

## ASP Returns To Hibernian Hall With August Wilson's *King Hedley II*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 7, 2024

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

[Evan Turissini](#) - 781-552-1605

**PRESS DATE:** Sunday, Mar. 10 at 2:00pm - [RSVP Here](#).

(BOSTON) – Following one of ASP's most acclaimed and successful productions of all-time, *Seven Guitars*, Actors' Shakespeare Project returns to Hibernian Hall in March for another installment in August Wilson's American Century Cycle: *King Hedley II*, directed by Elliot Norton Award winner Summer L. Williams.

Fresh off of a seven-year stint in prison, King Hedley II (named after his father, who was played by Johnnie Mack in ASP's *Seven Guitars*) dreams of going straight. He's going to open his own video store — even if he has to steal every refrigerator in Pittsburgh to make it happen. Returning home to the Hill District in 1985, King finds that his community is beset by violence, con men, and redlining. As King fights to keep his family afloat, the harsh realities of Reagan's America threaten to drag him under.

"We're thrilled to be partnering with Hibernian Hall again on another masterpiece by August Wilson," says Artistic Director Christopher V. Edwards. "As an itinerant theatre company, we have a unique ability to bring high-quality and intimate theatre to all corners of Boston, and we've always been welcomed so graciously and enthusiastically when we perform in Roxbury."

**August Wilson** is one of the the most lauded American playwrights of the twentieth century, known particularly for his American 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."

*King Hedley II* features ASP Resident Artist Company member Omar Robinson, as well as Naheem Garcia, Brandon G. Green, Patrice Jean-Baptiste, James Ricardo Milord, and Karimah Williams.

The design team will feature Jon Savage (scenic), Becca Jewett (costumes), Anshuman Bhatia (lighting), Caroline Eng (sound), Saskia Martínez (props), and Olivia Dumaine (intimacy). Jake Mariño is Production Stage Manager, and Athéna-Gwendolyn Baptiste is Assistant Stage Manager.

*King Hedley II* will run for four weeks, from March 8-31, 2024 at Hibernian Hall (184 Dudley St., Roxbury, MA 02119). It will be produced in partnership with Hibernian Hall.

Tickets are \$59.50, with limited seating starting at \$20. Student tickets are \$25, available for any patron ages 25 and under. For more information, visit [www.actorsshakespeareproject.org](http://www.actorsshakespeareproject.org).

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### **ABOUT ACTORS' SHAKESPEARE PROJECT**

**Actors' Shakespeare Project** is an award-winning professional theater company with a Resident Artist 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](http://www.ActorsShakespeareProject.org).

### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

Actors' Shakespeare Project deploys the creative energy of theatre artists and the power of language and stories to create shared experiences for our community. Our artistic productions and education programs challenge and interrogate long-held expectations about Shakespeare and classic work; build bridges between diverse viewpoints; and empower people to more deeply empathize with each other.

### **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/](http://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.

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### **PRODUCTION HISTORY**

***King Hedley II*** had its world premiere at the Pittsburgh Public Theater in December 1999, and debuted in Boston at the Huntington Theatre Company in May 2000. It opened on Broadway the following year at the Virginia Theatre (now the August Wilson Theatre), where it ran for seventy-two performances and received six Tony Award nominations. It was also nominated for the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

### **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**

**SUMMER L. WILLIAMS** (Director - *King Hedley II*) is an award-winning director and Co-Founder/Associate Artistic Director of Company One Theatre. Her most recent directing credits include *The Boy Who Kissed The Sky, can i touch it?* (Company One); *Jump* (Everyman Theatre); and *sandblasted* (Vineyard Theatre and WP Theater, Off-Broadway). Local/regional credits include *Downtown Crossing, Wolf Play, Leftovers, Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again., An Octoroon* and *Colossal* [2016 Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Director for both productions], *The Displaced Hindu Gods Trilogy: Shiv, We Are Proud To Present A Presentation..., How We Got On, The Brothers Size* and *Marcus; Or The Secret Of Sweet* as part of The Brother/Sister Plays [2012 Elliot Norton Nomination — Outstanding Production, 2012 IRNE Award — Best Play], *Neighbors, Grimm, The Good Negro, Voyeurs De Venus* [2009 Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Director], *The Bluest Eye* [2008 Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Production], *The Last Days Of Judas Iscariot, Spell #7, Jesus Hopped The A Train* [2004 Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Production], and *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992* (Company One); *The Arboretum Experience* (A.R.T); *Daddy Issues* (Salt Lake City Acting Company); *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play, Bootycandy* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); *Miss You Like Hell, Wig Out!* (Company One/OBERON at American Repertory Theater); *Smart People* (Kitchen Theatre Company/Geva Theater); *Barbecue* [2018 Elliot Norton Award — Outstanding Director], *Intimate Apparel*, and *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Lyric Stage Company). (she/her)

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### **ABOUT THE CAST**

**NAHEEM GARCIA\*** (Elmore). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut. **Regional:** Huntington Theatre Company, Boston Youth Theatre, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Company One, Kennedy Library (Moakley Public Speaking Program), and New African Theatre Company. **Recent Films:** "The Holdovers" (dir. Alexander Payne), "Billy Somethin'" (dir. Brandon Scales). Naheem is the Founder and lead teaching Artist for NG Edutainment, a local arts/education program. He is the Resident Teaching Artist and a member of the Huntington Theatre Company's Education Department, for close to 30 years. Naheem was the Speaker of Residents for the METCO Program at Sharon High and Middle School, Sharon, MA, in the 2020-2022 school year. Working with the Boston Police Department's youth program, Acting Up With the 5-0 Program. He is the Representative for the National Latino Committee, SAG-AFTRA, New England as well as a long time member of the union. Naheem is also the Artistic Director for the Oversoul Theatre Collective, and a member of the Board of Directors for Song Keepers, LTD. Most recently, Naheem had the honor and privilege to be the narrator for the King Embrace Monument located in the Boston Common, Boston, MA. (*he/him*)

**BRANDON G. GREEN\*** (Stool Pigeon). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Nat Turner In Jerusalem*. **Regional Acting:** *Sweat* (The Huntington); *black odyssey boston* (Central Square Theater/The Front Porch Arts Collective); *An Octoroon* (Company One/ArtsEmerson); *Romeo & Juliet*, *King Lear* (Commonwealth Shakespeare); *The Wiz*, *Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play*, *Intimate Apparel* (Lyric Stage Company); and more. **Regional Directing:** *X; or Betty Shabazz vs The Nation* (Front Porch), *Ferguson's Fines* (Brandeis University), *Non-Player Character* (MIT) and co-devising/performing in *The Fatherhood Mixtape* (New Rep), and more. **Film:** "Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance With Somebody". **Podcast:** "The Land Whale Murders", "The Grey Rooms", "After Impact", "The Ordinary Epic". **Education:** MFA in Acting from Brandeis University, Alabama State University. Brandon teaches theatre at Brown/Trinity Rep, Boston Conservatory, and MIT. Husband, Baba, Elliot Norton Award Winner. (*he/him*)

**PATRICE JEAN-BAPTISTE\*** (Ruby). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Coriolanus*, *Hamlet*. **Regional:** *Trouble in Mind*, *Broke-ology* (Lyric Stage Company); *A New Era* (Suffrage in Black and White Series); *Black Odyssey* (Front Porch Arts); *Building the Wall* (Central Square Theater); *Tough Titty* (A.R.T Institute); *Henry V* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); *BoyxMan* (Centastage); *The Monogamist* (Coyote Theatre). **Other:** Directed Speech and Debate Program/Performing Arts teacher (Milton Academy). **Education:** BA in Philosophy and French (Boston University); MA in Performance Arts (Trinity Rep/Rhode Island College). (*she/her*)

**JAMES RICARDO MILORD\*** (Hedley). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut. **Regional:** *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* [2023 Elliot Norton Award Nomination — Outstanding Actor], *K-I-S-S-I-N-G*, *Common Ground Revisited* (Huntington Theatre Company); *Paradise Blue*, *The Agitators*, *Cyrano* (Gloucester Stage Company); *Young Nerds of Color*, *Christmas Carol* (Central Square Theater); *Pipeline* (WAM/The Front Porch Arts Collective/Central Square Theater); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Boston Lyric Opera); *Anna Christie*, *Barbecue* (Lyric Stage Company of Boston); *Akeelah and the Bee* (Wheelock Family Theatre); *The Good Negro*, *Splendor*, and *The Brothers Size Trilogy*, (Company One). **Film:** *Salem's Lot* (Warner Bros. Pictures), *Honest Thief* (Solution Entertainment Group), *Proud Mary* (Screen Gems), *The Brotherhood* (Showtime), and a multitude of indies. (*he/him*)



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**ABOUT THE CAST** (cont.)

**OMAR ROBINSON\*** (Mister). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Seven Guitars, 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, Hartford Stage, Trinity Repertory Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Dorset Theatre Festival, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Lyric Stage Company, Central Square Theater, Boston Playwrights' Theatre, Theatre Espresso. **Education:** BA, Emerson College. (*he/him*)

**KARIMAH WILLIAMS** (Tonya). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut. **Regional:** *Chicken and Biscuits* [u/s] (The Front Porch Arts Collective); *Can I Touch It?* [u/s], *Black Super Hero Magic Mama* (Company One); *Onward, Votes for Woman* (Birch Tree Productions); *Coriolanus, For Colored Girls...* (Praxis Stage Company). **Film:** "Aftershock" (The History Channel), "Ye" (Jagun Fly Productions). **Web Series:** "Love Undone" (Joseph Goncalves). **Education:** BFA in Theatre Performance from Salem State University. Karimah is a special education teacher in the Boston Public Schools. (*she/her*)

**ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM**

**ANSHUMAN BHATIA** (Lighting Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut. **International:** Beijing's National Center for the Performing Arts, Dublin's Civic Theater. **Off-Broadway:** Classic Stage Company, Ma-Yi Theater Company, Soho Rep, Atlantic Theater Company, The Public, WP Theater. **Regional:** Arena Stage, Austin Opera, Bard Music Festival, Chautauqua Theater Company, Hartford Stage, HERE Arts Center, Keen Company, Kentucky Opera, LoftOpera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Madison Opera, Opera Columbus, Opera Omaha, Opera San Jose, Pacific Symphony, Palm Beach Opera, Primary Stages Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, Repertory Theater of Saint Louis, Santa Fe Opera, The Juilliard School, The McKittrick Hotel, The Park Avenue Armory, Virginia Arts Festival, Writers Theater. **Education:** MFA, New York University. Member USA829. Learn more [at his website!](#) (*he/him*)

**OLIVIA DUMAINE** (Intimacy Direction). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *How I Learned To Drive, The Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It.* **Regional Intimacy Credits:** *The Normal Heart* (New Repertory Theatre); *The House of Ramón Iglesia, Passing Strange* (Moonbox Productions), *Ada and the Engine* (Central Square Theater), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Shakespeare & Company), *Everyday Life and Other Odds and Ends* (Sleeping Weazel). **Upcoming:** *Romeo & Juliet* (Actors' Shakespeare Project), *Beyond Words* (Central Square Theater). **Education:** Salem State University; Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, Theatrical Intimacy Education, Intimacy for the Stage and Screen. Learn more [at her website.](#) (*she/her*)

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**ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM** (cont.)

**CAROLINE ENG** (Sound Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** debut. **Off-Broadway:** *Merry Me* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Belfast Girls* (Irish Repertory Theatre). **Regional:** *Fences, Measure for Measure* (Shakespeare & Company); *The Overview Effect* (Contemporary American Theater Festival); *Little Women* (Theaterworks/UCCS); *What the Constitution Means to Me* (WAM Theatre/Berkshire Theatre Group); *The Future is Female* (Flint Rep); *Three Sisters* (Two River Theatre); *That Must Be the Entrance to Heaven* (Urbanite Theatre). **Upcoming:** *Coriolanus* (Portland Center Stage/Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Hurricane Diane* (People's Light & Theatre). (*she/her*)

**BECCA JEWETT** (Costume Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Julius Caesar*. **Regional:** *A Christmas Carol* (Merrimack Repertory Theatre). **Local:** *Diaspora!*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Trayf*, *We Will Not Be Silent*, *Statements of an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*, *Lonely Planet*, *Blackberry Winter* (New Repertory Theatre); *Fairview*, *The Sound Inside* (SpeakEasy); *The Colored Museum* (Umbrella Arts Center), *Last Night at Bowl-Mor Lanes* (Greater Boston Stage Company). (*she/her*)

**SASKIA MARTINEZ** (Props Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *How I Learned To Drive*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus*, *Seven Guitars*. **Regional:** *The Addams Family*, *Head Over Heels*, *Little Women: The Musical* (Wheelock Family Theatre), *HER|alive.un.dead* (Guerilla Opera). **Education:** Boston University. (*they/them*)

**JON SAVAGE** (Scenic Design). **Actors' Shakespeare Project:** *Seven Guitars* [2023 Elliot Norton Award – Outstanding Scenic Design], *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 *King Hedley II***

Directed by Summer L. Williams

Presented by Actors' Shakespeare Project (Christopher V. Edwards, Artistic Director)

In Partnership With Hibernian Hall (Haris Lefteri, Interim Director of Hibernian Hall)

Following one of ASP's most acclaimed and successful productions of all-time, *Seven Guitars*, Actors' Shakespeare Project returns to Hibernian Hall in 2024 for another installment in August Wilson's American Century Cycle: ***King Hedley II***.

Fresh off of a seven-year stint in prison, King Hedley II dreams of going straight. He's going to open his own video store — even if he has to steal every refrigerator in Pittsburgh to make it happen. Returning home to the Hill District in 1985, King finds that his community is beset by violence, con men, and redlining. As King fights to keep his family afloat, the harsh realities of Reagan's America threaten to drag him under.

Hailed by *Variety* in 1999 as “maybe the most passionate work that August Wilson has penned to date,” ***King Hedley II*** dives into family tensions and the Black experience in America with Wilson's signature poeticism and power.

**Cast:** Naheem Garcia, Brandon G. Green, Patrice Jean-Baptiste, James Ricardo Milord, Omar Robinson, and Karimah Williams

**Design Team:** Jon Savage (Scenic Design)  
Becca Jewett (Costume Design)  
Anshuman Bhatia (Lighting Design)  
Caroline Eng (Sound Design)  
Saskia Martínez (Props Design)  
Olivia Dumaine (Intimacy Direction)

**Stage Manager:** Jake Mariño

**Venue Information:** Hibernian Hall  
184 Dudley St #200, Boston, MA 02119

**Performance Schedule:** Mar 8-31, 2024  
Wed - Sat at 7:30pm, Sat - Sun at 2pm.  
*No performances on Wed, Mar. 20*

**Estimated Run Time:** 2 hours and 50 minutes including a fifteen-minute intermission.

**Ticket Prices:** \$59.50, with select \$20 ticketing. \$25 for anyone under 25.

**Box Office Information:** [Visit this link for tickets.](#)

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