

August Wilson's **Seven Guitars** at Hibernian Hall

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 19, 2022

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
[Evan Turissini](#) - 781-552-1605

PRESS DATE: Sunday, February 12th at 2pm - [RSVP Here](#).

(BOSTON) – On February 8th, 2023, Actors' Shakespeare Project proudly returns to Hibernian Hall with one of the most celebrated plays of August Wilson's Century Cycle: **Seven Guitars**.

In Pittsburgh's historic Hill District, six friends gather to mourn and reminisce after the untimely death of blues guitarist Floyd "Schoolboy" Barton. As the characters recount Floyd's last days in 1948, **Seven Guitars** spins a tale of what happens when dreams of stardom collide with harsh reality. With bawdy comedy and enchanting blues rhythms, Wilson's Pulitzer- and Tony-nominated script explores faith, oppression, love, and the music that binds us together.

August Wilson is one of the the most lauded American playwrights of the twentieth century, known particularly for his Century Cycle - a series of ten plays that examine the African diaspora and Black life in the United States from the 1900s to the 1990s. All ten were produced on Broadway, and garnered Wilson ten Tony nominations as well as the Tony Award for Best Play (*Fences*), two Tony Awards for Best Revival (*Fences*, *Jitney*), and two Pulitzer Prizes for Drama (*Fences*, *The Piano Lesson*). On October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theater located at 245 West 52nd Street, The August Wilson Theatre. In August of 2022, Wilson's childhood home in Pittsburgh was reopened to the public as a historic landmark and artistic cultural center. He has been heralded by many as "The American Shakespeare."

ASP Resident Acting Company Member **Maurice Emmanuel Parent** will direct the Actors' Shakespeare Project production of **Seven Guitars**. As a director, Parent received acclaim for his work on Lyric Stage Company's *Breath & Imagination* and SpeakEasy Stage Company's *Choir Boy*. He has appeared in nine shows at ASP, including *Edward II*, for which he won the 2017 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Actor. He is the co-founder and Co-Producing Artistic Director of The Front Porch Arts Collective, a Black theater company committed to advancing racial equity through art.

Seven Guitars features ASP Resident Acting Company Members **Johnnie Mack** (*Othello*, *Pericles*, *King Henry VIII*) and **Omar Robinson** (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet*), as well as Maya Carter, Anthony T Goss, Dereks Thomas, Valyn Lyric Turner, and Regine Vital.

The design team is Jon Savage (scenic); Nia Safarr Banks (costumes); Amanda E. Fallon (lighting); Dewey Dellay (music composition), and Abraham Joyner-Meyers (sound). Ashley Pitchford is the Production Stage Manager, and Kelsey Whipple is the Assistant Stage Manager.

Seven Guitars will run for four weeks, from February 8 through March 5, 2023 at Hibernian Hall (184 Dudley St #200, Boston, MA 02119).

Tickets are \$52.50, with an allotment of Pay-What-You-Can tickets released for the week's performances on the Monday of that week. There are student rush tickets available at the box office one hour prior to each performance for \$15. For more information, visit www.ActorsShakespeareProject.org.

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ABOUT ACTORS' SHAKESPEARE PROJECT

Actors' Shakespeare Project is an award-winning professional theater company with a Resident Acting Company and extensive education, youth and community programs. ASP works and performs in found spaces, schools, and theaters in Boston neighborhoods. We present and explore the robust language, resonant stories, and deeply human characters in Shakespeare's plays and in other language-based contemporary playwrights. Our work is focused on intimacy, storytelling, language, relationships, voice, risk and artistry within and throughout the Boston area. For more information visit www.ActorsShakespeareProject.org.

ABOUT HIBERNIAN HALL

Hibernian Hall is your home for multicultural arts & culture in the heart of Boston. Owned by Madison Park Development Corporation, Hibernian Hall is a beautiful gathering place for music, dance, and theater –reflecting the diversity of cultures in the area. It serves as a destination for arts and culture in the heart of Roxbury and contributes to neighborhood revitalization. Hibernian Hall is a performing arts destination and an excellent venue for non-profit events that are open to the public. Learn more at madison-park.org/what-we-do/arts-culture/hibernian-hall/.

ABOUT MADISON PARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Madison Park Development Corporation is a leading developer of affordable housing in Nubian Square, a presenter of arts that reflect the culture of the community, and a promoter of Roxbury's health and well-being, working alongside residents and allies to empower the community, fight health disparities, and support our youth.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Seven Guitars had its world premiere at Chicago's Goodman Theatre in January 1995, and debuted in Boston at the Huntington Theatre Company that same year. It opened on Broadway the following year at the Walter Kerr Theatre, where it ran for 188 performances and received eight Tony Award nominations. It was also nominated for the 1995 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

August Wilson (Playwright) 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*. The ten play compilation is entitled *The American Century Cycle*. These works explore the heritage and experience of the descendants of Africans brought to North America as slaves, decade-by-decade, over the course of the twentieth century. Each of the Wilson plays have been produced on Broadway, at theaters across the country, and all over the world. In 2003, Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show, *How I Learned What I Learned*.

His works garnered many awards including two Pulitzer Prizes for Drama (*Fences* in 1987 and *The Piano Lesson* in 1990), the 1987 Tony Award for Best Play (*Fences*), two Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Play (*Fences* in 2010 and *Jitney* in 2017), the 2002 Olivier Award for Best New Play (*Jitney*), the 2017 Olivier Award for Best Revival of a Play (*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*), and seven Drama Critics Circle Awards. Additionally, the cast recording of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* received a 1985 Grammy Award, and Wilson received a 1995 Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of *The Piano Lesson*.

During his life, Wilson received many fellowships and awards, including the Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in Playwriting, the Whiting Writers Award, the Heinz Award, and was awarded the 1999 National Humanities Medal by President Bill Clinton. He received numerous honorary degrees from colleges and universities, as well as the only high school diploma ever issued by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Wilson's now famous TCG speech, [The Ground on Which I Stand](#) in 1996 triggered a great debate in the world of the American Theater.

On October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theater located at 245 West 52nd Street, The August Wilson Theatre. New York Public Radio recorded the entire American Century Cycle at the Greene Space, casting many of the original Broadway actors. PBS aired a documentary on Wilson entitled, "The Ground On Which I Stand," as part of the American Masters series. Wilson's screenplay for the 2017 feature film, *Fences* starring Denzel Washington and Viola Davis, garnered him an Academy Award nomination. Recently, The August Wilson African American Cultural Center in Pittsburgh opened a permanent exhibit under its roof, solely dedicated to the playwright's artistic legacy. In August of 2022, Wilson's childhood home in Pittsburgh was reopened to the public as a historic landmark and artistic cultural center, and his full archives now being housed at Pittsburgh University.

Though born in Pittsburgh, Wilson resided in Seattle when he passed away in 2005. He is survived by his daughters, Sakina Ansari Wilson and Azula Carmen Wilson, and his wife, costume designer, and Executive Director of the August Wilson Legacy LLC, Constanza Romero-Wilson. (*he/him*)

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ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Maurice Emmanuel Parent is an award-winning actor, director, educator and mentor with twenty years of professional experience. He has over forty acting credits at theaters across the nation and abroad, having performed with some of Boston's oldest and most respected companies such as the Huntington Theatre Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Lyric Stage Company, New Repertory Theatre, Central Square Theater, and has been a Resident Acting Company member at Actors' Shakespeare Project since 2011.

His work as an actor has earned him two Elliot Norton Awards from The Boston Theater Critics Association, three Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) awards, and an ArtsImpulse Award. Parent's history as an educator extends back over a decade. He's taught for Northeastern University, MIT, The Boston Conservatory at Berklee, and spent six years as a Performing Arts Specialist in the Boston Public School System. Currently, Parent is a full time Professor of the Practice in the Tufts Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies.

Parent is the co-founder of The Front Porch Arts Collective, a black theatre company committed to advancing racial equity in Boston through theater. In its sixth season, The Porch has quickly become a well-respected voice in the Boston theatrical landscape. In residence at the Huntington Theatre Company, Parent serves as both Co-Producing Artistic Director of The Porch and Consulting Producer for The Huntington. (*he/him*)

ABOUT THE CAST

MAYA CARTER (Vera Dotson). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut! **Regional:** *Little Women* (Perseverance Theatre); *A Raisin in the Sun* (Sharon Playhouse); *It Will Rise Soon Enough* (Lenfest/Columbia); *The Suburbs* (Thrown Stone Theater Co.) and *Grounded* (Irondale). **Developmental Projects:** *Tanya's Lit Clit* with ExB (Dramaturg), *Elle S'envoie* with Linked Dance Theater (Co-Creator/Director), and *The Freedman's Lit!* (Deviser/Ensemble Member). **Education:** BFA in Theatre Performance from Hofstra University. Maya is an interdisciplinary performer + teaching artist from Boston MA, living + making in Brooklyn, NY. Maya sends an ocean of gratitude to family + guides + ancestors + mentors for paving the way. @maya_n_carter

ANTHONY T GOSS (Floyd "Schoolboy" Barton) is an actor, writer from Roxbury, MA, based in NYC. He grew up just around the corner from Dudley station. On stage, he most recently appeared Off-Broadway in the play *Cowboy*, the Audelco nominated play *Gong Lum's Legacy* with Woody King Jr.'s New Federal Theatre, *Searching for Willie Lynch* at the New Horizon Theatre in Pittsburgh, and *Black Angels Over Tuskegee* in Delaware. He has also worked in various film and TV projects, including the film "African America" on Netflix. He is most excited to be home doing a play of the great August Wilson. It is a dream come true. Always grateful to God, The Ancestors, and those Artists who came before. ROXBURY WE HERE! @antgoss (*he/him*)

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ABOUT THE CAST (cont.)

JOHNNIE MACQUARLEY* (Hedley). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Othello*, *Pericles*, *Henry VIII*, *As You Like It*. **Regional:** *The Brother/Sister Plays*, *You For Me For You* (Company One); *Race* [u/s], *The Kite Runner* (New Rep); *Romeo & Juliet* (Happy Medium Theatre). **Directing:** *Romeo and Juliet* (Boston Arts Academy) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Actors' Shakespeare Project). **Film/TV:** "Double Cross" (UPN), "No Good Nick" (Netflix), "School of Rock" (Nickelodeon), *Joy* directed by David O. Russell, *Stars Fell on Alabama* directed by VW Sheich. **Education:** BA Alabama State University, MFA Brandeis University. www.JohnnieMack.com (he/him)

OMAR ROBINSON* (Canewell). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Pride and Prejudice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet*, *The School for Scandal*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Henry VIII*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Pericles*, *Twelfth Night*. **Regional:** Huntington Theatre Company, Trinity Repertory Company, Dorset Theatre Festival, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Lyric Stage Company, Central Square Theater, Boston Playwrights' Theatre, Theatre Espresso. **Education:** BA, Emerson College. (he/him)

DEREKS THOMAS* (Red Carter). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut! **Off-Broadway:** *Ghost Stories: The Shawl & Prairie Du Chien* (Atlantic Theater Company). **Regional:** *Radio Golf*, *Gem Of The Ocean*, *A Christmas Carol* (Trinity Rep); *The Lily's Revenge*, *The Light Princess*, *The Donkey Show* (A.R.T.); *Passing Strange* (Studio Theatre). **International:** *The Imaginary Invalid* (Moscow Art Theatre). **Television:** "Prodigal Son" (FOX). **Education:** MFA, Moscow Art Theatre (A.R.T. Institute for Advanced Theater Training); BS, The Citadel. www.DereksThomas.com (he/him)

VALYN LYRIC TURNER (Ruby). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut! **Regional:** *LORENA: A Tabloid Epic* (Boston Playwrights' Theatre), *Walking the Tightrope* (Wheelock Family Theatre). **University:** *Little Row Boat*, *Grounded* (BU School of Theatre). **Playwriting:** *Marian* (Locust Grove Theatre), *Half* (BU School of Theatre). **Radio:** *Iris* (Trick City Productions). **Education:** Fourth year BFA in Theatre Arts and BA in Spanish at Boston University. Valyn received the 2021 Broadway-World Boston Award for Best Performer in a Streaming Musical for *Walking the Tightrope*. (she/her)

REGINE VITAL (Louise). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut! **Regional:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, CSC2); *Re-Making America Plays*, *Voting Writes*, *Reproductive Liberty and Body Justice for All* (Company One); *The Phlebotomist* (Central Square Theatre); *Onward: Votes for Women* (Birch Tree Productions). **Fringe/Local:** *The Nether*, *Antigone* (Flat Earth Theatre); *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Coyote on a Fence* (HUB Theatre Company); *An Education in Prudence* (Open Theatre Project). **Film:** *Imagining the Age of Phyllis* (Revolutionary Spaces). **Education:** BA in English and History from Boston University; MA in English Literature and Creative Writing from University of Massachusetts Boston; MA candidate in Shakespeare Studies from King's College London and Shakespeare's Globe. (she/her)

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ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

NIA SAFARR BANKS (Costume Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut! **Regional:** *An Octoroon* [2019 Richmond Theatre Critic Circle Award nomination — Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design in a Play] (TheatreLab), *A Christmas Kaddish* [2022 Richmond Theatre Critic Circle Award nomination — Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design in a Musical] (Richmond Triangle Players); *Pipeline* (Virginia Repertory Theatre); *Pass Over* (American Shakespeare Center); and *The Barber of Seville* (The Santa Fe Opera). **Education:** Virginia Commonwealth University (BFA), Boston University (MFA - ongoing).

DEWEY DELLAY (Music Composition). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *The Merchant of Venice*. **Regional:** *The Inheritance* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); *Be Here Now* (Lyric Stage Company); and *Grand Horizons* (Gloucester Stage). **Other Credits:** Oprah Winfrey Network, National Geographic Explorer, Hans Zimmer's *Bleeding Fingers*, and numerous digital children's books for Live Oak Media. Dewey is the recipient of the Elliot Norton award for Outstanding Design and an IRNE for Best Sound Design. www.DeweyDellay.com (he/him)

AMANDA E. FALLON (Lighting Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut! **Regional:** *English* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); *LORENA: A Tabloid Epic*, *The Smuggler* (Boston Playwrights' Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *Nightfall*, *James* and *the Giant Peach* (Wheelock Family Theatre). **Education:** Boston University. www.AmandaFallonDesign.com (they/she)

ABE JOYNER-MYERS (Sound Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *The Bomb-itty of Errors*, *The Merchant of Venice* (A1), *Seize the King*, *Play On: Othello* (A1). **Boston:** *Much Ado About Nothing* (A3, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company), *Thumbelina: A Little Musical* (A1, American Repertory Theater). **Regional:** *Man of La Mancha* (A1, Asolo Repertory Theatre), *The Brightest Thing in the World* (A1, Yale Repertory Theatre), *Sing Street* (A3, Huntington Theatre).TV: "The Society" (Goth Accordion Player, Netflix). **Education:** Harvard University. (he/him)

JON SAVAGE (Scenic Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Macbeth*, and *Equivocation*. **Broadway:** *Hot Feet* (Assoc. Scenic Design). **Boston:** *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Black Odyssey Boston* (Front Porch Arts Collective/Central Square Theater); *A Disappearing Number* (Central Square Theater); *Sweet Charity*, *Lucky Stiff*, *Miracle on 34th Street* (Greater Boston Stage Company); *Reparations*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *True West*, *The Bank Job* (Gloucester Stage Company); *Imagining Madoff*, *Broken Glass*, *Cardboard Piano* (New Repertory Theatre); *Old Money*, *Comedy of Errors* [Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Design], *All's Well That Ends Well* [Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Production] (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *Laughing Wild* and Ryan Landry's *M* (Huntington Theatre Company). **Regional:** *State Fair* (The Walnut Street Theatre), *Fiddler on the Roof*, *King of the Jews* (Olney Theatre Center); *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Clybourne Park* (Lyric Repertory Company - UT). Jon is currently serving on faculty within the Design, Production and Management programs at Boston University. He is a member of United Scenic Artists. (he/him)

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CALENDAR LISTING INFORMATION

August Wilson's *Seven Guitars*

Presented by Actors' Shakespeare Project (Christopher V. Edwards, Artistic Director)
In Partnership With Hibernian Hall (Haris Lefteri, Interim Director of Hibernian Hall)

Actors' Shakespeare Project proudly returns to Hibernian Hall with one of the most celebrated plays of August Wilson's Century Cycle: **Seven Guitars**.

In Pittsburgh's historic Hill District, six friends gather to mourn and reminisce after the untimely death of blues guitarist Floyd "Schoolboy" Barton. As the characters recount Floyd's last days in 1948, **Seven Guitars** spins a tale of what happens when dreams of stardom collide with harsh reality. With bawdy comedy and enchanting blues rhythms, Wilson's Pulitzer- and Tony-nominated script explores faith, oppression, love, and the music that binds us together.

Director:	Maurice Emmanuel Parent
Cast:	Maya Carter, Anthony T Goss, Johnnie Mack, Omar Robinson, Dereks Thomas, Valyn Lyric Turner, and Regine Vital.
Design Team:	Jon Savage (Scenic Design) Nia Safarr Banks (Costume Design) Amanda E. Fallon (Lighting Design) Dewey Dellay (Music Composition) Abraham Joyner-Meyers (Sound Design)
Production Stage Manager:	Ashley Pitchford
Assistant Stage Manager:	Kelsey Whipple
Venue Information:	Hibernian Hall 184 Dudley St #200, Boston, MA 02119
Performance Schedule:	February 8 - March 5, 2023 Wed - Sat at 7:30pm, Sat - Sun at 2pm <i>No performances on Wed, Feb 15 or Thurs, Feb 16</i>
Estimated Run Time:	2 hours and 50 minutes, including one intermission.
Ticket Prices:	\$52.50. Limited Pay-What-You-Can Tickets are available for every performance, released on Monday the week of the show.
Student Rush:	\$15 with college ID, on sale at the box office one hour before curtain
Box Office Information:	Visit this link for tickets.
Press Contact:	Director of Marketing & Communications Evan Turissini Evan@ActorsShakespeareProject.org (not for publication) 781-552-1605 (cell - not for publication)