

APRIL 26 - MAY 22, 2016 | QUADRACCI POWERHOUSE

AUGUST WILSON'S

FENCES

Directed by **Lou Bellamy**

Play
Guide



The Rep
MILWAUKEE

Executive Producers:
James E. and Mary K. Braza

Associate Producers:
Carol and Rob Manegold &
Catherine and Buddy Robinson

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A Co-Production with

**Arizona Theatre Company
and Indiana Repertory Theatre**



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SYNOPSIS

August Wilson's *Fences* explores a family's hopes and dreams in a rapidly changing 1950s America. Troy Maxson, a former Negro League baseball player, must grapple with the reality of his life as a sanitation worker in Pittsburgh. His frustrations and disappointments about his life affect his wife, Rose, and his son, Cory, both of whom have to deal with the decisions Troy makes.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: **AUGUST WILSON**

Born Frederick August Kittel, August Wilson was born in the Hill District of Pittsburgh in 1945. His neighborhood became a common setting for many of his plays. At the age of 15, Wilson dropped out of high school, but independently continued his education at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. His father, Frederick Kittel, a German immigrant, was absent for most of August's life. In 1965, after Frederick passed away, August officially took his mother Daisy's maiden name, Wilson.

Wilson began his writing career as a poet, but was largely unsuccessful. In 1978, Wilson moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, where he began to focus more on writing plays. He wrote his first play, *Jitney*, in 1979, and received a fellowship from the Minneapolis Playwrights Center shortly after in 1980. In 1982, Wilson met Lloyd Richards, the African American Artistic Director at the Yale Repertory Theatre. Richards would direct the first of Wilson's plays in what is known as the 20th century cycle: a series of ten plays, each set in a different century, depicting the life of African Americans over the course of the century. With two Pulitzer Prizes, August Wilson is considered one of the most acclaimed playwrights of the 20th century.

In 2005, Wilson was diagnosed with liver cancer at the age of 60. He died on October 2, 2005 in Seattle, just six months after the premiere of his final play, *Radio Golf*.

CAST

James T. Alfred - Lyons

David Allen Anderson - Troy Maxson

Terry Bellam - Gabriel

Marcus Naylor - Bono

Edgar Sanchez - Cory

Kim Staunton - Rose

Makayla Davis - Raynell

Maya O'Day Biddle - Raynell

CREATIVE TEAM

Lou Bellamy
Director

Vicki Smith
Scenic Designer

Matthew J. Lefebvre
Costume Designer

Don Darnutzer
Lighting Designer

Brian Jerome Peterson
Sound Designer

Brent Gibbs
Fight Choreographer

Anne M. Jude
Stage Manager

August Wilson
(Photo Credit: Britannica.com)



MR. WILSON AND ME

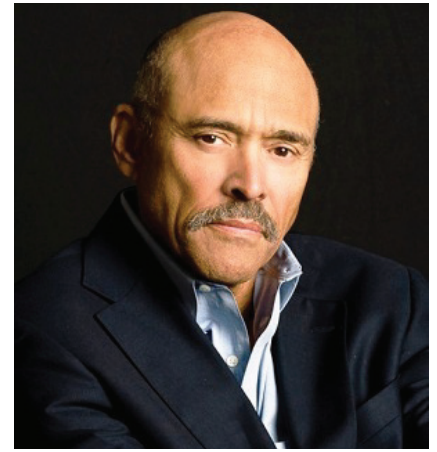
by Lou Bellamy, director

My relationship with the Wilson canon is largely due to my friendship with the playwright as well as my role as founding artistic director of Penumbra Theatre Company in Saint Paul, Minnesota. As artistic director, I produced Mr. Wilson's first professional production—*Black Bart and the Sacred Hills* in 1982. Penumbra Theatre continues to hold the record for having produced more of his work than any theatre in the world. Mr. Wilson was a member of Penumbra Theatre Company and wrote *Malcolm X*, a one-man show, expressly for me to perform. I've had the honor of bringing several of his characters to life on the stage, including Troy Maxson, Wilson's flawed hero in *Fences*.

My professional aesthetic, my relationship with and interpretation of history, and the manner in which I present African American comportment and culture on stage is shaped by his work. I find the spaces Wilson has engineered in this work capable of being filled by authentic African American cultural rhythms and nuance. Yet, *Fences* remains perhaps August Wilson's most accessible play. Maybe it's the structure, which weaves Wilson's tale around a single, Lear-like figure who has at once engendered deep understanding, revulsion, and identification from audiences all over the world.

The ensemble you will meet in this production (which includes IRT stalwart David Alan Anderson) is easily the strongest I've had the pleasure of leading. The quality and attention to detail of the designers is, in my estimation, without equal. Please enjoy the fruits of our labor, and experience the "thunder" that is *Fences*.

This interview is used with permission from the Indiana Repertory Theatre, with which Milwaukee Repertory along with Arizona Theatre Company have collaborated to create this co-production of Fences at three different theaters.



Lou Bellamy
(Photo Credit: Star Tribune)

PANEL DISCUSSIONS INSPIRED BY *FENCES*

Part of The Rep's mission is to provoke meaningful dialogue, which our new Community Engagement department has been active in implementing through our programming. For our production of *Fences*, we will be hosting panels of speakers that have been directly involved in issues that are confronted in and by the play. Join us at one of following discussions!

Celebrating the Legacy and Looking to the Future of African American Theater

Tuesday April 26th, 6:15pm – 7:15pm

Pay What You Can Preview Performance of *Fences* to follow at 7:30pm

Penumbra Theater, under the leadership of Founder and Artistic Director Lou Bellamy, produced August Wilson's first professional production and has gone on to produce more of August Wilson's work than any other theater in the world. Join Lou Bellamy and Chicago and Milwaukee based actors, directors, and African American arts leaders in a conversation celebrating August Wilson's legacy and discussing about the future of African American theater. The conversation will kick off with a tribute to August Wilson and Lou Bellamy by the next generation of emerging artists.

Fatherhood in Milwaukee

Sunday May 1st, 4:45pm – 5:30pm

Following the 2pm performance of *Fences*

"Everything that boy do... he do for you. He wants you to say 'Good job son.' That's all." – Rose, August Wilson's *Fences*

Much of *Fences* centers on the relationship of Troy to his father and Troy to his children. Hear responses to the play from community organizers leading programs that create strong male role models in our city and support Milwaukee fathers.

From the Negro League to Today: Milwaukee's African American Baseball Legends

Sunday May 8th, 4:45pm – 5:30pm

Following the 2pm performance of *Fences*

Troy Maxson in *Fences* is a former Negro League Baseball player grappling with his history of being excluded from the Major Leagues and his own son's love of and talent in sports. Join local baseball legends for a conversation about the history of the Negro League and the roll of baseball in the lives of African American youth today.

PITTSBURGH AND THE HILL DISTRICT

Referred to as the “gateway to the west” in its early days, Pittsburgh was once known for steel production and mining. The city was also home to several stops on the abolitionists’ Underground Railroad during the Civil War. The Hill District is a group of historically African American neighborhoods in Pittsburgh that is known as a center for jazz music and African American culture. The Hill District of Pittsburgh is a common setting for Wilson’s plays, as the map to the right shows.

(Map reprinted with permission from South Coast Repertory Theater)

PITTSBURGH: Then and Now

	THEN	NOW
Population	670,000+	300,000+
Main Industry	Steel production	Technology
Baseball Win/Loss Record	62W-92L (7th in the league in 1957)	98W-64L (2nd in the league in 2015)

THE HILL DISTRICT: Then and Now

THEN (1950s)	NOW (2010s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population: 53,648 lived in the Hill District (1950) Main Thoroughfares: Fullerton Street and Wylie Avenue- known as “the crossroads of the world” for jazz and entertainment. Local Businesses: The Hill District existed as a city within a city. It contained everything someone would need for day-to-day existences drugstores, shoe stores, a department store, hotels, theaters, etc. There was no need to go downtown or leave the Hill for any other business. Civic Arena Area: To make way for construction of the new Civic Arena, 1,300 structures were leveled, displacing 8,000 people and 400 businesses. Few received relocation compensation. Many economists point to this as a factor in the downturn of the economic fortunes of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population: 10,450 lived in the Hill District (2010) Main Thoroughfares: the 2000 block of Centre Avenue, which bisects the Hill District, is under development, guided by the Hill District Community Development Committee and the City of Pittsburgh. Last fall, a Shop 'n Save opened on Centre Avenue. This is the area's first grocery store to open in a generation. Centre Avenue also has recently opened a new YMCA and Carnegie Library. Local Businesses: The Grenada Theater, located at 2007 Centre Avenue, is currently closed, but is slated to be renovated and restored. In its heyday, great jazz artists like Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, and Ella Fitzgerald played there. Civic Arena Area: The Civic Arena has been demolished and replaced by the Consol Energy Center a few hundred feet away. A \$500 million dollar plan has been introduced to turn the Lower Hill District, where the Civic Arena used to be, into office towers, green spaces, bike paths, hotels, and new housing.

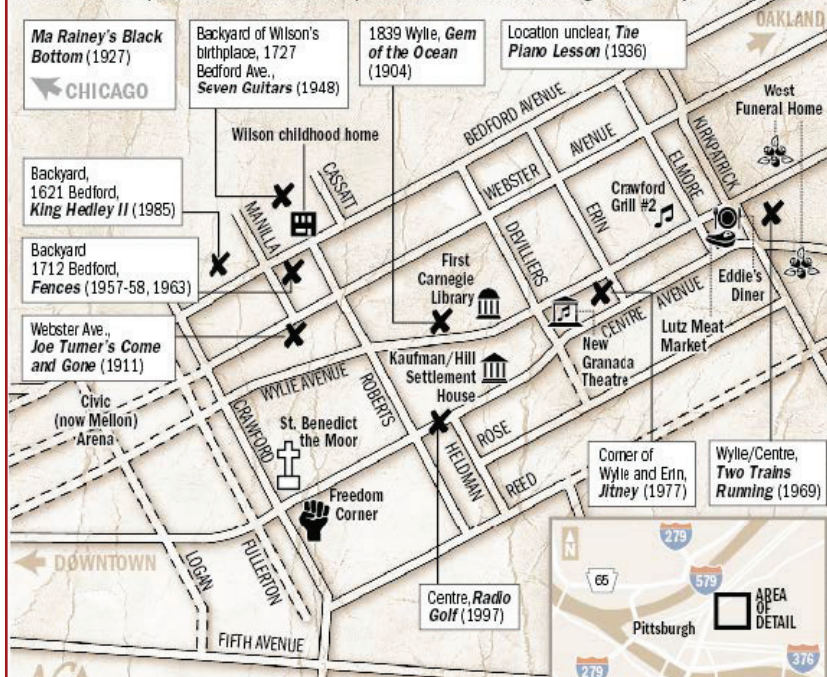
Urban renewal is the process where an urban neighborhood or area is improved and rehabilitated. This is usually done to try to encourage wealthier people to live in the area, which contributes to gentrification of city property. The urban renewal process can include:

- Demolishing older buildings
- Building new housing
- Adding new features to draw activity into the area (ex: movie theaters or shopping malls)

In Pittsburgh, urban renewal has been evident since the late 1950s, when most of the Lower Hill District was razed to make way for the Civic Arena. Pittsburgh has been undergoing a population drain since the 1950s. In fact, Pittsburgh’s population has been cut in half since 1950. City leaders believe redevelopment through urban renewal will help bring more people to the city.

August Wilson’s Hill District

Of Wilson’s unprecedented American epic cycle of ten plays set in each decade of the 20th century, all but one take place in a fictional landscape based on this real Pittsburgh community.



THE 20TH CENTURY CYCLE

August Wilson's most well-known achievement during his career is "The Pittsburgh Cycle" or "20th Century Cycle." The cycle is a series of ten plays that tell the story of the African American experience throughout the 20th century, exploring themes such as racism and family values. All of the plays are set in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, except for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, which is set in Chicago.

The Complete Pittsburgh Cycle

- 1900s – *Gem of the Ocean*** (written in 2003)
- 1910s – *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*** (written in 1988)
- 1920s – *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*** (written in 1984)
- 1930s – *The Piano Lesson*** (written in 1990)
- 1940s – *Seven Guitars*** (written in 1995)
- 1950s – *Fences*** (written in 1987)
- 1960s – *Two Trains Running*** (written in 1991)
- 1970s – *Jitney*** (written in 1982)
- 1980s – *King Hedley II*** (written in 1999)
- 1990s – *Radio Golf*** (written in 2005)

"I think all in all, one thing a lot of plays seem to be saying is that we need to, as black Americans, to make a connection with our past in order to determine the kind of future we're going to have. In other words, we simply need to know who we are in relation to our historical presence in America."

-- August Wilson



1900s – *Gem of the Ocean*

Produced by the Rep in its 2006-2007 season. Citizen Barlow goes to the home of 285-year-old Aunt Ester, who guides him on a spiritual journey to the City of Bones.

(Photo Credit: Milwaukee Repertory Theater)



1920s – *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*

Produced by the Rep in its 2010-2011 season, this play won Wilson his first of seven New York Drama Critics Circle awards.

(Photo Credit: Milwaukee Repertory Theater)



1970s – *Jitney*

Produced by the Rep in its 2001-2002 season. *Jitney* follows the lives of unlicensed taxi drivers operating in Pittsburgh's Hill District.

(Photo Credit: Milwaukee Repertory Theater)



1990s – *Radio Golf*

Produced by the Rep in its 2009-2010 season. Aunt Ester's home is threatened with demolition in the last play Wilson wrote before his death.

(Photo Credit: Milwaukee Repertory Theater)

CHARACTERS IN *FENCES*



David Alan Anderson plays **Troy Maxson** - A former Negro League baseball player who now works in the sanitation department, lifting garbage into trucks.



Kim Staunton plays **Rose** - Troy's wife. She is loyal and supportive of her husband and son, and is kind and caring to everyone around her.



James T. Alfred plays **Lyons** - Troy's oldest son from a previous relationship.



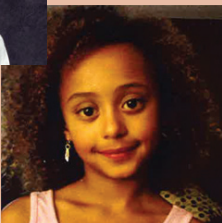
Terry Bellamy plays **Gabriel** - Troy's brother. In World War II, he suffered severe head trauma and wholeheartedly believes that he is the Archangel Gabriel.



Edgar Sanchez plays **Cory** - Troy and Rose's son. He is smart and naturally athletic, specifically at football.



Marcus Naylor plays **Jim Bono** - Troy's best friend of 30 years whom he met while in prison. He was there during Troy's baseball days, and looks up to him as a role model.



Makayla Davis and **Maya O'Day-Biddle** play **Raynell** - Troy's daughter and youngest child from another relationship. In this production, two different actresses portray her on different nights.

AUGUST WILSON'S INTRODUCTION TO *FENCES*

**When the sins of our fathers visit us
We do not have to play host.
We can banish them with forgiveness
As God, in his Largeness and Laws.**

—August Wilson

August Wilson wrote a cultural and historical backdrop to his play *Fences* that eloquently describes the emotions and zeitgeist of the time and place. As this piece is both expressive and informative, but generally doesn't make it to the stage, we are happy to share it with you here:

"Near the turn of the century, the destitute of Europe sprang on the city with tenacious claws and an honest and solid dream. The city devoured them. They swelled its belly until it burst into a thousand furnaces and sewing machines, a thousand butcher shops and bakers' ovens, a thousand churches and hospitals and funeral parlors and money-lenders. The city grew. It nourished itself and offered each man a partnership limited only by his talent, his guile, and his willingness and capacity for hard work. For the immigrants of Europe, a dream dared and won true.

The descendants of African slaves were offered no such welcome or participation. They came from places called the Carolinas and the Virginias, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. They came strong, eager, searching. The city rejected them and they fled and settled along the riverbanks and under bridges in shallow, ramshackle houses made of sticks and tar-paper. They collected rags and wood. They sold the use of their muscles and their bodies. They cleaned houses and washed clothes, they shined shoes, and in quiet desperation and vengeful pride, they stole, and lived in pursuit of their own dream. That they could breathe free, finally, and stand to meet life with the force of dignity and whatever eloquence the heart could call upon.

By 1957, the hard-won victories of the European immigrants had solidified the industrial might of America. War had been confronted and won with new energies that used loyalty and patriotism as its fuel. Life was rich, full, and flourishing. The Milwaukee Braves won the World Series, and the hot winds of change that would make the sixties a turbulent, racing, dangerous, and provocative decade had not yet begun to blow full."

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN THE 1950S

CIVIL RIGHTS ERA BEFORE AND AFTER *FENCES*

Troy is thrown into conflict with his children who are of the second half of the century's slow march to opportunities for African Americans. He resents Cory especially for being born into a time which is marginally more accepting of the color of his skin.

BONO: "Times have changed, Troy. You just come along too early."

TROY: "There ought not never have been no time called too early!"

1954 - *Brown v. Board Education of Topeka* was the ground breaking Supreme Court case that ended racial segregation in schools.

1955 - Rosa Parks refuses to move to the back of a Montgomery, Alabama bus. She is arrested. This prompted the Montgomery Bus Boycott by African American protesters, notably Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Subsequently, he becomes the most prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

Between 1910-1970, The Great Migration was the movement of six million or more African Americans from rural South to urban Northeast, Midwest, and West. This phenomenon is represented by Troy's journey from his farm 200 miles from Mobile, Alabama to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In popular culture, this was called the "Walking Blues."

BONO: "Just keep on walking till you come to something else. Ain't you never heard of nobody having the walking blues? Well, that's what you call it when you just take off like that."

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment for African Americans was much higher than those of whites because finding a job was nearly impossible because of their skin color. Labor and low-paying service jobs were the norm. Eventually, Troy challenges this and becomes the first black driver of a garbage truck in his company.

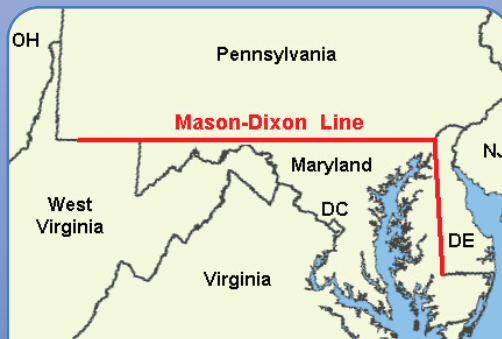
TROY: "I went to Mr. Rand and asked him, 'Why? Why you got the white mens driving and the colored lifting?'"

CREDIT IN THE 1950s

The first credit card appeared in 1950 and stimulated the purchasing power of the American economy. African Americans had difficulty obtaining credit, except at high interest rates, as Troy tells in his experiences trying to buy furniture.

Poverty was said to be "invisible" in the 50s since it was concentrated in rural white neighborhoods or black urban neighborhoods.

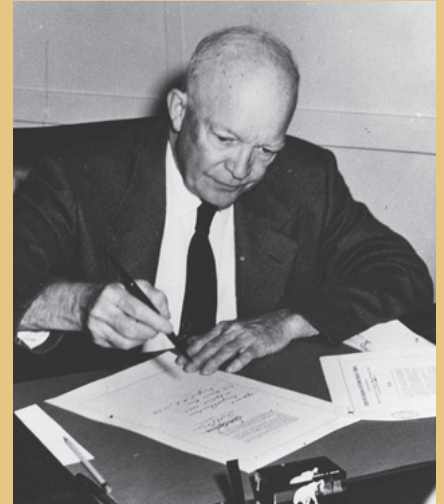
TROY: "I got an empty house with some raggedy furniture in it. Cory ain't got no bed. He's sleeping on a pile of rags on the floor. Working every day and can't get no credit."



MASON DIXON LINE

Troy's last name, Maxson, is a mashup of Mason and Dixon from the Mason Dixon Line, the historical division between slave-holding southern states and free northern states.

1957 - Congress passes Civil Rights Act that ends discriminatory voter registration practices. Later acts would address segregation in public places and employment opportunities.

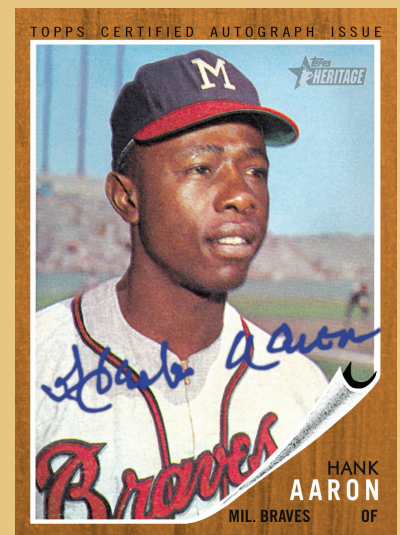


President Eisenhower signing the Civil Rights Act of 1957. (Photo Credit: CivilRightsMovement.net)

HANK AARON

Fences is set in the same year that Hank Aaron led the Milwaukee Braves to win the World Series in 1957. *Fences* ends in 1965, by that time African Americans had marched on Washington, MLK had made his "I Have a Dream" speech and Congress had passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which ended many discriminatory practices.

(Photo Credit: Britannica.com)





THE NEGRO LEAGUE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS IN BASEBALL

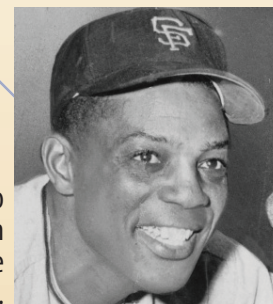
TRANSCENDING JIM CROW: In the more racially tolerant North and Midwest, it was easier for a talented African American to make a place on a white team. Although this was uncommon, no official, legal league rule existed to deny African Americans a spot on a professional team. However, due to pressures from Southern team owners who followed Jim Crow laws, the National League came to an "understanding" that there would be no black players on white teams. Prior to an official organization in 1920, many rogue teams called barnstormers began popping up. These groups traveled the country challenging anyone to play them, including

white teams. Taking their history of racial oppression to the field became a form of redemption, especially when they beat their white opponents. It became an even playing field. And when some owners began to see the financial possibilities, some began to slack a little on the "understanding." While many people may not have liked it, integration began to happen when the top talent from these Negro Leagues proved that they were just as good, if not better than their new white teammates. Moses Fleetwood Walker and Bud Fowler were among the early black pioneers of baseball integration.



JACKIE ROBINSON became the first black American baseball player after signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He ended up leading the Dodgers to the World Series in 1955.

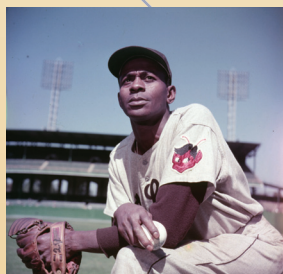
(Photo Credit: loc.gov)



WILLIE MAYS of the San Francisco Giants was the first African American player to hit four home runs in a game in 1961.



BUD FOWLER becomes the first black pro baseball player, for a team in Chelsea, Mass in 1878. In 1920, the Negro League was established which segregated baseball.

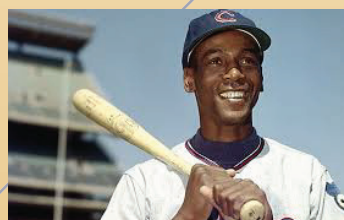
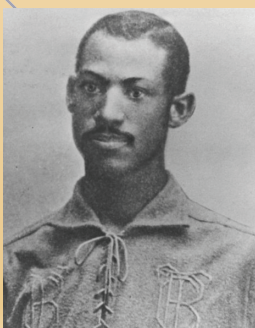


SATCHEL PAIGE began his career in the Negro Leagues in 1926, until finally getting drafted into the Major Leagues as a 42-year-old rookie.



In September 1957, **HANK AARON** hit a home run in the 11th inning which sent the [then] Milwaukee Braves to the World Series. Milwaukee, the underdog team, won an upset over the New York Yankees in seven games. In 1974, he broke Babe Ruth's record by hitting his 715th career home run. (Photo Credit: NLBM.com)

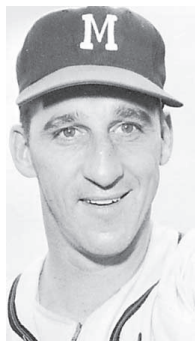
MOSES FLEETWOOD WALKER was born along the Underground Railroad in 1857. In 1884, at age 26, he broke down barriers to become the first African American to play on a white Major League baseball team. (Photo Credit: mlb.com)



ERNIE BANKS of the Chicago Cubs became the first African American to win two consecutive MVP awards in 1959. (Photo Credit: Major League Baseball)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS & REFERENCES IN *FENCES*

Here is a list of terms and references to help contextualize the play, *Fences* along with quotes from when they are used in the script.



Warren Spahn: An American baseball pitcher, Warren Spahn established a record for left-handed pitchers with 363 major league victories.

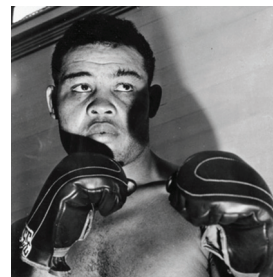
"I bet you couldn't hit no home runs off of Warren Spahn." -Cory

(Photo Credit: Britannica.com)



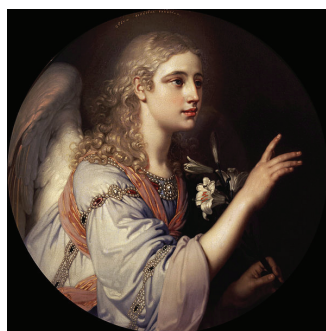
Battle of Armageddon: According to the Book of Revelations, the Battle of Armageddon will be a final battle between the followers of Jesus and the followers of Satan. **"Waiting on the Battle of Armageddon, huh?"** -Lyons

(Image Credit: battle-of-armageddon.org)



Joe Louis: An American professional boxer who was known as the "Brown Bomber," Joe Louis was the undefeated world heavyweight champion for 12 years, with only one loss before officially earning the title. **"Big old strong boy. Look like Joe Louis."** -Bono

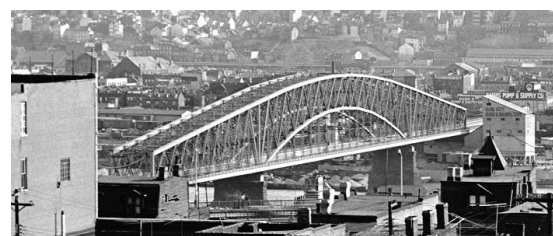
(Photo Credit: Biography.com)



Archangel Gabriel: One of three archangels, Gabriel serves as God's messenger to certain people. He is often associated with a trumpet, which is said to be his indicator of God's return to Earth. Gabriel, Troy's brother in the play, believes that he is this archangel. **"I'm gonna tell St. Peter to open the gates. You get ready now."** -Gabriel



Aunt Jemima: Aunt Jemima is a brand of pancake mix, syrup, and other breakfast foods with a popular African American mascot marketed to depict warmth, nourishment, and good food. **"I done had breakfast with Aunt Jemima."** -Gabriel (Image Credit: auntjemima.com)



Brady Street Bridge: This steel bridge was located in Pittsburgh, from 1896-1977. It was officially demolished in 1978 and was then replaced by the Birmingham Bridge. **"Colored folks living down there on the riverbanks in whatever kind of shelter they could find for themselves. Right down there under the Brady Street Bridge."** -Troy

(Photo Credit: Brookline Connection)



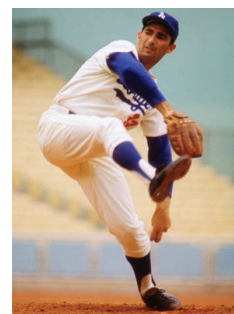
Hellhound: A hellhound is a supernatural dog in folklore. **"You know I was chasing hell-hounds."** -Gabriel

(Image Credit: Animal Planet)



A&P: The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, better known as A&P, was an American and Canadian grocery store chain that went out of business in 2015, after 156 years of operation. **"The only thing I say about the A&P is I'm glad Cory got that job down there."** -Troy

(Photo Credit: groceries.com)



Sandy Koufax: Sandy Koufax was one of the most dominant baseball pitchers until he was forced into early retirement at the age of 30 due to arthritis in his elbow. **"Sandy Koufax. He's leading the league in strikeouts."** -Cory

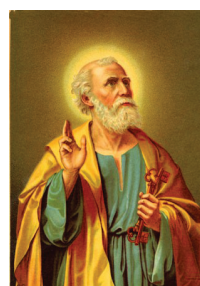
(Photo Credit: sportsplacement.com)



Uncle Remus:

Uncle Remus tales are African American trickster stories written by Joel Chandler Harris. Uncle Remus is popularly known as the singer of Disney's Academy Award Winning Best Song, "Zip-a-dee-doo-dah."

"I know you got some Uncle Remus in your blood." -Bono



St. Peter: St. Peter is considered to be the first official Pope.

"...every morning me and St. Peter would sit down by the gate and eat some big fat biscuits." -Gabriel

(Image Credit: Roman Catholic Church of St. Peter)



Crawford Grill: At the time of the play, this renowned jazz club in the Hill District brought all ethnicities and walks of life together in pursuit of jazz music.

"I see where you playing down at Crawford Grill tonight." – Bono (Photo Credit: Pittsburgh Post Gazette)

HERE ARE A FEW TERMS AND PHRASES

Whapping: To beat or thrash something or someone.

Hitched up: To travel by getting free rides in passing vehicles.

You in the batter's box now: Troy is referring to the spaces to the left or right of home plate that the batter stands in depending on his or her dominant hand. He's intimating that Cory is up to bat, and is playing the game now, and already has one strike.

You can't visit the sins of the father upon the child: This phrase seems to be inspired by the passage in the Bible, Ezekiel 18:20 which says, "The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son."

Plumb: Downright, absolutely.



Banty: The banty is a type of small, but aggressive rooster known for its temper. The name is taken from "Bantam" which is a smaller variety of poultry.

"Okay baby, but I'm gonna buy me a banty rooster and put him out there in the backyard." – Troy

(Photo Credit: backyardchickens.com)



Numbers Game: A form of lottery played mostly in poor neighborhoods, wherein a bettor attempts to pick three digits to match those that will be randomly drawn the following day.

"Them numbers don't know nobody. I don't know why you fool with them. You and Lyons both." – Troy

(Image Credit: Pennsylvania Lottery)



Courier: The Pittsburgh Courier was an African American newspaper published from 1907 until 1966; one of the most significant black newspapers in the United States.

"Got it all over the front page of the Courier about them raiding Sefus' place... where you be hanging out with all them thugs." – Troy



Featured Artist: HOPE PAROW, EDUCATION ASSOCIATE

"Theater can and should be culturally responsive, enjoyed, and shared between a community," says Hope Parow, who is currently in her third season at Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Right after graduating college with a degree in Education and Theater Performance, Hope began working at The Rep as an Emerging Professional Resident. Currently, she works in the Education Department as the Education Associate, alongside two other full-time staff members, a seasonal Emerging Professional Resident, and part-time interns. The Education Department is responsible for creating and implementing a variety of in-school, after-school, and community programming, as well as onsite programming at the theater. The programming is currently focusing on the production of August Wilson's play, *Fences*.

An example of The Rep's Education programs is School Subscription, which gives teachers the opportunity to bring a classroom to see four different productions throughout the season. The students participate in pre- and post-show workshops with an actor or director, giving them the ability to interact with professional theater artists in each production. For *Fences*, the last of the four shows this season, The Rep will be welcoming five School Subscription classrooms. Another program is Teen Council, a student-led organization comprised of 17 Leadership Board members and 80 general members who love theater and collaborate to support the mission of The Rep. They will be hosting their final Teen Night around *Fences*. Teen Nights are designed to make theater more accessible and engaging to young adults throughout the city. This final night will be envisioned, planned, and implemented by the Teen Council Leadership Board members. Hope says, "by offering events and tickets to shows at a reduced price, we hope to not only expand audiences and make the fine arts more inclusive, but help develop the next generation of theater artists and arts leaders."

Another important initiative is Scriptworks, an in-class program for high school students that focuses on reading and explaining a script through a professional theater art lens. *Fences* is the second Scriptworks show for the 2015-16 season, featured in five schools for a total of ten classrooms. For *Fences*, Hope is using a different approach than usual to help students learn more about the script. She says that Scriptworks "usually focuses on technical elements such as costume design," but for this script, the students will be looking into the development of the main protagonist, Troy,

focusing on what he has seen and experienced throughout his life. Students will be "reading bits and pieces of the script through the lens of an Education Director, and will learn how to use theater or art for social justice or to educate people," Hope says. The students will be create social justice action plans, which they will hopefully implement in their school or neighborhood community.

In addition, The Rep also hosts Rep Immersion Day, an event supported by the entire Rep community, who volunteer their time to make the day meaningful for students. On an Immersion Day, students arrive to The Rep early in the morning and participate in a full day of activities relating to the performance. They are shown technical demonstrations by The Rep staff or guest artists, and in doing this, they are able to see how the production comes to life onstage. Students are also given lunch, and they end their day with seeing the matinee. This spring, Hope anticipates welcoming roughly 1400 students for the *Fences* Student Matinee and Immersion Day alone.

With all of the programming it has to offer, the Education Department is an important part of The Milwaukee Repertory Theater. This season, *Fences* is the wrap-up show for Scriptworks, and an ideal production to end with which to end the season. It not only demonstrates the importance of theater, but *Fences* also brings people together while shedding light on important issues.



Hope Parow, Education Associate at Milwaukee Repertory Theater

CO-PRODUCTION:

This production is a Co-Production shared between three theaters: Arizona Theatre Company (January 16th-February 28th), Indiana Repertory Theatre (March 9th-April 3rd), and Milwaukee Repertory Theater (April 26th-May 22nd). The set, costumes, props, actors, and stage management travel with the production from theater to theater. A Co-Production is beneficial financially to all hosts, and also allows a wide range of audiences to see a creative work. We are proud to be the final stop of this production.



INDIANA
REPERTORY
THEATRE

"I write for myself, and my goal is bringing that world and that experience of black Americans to life on the stage and giving it a space there."

-- August Wilson

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VISITING THE REP

Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Patty and Jay Baker Theater Complex is located in the Milwaukee Center downtown at the corner of Wells and Water Streets. The building was formerly the home of the Electric Railway and Light Company.

The Ticket Office is visible on the left upon entering the Wells Street doors. The Quadracci Powerhouse is located on the second level and can be accessed via the escalator or elevator.



THE REP VALUES YOUR SUPPORT

Financial support enables The Rep to:

- ★ Advance the art of theater with productions that inspire individuals and create community dialogue;
- ★ Provide a richer theater experience by hosting Rep In Depth, Talkbacks, and creating Play Guides to better inform our audiences about our productions;
- ★ Educate over 20,000 students at 200+ schools in the greater Milwaukee area with Rep Immersion Day experiences, student matinees, workshops, tours and by making connections with their school curriculum through classroom teaching programs such as Reading Residencies and Scriptworks;
- ★ Maintain our commitment to audiences with special needs through our Access Services that include American Sign Language interpreted productions, captioned theater, infrared listening systems and script synopses to ensure that theater at The Rep is accessible to all;
- ★ Educate the next generation of theater professionals with our Artistic Intern Program which gives newly degreed artists a chance to hone their skills at The Rep as they begin to pursue their theatrical careers.

We value our supporters and partnerships and hope that you will help us to expand the ways Milwaukee Rep has a positive impact on theater and on our Milwaukee community.

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