

For Immediate Release
September 10, 2008

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Tickets: Penumbra Theatre Box Office
651-224-3180 or penumbra theatre.org



EXTENDED RUN—Now through October 19, 2008!

***Fences* by August Wilson**

Directed by Lou Bellamy

September 10, 2008; St. Paul, MN: Penumbra Theatre Company, the nation's preeminent African American theatre, announces the addition of 28 performances of *Fences* due to popular demand. **The extension runs through Sunday, October 19, 2008.**

A Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, *Fences* is the story of Troy Maxon who by all rights should have been an American baseball legend. When his rapid rise through the Negro leagues hit the ceiling of racial prejudice, Troy was forced to let go of his dream for major league success. Now his son has won the attention of college football recruiters – an opportunity to achieve the dream his father could not. Can Troy quiet his own demons enough to support his son or will he strike out once more? Set in 1957, *Fences* is the heartbreaking story of a man and his last chance at bat.

Starring: Ansa Akyea (Cory), James Craven (Gabriel), Marion McClinton (Jim Bono), Elayn J. Taylor (Rose), Kevin D. West (Lyons), James A. Williams (Troy Maxon), and Marianna McGee and Mahogany Ellis (sharing the role of Raynell).

Wilson's *Fences* deftly captures the tensions of the 1950s, offering a unique and powerful insight into a turbulent era in American history. Penumbra proudly presents this play as part of its five year commitment to stage all ten of August Wilson's plays that chronicle black American life decade by decade. Penumbra will host Wilson's *20th Century Cycle* by staging two of his plays each season. Last year Penumbra launched the cycle with *The Piano Lesson* and *Gem of the Ocean*. This season includes *Fences* and *Radio Golf*.

Director Lou Bellamy states, "This great playwright, who found muses in his friends and fellow company members at Penumbra, took up the mantle to create stories and characters that were worthy of the black people he knew, of the richness of the culture he saw. Penumbra is honored to host Wilson's *20th Century Cycle* and offer audiences the opportunity to witness the work of a great writer staged by the artists he regarded so highly—and to rediscover a century of American Life."

Performances run Wednesdays through Sundays, times vary. Details follow on quick reference.

The 2008-2009 Season is presented by Star Tribune and Minnesota Monthly

*****MORE*****

Quick Reference

- Production:** *Fences*
Playwright: August Wilson
Producer: Penumbra Theatre Company and Lou Bellamy
Sponsor: The Cargill Foundation
Director: Lou Bellamy
- Ensemble:** Ansa Akyea (Cory), James Craven (Gabriel),
Marion McClinton (Jim Bono), Elayn J. Taylor (Rose)
Kevin D. West (Lyons), James A. Williams (Troy Maxon), and Marianna
McGee and Mahogany Ellis (sharing the role of Raynell)
- Design Team:** C. Lance Brockman (Scenic Designer), Don Darnutzer (Lighting
Designer), Martin Gwinup (Sound Designer)
Mathew J. LeFebvre (Costume Designer)
- Dates:** **Now through October 19, 2008**
- Performances:** Wednesdays 10:00am & 7:30pm
Thursdays 7:30pm
Fridays 7:30pm
Saturdays 7:30pm
Sundays 2:00pm and 7:30pm
- Tickets:** 651-224-3180 or penumbratheatre.org
Price: \$18 - \$38
- Special events:** Symposium on October 1, from 6:00 - 8:00pm
at the University of Saint Thomas
- Theatre Location:** 270 North Kent Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102
- Media Contact:** Julie McGarvie, Marketing Director
651-288-6784 or julie.mcgarvie@penumbratheatre.org

The 20th Century Cycle by August Wilson

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| 1900s - <i>Gem of the Ocean</i> | 1950s - <i>Fences</i> |
| 1910s - <i>Joe Turner's Come and Gone</i> | 1960s - <i>Two Trains Running</i> |
| 1920s - <i>Ma Rainey's Black Bottom</i> | 1970s - <i>Jitney</i> |
| 1930s - <i>The Piano Lesson</i> | 1980s - <i>King Hedley II</i> |
| 1940s - <i>Seven Guitars</i> | 1990s - <i>Radio Golf</i> |

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