



**News Release**  
**Virginia Repertory Theatre**

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**January 30, 2020**

**Virginia Repertory Theatre presents**  
**August Wilson's *Fences***

**Richmond, VA --** This Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning drama will be presented at Virginia Rep's November Theatre (114 West Broad Street) beginning **February 7th, 2020** with two preview performances on Wednesday, February 5th and Thursday, February 6th. August Wilson's powerful masterwork will be onstage **through March 1st**. *Fences* is presented as part of the Acts of Faith Festival.

*Fences* tells the story of Troy Maxson, a sanitation worker in 1950s Pittsburgh. Once a star in the Negro leagues, Troy's dream of playing in the majors was denied due to the color of his skin. Years later, Troy's bitterness takes its toll on his relationship with his son, who now wants his own chance to play ball. "Few playwrights have approached [Wilson's] genius for turning workaday vernacular into poetry." - *New York Times*

Virginia Rep is delighted to welcome back **Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates** to direct *Fences*. Pettiford-Wates is a Professor of Graduate Pedagogy in Acting and Directing at Virginia Commonwealth University and the Artistic Director and Founder of The Conciliation Project, a nonprofit social justice theatre company. Pettiford-Wates also directed Virginia Rep's production of *A Raisin in the Sun* and the Virginia Rep/Cadence Theatre Company co-production of *Between Riverside and Crazy*.

Making his Richmond debut, Virginia Rep is thrilled to welcome **James Craven**, who will star as Troy Maxson. Craven's Broadway and Touring credits include *The Gospel at Colonus* European Tour with Morgan Freeman, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. Film and television credits include *D3: The Mighty Ducks* (Disney); *Sneakers* (Universal); *Downtown* (FOX); *Twin Peaks*, and *Fire!* (ABC). At Penumbra Theatre, James performed in all ten of August Wilson's best known plays.

Also making her Virginia Rep debut, **Lisa Strum** joins the company as Rose Maxson. Theatre credits include *Fences* (Resident Ensemble Players, BroadwayWorld Regional Theatre Best Actress Award); *Sweat* (People's Light); and *Pipeline* (Detroit Public Theatre). Television credits include *Law & Order: SVU*, *Citizen Baines* and *The Blacklist*. **Jamar Jones** returns to Virginia Rep to play Cory Maxson, after appearing in *Akeelah and the Bee* at the Children's Theatre in 2017. Jones recently was seen in *Passing Strange* (Firehouse Theatre); *An Octoroon* (TheatreLAB, RTCC Award for Best Actor); and *Red Velvet* (Quill Theatre, RTCC Nomination for Best Actor).

**Josafath Reynoso** makes his Virginia Rep debut as Scenic Designer, having recently designed *Pure Confidence* at University of Richmond. Also making their Virginia Rep debuts, **Nia Safarr Banks** (*An Octoroon*, RTCC Nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design for a Play) will Costume Design, and **Andrew Bonniwell** (*In My Chair*, co-production with Cadence Theatre) will Lighting Design. Virginia Rep Audio Visual Apprentice **Nicholas Seaver** will Sound Design.

The full creative team and cast list is below.

### **Direction & Design**

Direction	<b>Tawnya Pettiford-Wates</b>
Scenic Design	<b>Josafath Reynoso</b>
Costume Design	<b>Nia Safarr Banks</b>
Lighting Design	<b>Andrew Bonniwell</b>
Sound Design	<b>Nicholas Seaver</b>
Dramaturgy	<b>Vanessa Jackson</b>
Fight Direction	<b>Melissa Freilich</b>
Production Stage Management	<b>Jocelyn A. Thompson*</b>
Assistant Stage Management	<b>Luke Robinson*</b>

## **Cast**

Troy Maxson

**James Craven\***

Rose

**Lisa Strum\***

Cory

**Jamar Jones**

Gabriel

**Horace E. Smith\***

Lyons

**Joe Marshall**

Jim Bono

**J. Ron Fleming, Jr.**

Raynell

**Milani Hopkins**

Rose understudy

**Patricia Alli**

Lyons/Cory understudy

**Tevin Davis**

Gabriel/Bono understudy

**Walter Riddle**

\* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the U.S.A.

## **Ticket Information**

**Box Office:** 804-282-2620

[www.virginiarep.org](http://www.virginiarep.org)

Full Price Tickets: \$36 - \$54

Discounted Group Rates and Rush tickets available.

U-Tix for college and high school students \$15 are available by phone or in person on the day of show only. Valid Student ID required.

## **Performance Schedule**

Evening performances at 7:00 p.m. on select Wednesdays and every Thursday

Evening performances at 8:00 p.m. every Friday and Saturday

Matinee performances at 2:00 p.m. on select Wednesdays and Saturdays and every Sunday

## **Accessibility Programs**

### **Audio Described Performances**

In collaboration with Virginia Voice, Virginia Rep is pleased to offer Audio Described performances, in which actions, expressions and gestures are described during gaps between dialogue throughout the performance for patrons with low vision or blindness. In addition to live audio description during performances, patrons are also invited to participate in a tactile tour before the performance. The Audio Described performances for *Fences* will be on Saturday, February 15 at 2 p.m. and Saturday February 29 at 2 p.m.

### **Induction Loop**

The Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre is equipped with a state-of the-art induction loop hearing system that is compatible with all telecoil-equipped hearing aids and cochlear implants. A handheld receiver and headphone system is also available free of charge for anyone who is hearing impaired.

### **Community Tickets Grant**

Virginia Rep is thrilled to offer a **free** Community Tickets Grant for nonprofit organizations. We encourage all organizations who have a demonstrated need for complimentary tickets to fill out a short application on our website: [bit.ly/CommunityTix](http://bit.ly/CommunityTix)

### **Parking**

Valet parking is available for \$8 at all performances and free self-parking is available for patrons within blocks of the theatre. Valet is complimentary for patrons who dine at Max's on Broad before the show. Valet is no longer located in front of the theatre, and has been moved less than one block away to Jefferson Street.

### **Press**

Press Kits will be available at <http://va-rep.org/press.html>

Pass code accessible Hi Res photos available to the media.

username = press

password = HiRes121

### **About Virginia Repertory Theatre**

Virginia Repertory Theatre is a regional professional theatre in Richmond, Virginia. With a budget of \$5.5 million, four distinct venues, an educational touring arm, and an annual audience

over 530,000, Virginia Rep is one of the largest performing arts organizations in Central Virginia. Virginia Rep stages four seasons annually: the Signature Season at the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre, Theatre Gym Season in partnership with Cadence Theatre Company, Virginia Rep's Children's Season at Willow Lawn, and the Hanover Tavern Season.

### **Season Sponsors**

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### **Media Sponsors**

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