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**EXPERIENCE PULITZER PRIZE-WINNER AUGUST WILSON’S WORK FROM THREE CHICAGO THEATERS THIS SPRING**

**\**JOE TURNER’S COME AND GONE* DIRECTED BY CHUCK SMITH FEATURING ANTHONY FLEMING III, NAMBI E. KELLEY, SHARIBA RIVERS, A.C. SMITH AND MORE, APPEARS APRIL 13 – MAY 12 (GOODMAN THEATRE)\***

**\*\*HARRY LENNIX STARS IN *HOW I LEARNED WHAT I LEARNED*, APRIL 20 – MAY 5, PRODUCED BY CONGO SQUARE (BROADWAY IN CHICAGO’S BROADWAY PLAYHOUSE AT WATER TOWER PLACE)\*\***

**\*\*\*20 CHICAGOLAND HIGH SCHOOLERS CONTEND FOR THE TOP SPOTS OF 2024’s *AUGUST WILSON NEW VOICES* REGIONAL MONOLOGUE AND VISUAL DESIGN COMPETITIONS AT THE GOODMAN ON MARCH 18\*\*\***

(Chicago, IL) This spring, the legacy of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright August Wilson lights up Chicago stages with two new productions in major revivals—plus *August Wilson New Voices,* the annual showcase of the best emerging talent across Chicagoland high schools. Longtime Wilson interpreter **Chuck Smith**, **Goodman Theatre** Resident Director, directs a new production of ***Joe Turner’s Come and Gone***—the second work in Wilson’s 10-play American Century Cycle that the Goodman last produced in 1991. At the same time, **Congo Square Theatre Company**, **Broadway In Chicago** and the Goodman join forces with the Chicago premiere of Wilson’s autobiographical tour-de-force, ***How I Learned What I Learne****d*, starring **Harry Lennix**, directed by **Ken-Matt Martin,** at the Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place. In addition, 20 students from 12 high schools will participate in the local finals of ***August Wilson New Voices*** atthe Goodman stage on March 18—presented by **The League of Chicago Theatres** in collaboration with **Gilded Road Productions** and the Goodman. This free monologue and visual design competition offers youth an opportunity to explore and share the richness of Wilson’s American Century Cycle through master classes and coaching from teaching artists**.** The top three monologue and design students advance to the national finals in Pittsburgh, April 26-29.

**August Wilson’s**

***Joe Turner’s Come and Gone***

**Directed by Chuck Smith**

**Goodman Theatre (in the 856-seat Albert Theatre) | 170 N. Dearborn**

**April 13 – May 12, 2024 | Opening Night is Wednesday, April 24**

**Tickets:** [**GoodmanTheatre.org**](http://www.GoodmanTheatre.org) **or 312.443.3800**

**E-Press Kit is available** [**here**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/kur5xqa6x9kugyk/AADkxPmhXyQu2fHTs4SVhS4Ha?dl=0)**.**

A journey of self-discovery leads to salvation in this major revival of the Pulitzer Prize-winner’s masterwork. On the heels of *Gem of the Ocean* (2022), longtime August Wilson interpreter Chuck Smith revives the second work in the famed American Century Cycle—one of Wilson’s best-loved, most compelling plays. Herald Loomis searches the country with his young daughter to find his estranged wife. But first, he must regain a sense of his own heritage and identity in this story of spiritual and emotional resurrection. The cast features **Harper Anthony** (Reuben Mercer), **Anthony Fleming III** (Jeremy Furlow), **TayLar** (Bertha Holly), **Gary Houston** (Rutherford Selig), **Kylah Jones** (Zonia), **Nambi E. Kelley** (Mattie Campbell), **Krystel V. McNeil** (Molly Cunningham), **Tim Rhoze** (Bynum Walker), **Shariba Rivers** (Martha Loomis), **A.C. Smith** (Herald Loomis) and **Dexter Zollicoffer** (Seth Holly).

**August Wilson’s**

***How I Learned What I Learned***

**Directed by Ken-Matt Martin**

**Featuring Harry Lennix**

**Produced by Congo Square Theatre, in association with Goodman Theatre**

**Broadway in Chicago’s Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place | 175 E. Chestnut**

**April 20 – May 5, 2024 | Opens April 21**

**Tickets: BroadwayInChicago.com**

**Groups of 10 or more: 312.977.1710 or** **GroupSales@BroadwayInChicago.com****.**

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**E-Press Kit is available** [**here**](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dropbox.com%2Fscl%2Ffo%2Fau1jg97ksngw5cn7iecv9%2Fh%3Frlkey%3D1pqit1m1xh5pdcoa72ek5xfpx%26dl%3D0&data=05%7C02%7CDeniseSchneider%40GoodmanTheatre.org%7C1a12f29de7f742c6890a08dc3d45082b%7C8305ef74c2704cdb9f2107217cc0965a%7C0%7C0%7C638452613948411890%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=5%2BhBdz6LsZI4LClARVNd98ruvQLwwq4P%2Bfpp1ACnLp4%3D&reserved=0)**.**

***How I Learned What I Learned*** follows Wilson’s journey as a young Black writer from Pittsburgh to one of the most celebrated American playwrights of the 20th century. Written three years before his death, the one-man show recounts numerous stories from the author’s long career and the lessons they taught about what it means to be a Black artist in America. Congo Square Board Member, and star of stage and screen, **Harry Lennix** will perform the play. Most recently, Lennix has been seen as Harold Cooper on NBC’s acclaimed series *Blacklist*, and as General Swanwick/Martian Manhunter in numerous films and TV shows in the DC Extended Universe.

***August Wilson New Voices***

**Regional Monologue and Visual Design Competition**

**March 18 at 6pm, Goodman Theatre (in the 856-seat Albert Theatre)**

**Tickets are free, but reservations are recommended; visit** [**GoodmanTheatre.org**](http://www.GoodmanTheatre.org)

**E-Press Kit is available** [**here**](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/x00o91ycw57fxs4rx0uig/h?rlkey=mwzxg6kpgqtu7sjtod9zfniay&dl=0)**.**

*August Wilson New Voices* is a national competition that gives students across the country an opportunity to explore and share the richness of August Wilson’s Century Cycle. Now in its 14th year, the competition in Chicago serves more than 300 students annually through the competition, masterclasses and college scholarships. [The League of Chicago Theatres](http://www.leagueofchicagotheatres.org/), in collaboration with Gilded Road Productions and [Goodman Theatre](http://www.goodmantheatre.org/), is proud to partner in presenting *August Wilson New Voices - Chicago*.

**ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

Born and raised in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, **August Wilson** (1945-2005) authored the American Century Cycle of 10 plays, including *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.* These works explore the heritage and experience of African Americans, decade by decade, over the course of the 20th century. Goodman Theatre was the first in the country to have produced every play in Wilson’s cycle. In 2003, Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show *How I Learned What I Learned*. Wilson’s work garnered many awards, including Pulitzer Prizes for *Fences* (1987) and *The Piano Lesson* (1990); a Tony Award for *Fences*; Great Britain’s Olivier Award for *Jitney*; as well as seven New York Drama Critics Circle Awards for *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, Fences, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, The Piano Lesson, Two Trains Running, Seven Guitars* and *Jitney*. 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*. On October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theater located at 245 West 52nd Street the August Wilson Theatre.

**Chuck Smith** is a member of Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees and is Goodman Theatre’s Resident Director. He is also a resident director at the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe in Sarasota, Florida. Goodman credits include the recent revival of August Wilson’s *Gem of the Ocean* (2022) and the Chicago premieres of Objects in the Mirror; Pullman Porter Blues; By the Way, Meet Vera Stark; Race; The Good Negro; Proof and The Story; the world premieres of By the Music of the Spheres and The Gift Horse; James Baldwin’s The Amen Corner, which transferred to Boston’s Huntington Theatre Company, where it won the Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) Award for Best Direction; A Raisin in the Sun; Blues for an Alabama Sky; August Wilson’s Two Trains Running and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom; Ain’t Misbehavin’; the 1993 to 1995 productions of A Christmas Carol; Crumbs From the Table of Joy; Vivisections from a Blown Mind and The Meeting. He served as dramaturg for the Goodman’s world-premiere production of August Wilson’s Gem of the Ocean. He directed the New York premiere of Knock Me a Kiss and The Hooch for the New Federal Theatre and the world premiere of Knock Me a Kiss at Chicago’s Victory Gardens Theater, where his other directing credits include Master Harold… and the Boys, Home, Dame Lorraine and Eden, for which he received a Jeff Award nomination. Regionally, Mr. Smith directed Death and the King’s Horseman (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Birdie Blue (Seattle Repertory Theatre), The Story (Milwaukee Repertory Theater), Blues for an Alabama Sky (Alabama Shakespeare Festival) and The Last Season (Robey Theatre Company). At Columbia College he was facilitator of the Theodore Ward Prize playwriting contest for 20 years and editor of the contest anthologies Seven Black Plays and Best Black Plays. He won a Chicago Emmy Award as associate producer/theatrical director for the NBC teleplay Crime of Innocence and was theatrical director for the Emmy-winning Fast Break to Glory and the Emmy-nominated The Martin Luther King Suite. He was a founding member of the Chicago Theatre Company, where he served as artistic director for four seasons and directed the Jeff-nominated Suspenders and the Jeff-winning musical Po’. His directing credits include productions at Fisk University, Roosevelt University, Eclipse Theatre, ETA, Black Ensemble Theater, Northlight Theatre, MPAACT, Congo Square Theatre Company, The New Regal Theater, Kuumba Theatre Company, Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre, Pegasus Players, the Timber Lake Playhouse in Mt. Carroll, Illinois and the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is a 2003 inductee into the Chicago State University Gwendolyn Brooks Center’s Literary Hall of Fame and a 2001 Chicago Tribune Chicagoan of the Year. He is the proud recipient of the 1982 Paul Robeson Award and the 1997 Award of Merit presented by the Black Theater Alliance of Chicago.

**Harry Lennix** is a distinguished film, television stage actor and producer. For the past nine seasons, he has starred as Harold Cooper, on NBC’s *The Blacklist*. Moviegoers know Lennix as General Calvin Swanwick (a.ka. Martian Manhunter) from *The Justice League*, *Man of Steel* and *Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice*, Commander Lock in *The Matrix*: *Reloaded* and *The Matrix: Revolutions*, and Joe Adams in the Oscar® winning RAY. He made his screen debut as Dresser in the fan favorite movie: *The Five Heartbeats*. Lennix also recurs on the Showtime series *Billions*. Lennix made his Broadway debut in Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright August Wilson’s Tony nominated *Radio Golf*. For the stage, he directed LeKethia Dalcoe’s drama *A Small Oak Tree Runs Red*, which went on to win the Audelco Award for best production in 2018, as well as Robert Townsend’s *The Five Heartbeats*, which received three NAACP Theater Award nominations. Other directing credits include: *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams for Steppenwolf Theater Company. As an actor for the stage, he starred in August Wilson’s *King Hedley II* at the Mark Taper Forum. In 2001 he played Iachimo in *Cymbeline* for Theatre for a New Audience at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the first American company invited to perform in Stratford Upon Avon. In July 2014, Lennix created Exponent Media Group, a movie production company he founded with longtime Chicago associate Steve Harris. He is married to Djena Graves Lennix, a businesswoman.

**Ken-Matt Martin** has established himself as a preeminent theater director, cultural worker and collaborator who has worked with some of industry’s most formidable artists, including S. Epatha Merkerson, André Braugher, Robert O’Hara, Leigh Silverman, Harry Lennix, Uma Thurman, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Robert Falls, Debra Jo Rupp, Harry Lennix, Lynn Nottage and Dominique Morisseau, amongst dozens of others. He began his life in the performing arts as a child actor after booking an appearance on Nickelodeon’s landmark series All That. As an actor, Martin has appeared in regional productions of *Superior Donuts*, *Clybourne Park*, *Hairspra*y, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Les Miserables*, *Shrek the Musical*, *Dutchman*, *The Wild Party*, and most recently the 35th Anniversary production of *The Gospel At Colonus* at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park for the Public Theatre. Notable directing credits include productions of August Wilson’s *Fences* and *The Piano Lesson* (Pyramid Theatre Company), Jonathan Larson’s *tick…tick…Boom* (Brown/Trinity Rep), *A Son*, *Come Home* and *Brotherhood* at Williamstown Theatre Festival, Nia Vardalos’ adaptation of Cheryl Strayed’s *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Baltimore Center Stage), the world premiere of NANCY (Mosaic Theatre Company), *Hello, Dolly!* (Arkansas Repertory Theatre), and the forthcoming musical *Long Way Down*, which will play engagements at Olney Theatre Center and New York’s Apollo Theatre. Martin’s directorial work has been honored with a Cloris Leachman Excellence in Theatre Award, a BroadwayWorld Regional Award, and the Bravo Greater Des Moines Standing Ovation Award, amongst others. In addition, Ken-Matt has been praised as an innovator in the modern American theater; he created the 20/50 New Play Festival, the Ignite Chicago Festival, Goodman Theatre’s Live @Five Show, and was the co-founder of the Pyramid Theatre Company. A highly sought after thought leader, he has served key positions at Baltimore Center Stage, Victory Gardens Theatre, Goodman Theatre, and Williamstown Theatre Festival. As a collaborator, he was part of the team to help orchestrate the Broadway transfers of The Sound Inside, Grand Horizons, Rose Tattoo, and Lempicka, and the Off-Broadway transfers of Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Seared, Selling Kabul, and Unknown Soldier. He’s also brokered partnerships with Chicago State University, The Black List, Des Moines Performing Arts, EquiTrust Life Insurance, and others, to bring unique theatrical experiences to the general public. Martin holds a M.F.A. in directing from Brown University/Trinity Repertory Company. He has served on the selection committees for the Venturous Theatre Fund, the Princess Grace Awards, and the Jonathan Larson Awards. He’s the recipient of a New Harmony Project Artist in Resident Fellowship, a “Keep Going” Commission by Baltimore Center Stage, a Drake University Guest Artist in Residence Fellowship, and the Bill Foeller Directing Fellowship. More at @kennmattm.

**ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS**

**Congo Square Theatre Company** is a professional ensemble based organization that champions the African American experience by producing definitive and transformative theatre, spawned from the African Diaspora, to enlighten, educate, and inspire everyone. They are a haven for artists of color to challenge and redefine the theatrical canon by amplifying and creating stories that reflect the reach and complexities of Black Culture. With a predominately Black staff and Ensemble, their company and work authentically reflects the communities they serve in the stories they tell. They are not only deeply committed to ensuring that Black stories are clearly and unapologetically heard through authentic Black lenses, but also that Black communities are given space to heal and find freedom and unity. One pillar of their organization is their Radical Generosity model, which strives to offer heavily subsidized and free tickets to ensure that members of all communities can access their work. It is through programs like this that Congo Square Theatre works to disrupt systems of racism that permeate communities, cultivate a space where Black art and artists are celebrated and showcased, and provide a distinctive perspective of the African American experience across the Chicago theatre landscape.

**Broadway In Chicago** was created in July 2000 and over the past 24 years has grown to be one of the largest commercial touring homes in the country. A Nederlander Presentation, Broadway In Chicago lights up the Chicago Theater District entertaining up to 1.7 million people annually in five theatres. Broadway In Chicago presents a full range of entertainment, including musicals and plays, on the stages of five of the finest theatres in Chicago’s Loop including the Cadillac Palace Theatre, CIBC Theatre, James M. Nederlander Theatre, and just off the Magnificent Mile, the Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place and presenting Broadway shows at the Auditorium Theatre. For more information, visit [BroadwayInChicago.com](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.broadwayinchicago.com%2F&data=05%7C02%7CDeniseSchneider%40GoodmanTheatre.org%7C7ef16e8eebbf4aa9617c08dc37e7d33d%7C8305ef74c2704cdb9f2107217cc0965a%7C0%7C0%7C638446716060949296%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=lt%2FYz6tdpjyWYImU0oimwp2rHOWyG7iBUs0ymt%2B0U98%3D&reserved=0). Follow @broadwayinchicago on [Facebook,](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FBroadwayInChicago%2F&data=05%7C02%7CDeniseSchneider%40GoodmanTheatre.org%7C7ef16e8eebbf4aa9617c08dc37e7d33d%7C8305ef74c2704cdb9f2107217cc0965a%7C0%7C0%7C638446716060958719%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=fmhoKZCPgLLni5Wj1c5po0LlDPPqVA3mRNm166LF78c%3D&reserved=0) [Instagram,](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fbroadwayinchicago%2F&data=05%7C02%7CDeniseSchneider%40GoodmanTheatre.org%7C7ef16e8eebbf4aa9617c08dc37e7d33d%7C8305ef74c2704cdb9f2107217cc0965a%7C0%7C0%7C638446716060965824%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=1YtYaj1Nywewej1D35%2BQEx0jsazIB5Mt1EczguJ5aY4%3D&reserved=0) and [TikTok](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tiktok.com%2F%2540broadwayinchicago&data=05%7C02%7CDeniseSchneider%40GoodmanTheatre.org%7C7ef16e8eebbf4aa9617c08dc37e7d33d%7C8305ef74c2704cdb9f2107217cc0965a%7C0%7C0%7C638446716060971856%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=paDONY8l247InOBfM0fABng1f0zM5lnpaMsviNXf2BI%3D&reserved=0) #broadwayinchicago

**Chicago theater** is the leader in the U.S. with more than 250 theaters throughout Chicagoland, comprising a rich and varied community ranging from storefront, non-union theatres to the most renowned resident theaters in the country, including five which have been honored with Regional Tony Awards, and the largest touring Broadway organization in the nation. Chicago’s theaters serve five million audience members annually and have a combined budget of more than $250 million. Chicago typically produces and/or presents more world premieres annually than any other city in the nation. Each year, Chicago theaters send new work to resident theaters across the country, to Broadway, and around the world.

Theater is essential to the life of a great city and to its citizens. The **League of Chicago Theatres** is an alliance of theaters which leverages its collective strength to support, promote and advocate for Chicago’s theater industry. Through our work, we ensure that theater continues to thrive in our city.

Chicago’s theater since 1925, **Goodman Theatre** is a not-for-profit arts and community organization in the heart of the Loop, distinguished by the excellence and scope of its artistic programming and community engagement. Led by Artistic Director Susan V. Booth and Executive Director/CEO Roche Schulfer, the theater’s artistic priorities include new play development (more than 150 world or American premieres), large-scale musical theater works and reimagined classics. Artists and productions have earner two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards and nearly 200 Joseph Jefferson Awards, among other accolades. The Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson’s “American Century Cycle.” Its longtime annual holiday tradition *A Christmas Carol*, now in its fifth decade, has created a new generation of theatergoers in Chicago. The Goodman also frequently serves as a production and program partner with national and international companies and Chicago’s Off-Loop theaters. Julie Danis is Chair of Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees, Lorrayne Weiss is Women’s Board President and Kelli Garcia is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

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