout); *Othello* (NY Stage and Film). National Tour: *Jitney*. Regional: *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical* (Signature Theatre); *The Inspector*, Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Yale Rep); *3 Summers of Lincoln* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Midnight in The Garden of Good and Evil* (The Goodman Theatre); *Gatsby* (A.R.T.); *A Transparent Musical* (Center Theatre Group); *Ava: The Secret Conversations* (Geffen Playhouse); *Bliss!* (The 5th Avenue). Television: *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* (Emmy Nominee).

Eric M. Glover *he/him* (Production Dramaturg) is proud to serve as half of the ship's anchor in this production, his sixth at Yale Repertory Theatre. In summer 2006 when he was a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow studying at Swarthmore College aimlessly, Glover worked as an Artistic Intern at Signature Theatre Off-Broadway and learned more about dramaturgy purposefully. Glover and Charity Miller, another Artistic Intern, were responsible for, among other tasks, actors' packets for August Wilson's *Seven Guitars*, directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson. In winter 2023 when the August Wilson Archive at the University of Pittsburgh began receiving visitors, Glover was one of the first five artist-educator-scholars to gain access from Pitt to Wilson's archive. Glover and his coauthors' research article, "Forum: Encounters in the August Wilson Archive," appears, edited and with an introduction, in *Theater* magazine 54 (1).

Layla Williams (Production Dramaturg) is a second-year M.F.A. candidate in dramaturgy and dramatic criticism at David Geffen School of Drama. Most recently, she worked as the assistant dramaturg on *Furlough's Paradise* at Yale Rep. Before coming to Yale, she earned her B.A. in African American studies from Princeton University, where she also honed her skills as a director and writer through minors in theater, music theater, and creative writing.

Cat Slanski (Technical Director) is a third-year M.F.A. candidate in the technical design and production program at David Geffen School of Drama. Credits include assistant technical director for *Spunk* and *falcon girls*, assistant props manager for *Furlough's Paradise* (Yale Rep); production electrician for *The Life and Death of King Richard the Second* (Geffen School); and co-technical director for the 2026 Yale Summer Cabaret. Before beginning in the M.F.A. program, Cat worked in sound at Trinity Repertory Company and graduated with degrees in English and physics from Bryn Mawr College.

Kelsey Rainwater (Fight and Intimacy Director). Kelsey Rainwater's work was most recently seen in *Antigone (This Play I Read In High School)* at The Public Theater. Broadway: *Liberation, The Last Five Years*, and *Hell's Kitchen*. Off-Broadway: *Liberation* (Roundabout); *Saturday Church* (New York Theater Workshop); *Walden* (Second Stage); *Jordans, Goddess, Sally and Tom, White Noise* (The Public). Regional: *Two Trains Running, Laughs in Spanish, Hot Wing King* (Hartford Stage); *In the Southern Breeze* (Rattlestick); *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Keen Company); *Furlough's Paradise, Hedda Gabler, Spunk, Notes on Killing...*, *The Inspector, Wish You Were Here, Between Two Knees, Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles*, and *the ripple, the wave that carried me home* (Yale Rep). Film and television: *Baby Ruby, The Green Veil, The Artist*. She is a Lecturer in acting at David Geffen School of Drama, co-teaches stage combat and intimacy, and is a Resident Fight and Intimacy Director for Yale Rep.

Julie Foh she/her (Vocal Coach) is a voice, text, and dialect coach and Associate Professor Adjunct of acting at David Geffen School of Drama. Previous coaching credits include *Furlough's Paradise, Spunk, falcon girls, Escaped Alone*, and *the ripple, the wave that carried me home* (Yale Rep); *Death of a Salesman, The Cottage, Hurricane Diane, Romeo and Juliet, All My Sons, The Winter's Tale* (Hartford Stage); *Dial M for Murder* (Drury Lane Theatre); *The Woman in Black* (Weston Theater Company); *A View from the Bridge* (Long Wharf Theatre); *Julius Caesar, As You Like It, The Taming of the Shrew, Othello, Love's Labour's Lost, The Tempest, The Winter's Tale, Measure for Measure, Henry V, Twelfth Night, Coriolanus* (Next Chapter Podcasts); *Frankenstein, A Christmas Carol, Sense and Sensibility, As You Like It, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, A Man for All Seasons, And a Nightingale Sang, The Caretaker, A Child's Christmas in Wales* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey); *Belfast Girls* (Irish Rep); *Mlima's Tale* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and Westport Country Playhouse); *Ride the Cyclone: The Musical, Sleuth* (McCarter Theatre Center); *Wolverine: The Lost Trail* (Marvel podcast); *As You Like It, King Charles III* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival); *Sherwood* (Cleveland Play House); *Pygmalion* (BEDLAM); *Familiar* (Woolly Mammoth); *Trans Scripts, Cardenio* (American Repertory Theater); *The Tallest Tree in the Forest* (Tectonic Theater Project); and others. She is an Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework, a Master Teacher of Knight-Thompson Speechwork, and co-author of *Experiencing Speech: A Skills-Based, Panlingual Approach to Actor Training*.

Calleri Jensen Davis (Casting Director) is a creative casting partnership among James Calleri, Erica Jensen, and Paul Davis of over 20 years. They began their collaboration with Yale Rep in 2023 with *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* and *the ripple, the wave that carried me home*. Broadway credits: *The Piano Lesson, Topdog/Underdog, for colored girls..., Thoughts of a Colored Man, Burn This, Fool for Love, The Elephant Man, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Of Mice*

and Men, Venus in Fur, A Raisin in the Sun, 33 Variations. Television: *Love Life, Queens, Dickinson*, and *The Path*, to name a few.

Payton Gunner *she/her* (Stage Manager) is from Atlanta, Georgia, and a third-year M.F.A. candidate at David Geffen School of Drama, where her credits include *What Rough Beast*, *King Lear*, and *The Tragedy of Coriolanus*. Other credits include *Othello* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *Hedda Gabler* (Yale Rep), *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)* (The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey), *The Pickleball Wars* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater), and *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* (Odyssey Opera). B.A., Brandeis University. Payton sends her love and gratitude to her family and friends.

About Yale Repertory Theatre

Yale Repertory Theatre, the internationally celebrated professional theatre in residence at David Geffen School of Drama, has championed new work since 1966, producing well over 100 premieres—including two Pulitzer Prize winners and four other nominated finalists—by emerging and established playwrights. Twenty Yale Rep productions have advanced to Broadway, garnering more than 40 Tony Award nominations and 10 Tony Awards. Yale Rep is also the recipient of the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Established in 2008, Yale's Binger Center for New Theatre has distinguished itself as one of the nation's most robust and innovative new play programs. To date, the Binger Center has supported the work of more than 75 commissioned artists and underwritten the world premieres and subsequent productions of nearly 40 new plays and musicals at Yale Rep and theaters across the country.

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