

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **August Wilson Society (AWS) Announces 2023 Biennial Colloquium: March 2-4, 2023**

*Pittsburgh, PA* – The August Wilson Society (AWS), in collaboration with the August Wilson African American Cultural Center (AWAACC) and University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS), is pleased to announce its Biennial Colloquium: *Excavating New Critical Landscapes for August Wilson Studies*, March 2-4, 2023, to mark the grand opening of the August Wilson Archive at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The August Wilson Archive arrived at the ULS in 450 boxes containing materials documenting a wide array of Wilson's career and interests from the 1960s to 2010. There are scripts, production materials of his American Century Cycle plays, his personal library and music collection, artwork, poetry, unpublished work including non-Cycle plays, speeches, essays, audio recordings, awards, degrees, books, correspondence, newspapers, magazines, notebooks, writing tablets, photographs, posters, production designs, props, scripts, and video recordings. The collection will officially open for research on January 9, 2023.

The keynote speaker for the Colloquium is Tony-award winning actor, Emmy and Golden Globe nominated writer, and acclaimed director, Ruben Santiago-Hudson. He most recently penned the screenplay of August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* for Netflix, which starred Viola Davis, and the late Chadwick A. Boseman, produced by Denzel Washington and directed by George C. Wolfe. At The Green Space in New York City, he served as Artistic Director of dramatic readings of all 10 of August Wilson's American Century Cycle plays that aired on WNYC and NPR. Santiago-Hudson has also directed *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Jitney* and *The Piano Lesson*, and has performed in *Fences* and *Seven Guitars*. He currently stars in the hit CBS drama *East New York* alongside Jimmy Smits and Amanda Warren.

In addition, the Colloquium will feature Wali Jamal, Pittsburgh-based author, actor, playwright and the first and only actor to have performed in all 10 of Wilson's produced plays. Jamal will perform August Wilson's heavily autobiographical solo performance, *How I Learned What I Learned*, created by August Wilson in collaboration with and Todd Kreidler. The show chronicles Wilson's life as a Black artist in the Hill District in Pittsburgh, from his childhood to the completion of The American Century Cycle of award-winning plays.

Other Colloquium highlights include:

- The *Encounters in the August Wilson Archives* panel. This panel brings together scholars, artists, educators, and students to reflect on the personal, intellectual, and artistic import of the August Wilson Archive. Panelists will respond to materials they encounter in the collection and illuminate the ways they help deepen our understanding of Wilson's life and work and its relation to the larger socio-historical record.

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- Guided tours of August Wilson: The Writers Landscape permanent exhibit and the August Wilson House in the Hill District
- Fundraising reception at the Rivers Club, Pittsburgh's premiere city club
- On-site local vendor's marketplace
- Salute to Wilsonian Warrior Ancestors Ceremony (in honor of those who have transitioned but played a significant role in shaping August Wilson's craft and career)

This year, the 2023 Biennial Colloquium will be live in-person and live-streamed by KDKA-TV Pittsburgh.

To register for the event, click on the Eventbrite link: [2023 Biennial Colloquium Registration Link](#) or visit the AWS website at [www.augustwilsonsociety.org](http://www.augustwilsonsociety.org). For more information, contact August Wilson Society President, Sandra G. Shannon, PhD at [info@augustwilsonsociety.org](mailto:info@augustwilsonsociety.org).

See tentative schedule at-a-glance on next page.

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**The August Wilson Society** is a multidisciplinary community of educators, visual and performing artists and practitioners, students, and theatre lovers who remain dedicated to commemorating August Wilson's legacy by promoting the studying, teaching, researching, performing, and ultimately the safeguarding of the rich narrative of the African American past that Wilson has bequeathed to us in the form of 10 plays that chronicle the stories of African Americans from 1904 to 1997.

**Howard University** Founded in 1867, Howard University is a private, research university that is comprised of 14 schools and colleges. Students pursue more than 140 programs of study leading to undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. The University operates with a commitment to Excellence in Truth and Service and has produced one Schwarzman Scholar, three Marshall Scholars, four Rhodes Scholars, 12 Truman Scholars, 25 Pickering Fellows and more than 165 Fulbright recipients. Howard also produces more on-campus African American Ph.D. recipients than any other university in the United States.



## **August Wilson Society (AWS) 2023 Biennial Colloquium At-A-Glance**

**August Wilson African American Cultural Center**  
980 Liberty Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
March 2-4, 2023

### **Thursday, March 2nd**

- Welcome and opening remarks by Dr. Kornelia Tancheva, Hillman University Librarian and Director of University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS), and Dr. Sandra Shannon, President of the August Wilson Society
- AWS/ULS *Encounters in the August Wilson Archive* panel presentation (in-person, live-streamed, and video recorded)
- Guided tours of August Wilson: The Writers Landscape, the Hill District, and the August Wilson House
- AWS Colloquium theme-related panels, workshops, and presentations
- Fundraiser Reception at the Rivers Club for AWS Colloquium participants and guests

### **Friday, March 3rd**

- Ruben Santiago Hudson to deliver Keynote Address (in-person, live streamed, and video recorded)
- Vendor marketplace, explore downtown Pittsburgh
- AWS Colloquium theme-related panels, workshops, and presentations continued
- AWS Colloquium Reception for participants and other registered and invited guests
- Wali Jamal to perform August Wilson's *How I Learned What I Learned* at AWAACC

### **Saturday, March 4**

- Salute to Wilsonian Warrior Ancestors
- Culminating Colloquium session
- Colloquium ends