



POWERFUL STORIES. BOLDLY TOLD. 40 YEARS STRONG.

163 3RD ST N, ST PETERSBURG, FL 33701

For Immediate Release

January 5, 2018

Contact: The American Stage

Marketing Team

(727) 823-1600 x 209

marketing@americanstage.org

American Stage launches the American Legacy Series with A RAISIN IN THE SUN.

**The 2017-18 Season continues with a theatre milestone about cultural roots and the American dream.
January 24 thru February 18. #asRAISIN**

GET IN-THE-KNOW ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

1. A True Legacy: A groundbreaking family drama and an American theatre milestone.

American Stage is committed to producing a significant classic American play each season. Our first legacy production, *A RAISIN IN THE SUN* is a true American theatre trailblazer. Playwright, Lorraine Hansberry, was the youngest American ever to win a New York Critics' Circle award and the first black woman to have her play performed on Broadway. *RAISIN* was also the first non-musical play to appear on Broadway with an African American cast and director.

2. Exceptional Artistry: The return of Director L. Peter Callender.

Peter returns after helping us celebrate the completion of August Wilson's American Century Cycle. He directed the American Stage hits *JOE TURNER'S COME & GONE* and *JITNEY*, and received the TTB Award for Outstanding Director two years running. We are excited to have Mr. Callender back to direct this first play in our American Legacy Series.

3. Of-the-Moment Relevance: Revealing racial and gender roadblocks to the American Dream

A RAISIN IN THE SUN highlights the role race and gender can play in achieving the American Dream. Lorraine Hansberry's widely appealing story feels utterly timely and exceptionally relevant in 2018 America.

St. Petersburg, FL – American Stage continues its 2017-18 Season 'WE THE PEOPLE' with *A RAISIN IN THE SUN* by Lorraine Hansberry and directed by L. Peter Callender. This mainstage play launches the American Legacy Series. Each season, this series will include a significant classic American play with themes that connect us to our history, drawing a clear line to the realities of today.

"A RAISIN IN THE SUN feels like the ideal play to follow-up our 10-play August Wilson's American Century Cycle and to inaugurate our new American Legacy Series. As not only the first black woman to have a play produced on Broadway but also the youngest person to win the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best American Play, Lorraine Hansberry's impact on American theatre is profound." - Stephanie Gulate, Producing Artistic Director

This story of hope and inspiration remains universally relevant more than 60 years after it first hit Broadway. In pursuit of the American Dream, the Younger family wrestles with assimilation into a white Chicago neighborhood, and the pull of their cultural roots which both unite and divide. What personal choices will determine their future?

"In Lorraine Hansberry's A RAISIN IN THE SUN everyone has a dream; a dream that shapes and propels them forward. But for the Younger family, today's dreams are tomorrow's reality and the truth of the reality, isn't always easy to accept." L. Peter Callender, Director

COME TOGETHER as WE THE PEOPLE...WILL NOT HAVE OUR DREAMS DEFERRED.

A RAISIN IN THE SUN will have 11 cast members featuring Sheryl Carbonell*, Elijah Jordan, Jaiden B. Gray, Enoch King*, Kiara Hines, Fanni Green* (JOE TURNER'S COME & GONE), Patrick A. Jackson*, Troy D. Wallace, Dee Selmore, Gavin Hawk* (Hawk & Wayne, THE PITMEN PAINTERS), and Cranstan Cumberbatch (2 TRAINS RUNNING).

The following includes information on the cast, production, performance dates, and ticketing information, as well as a listing of special events associated with the production.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

LORRAINE HANSBERRY was born on May 19, 1930, in Chicago, Illinois. In 1938, Hansberry's family moved to a white neighborhood and was violently attacked by neighbors. They refused to move until a court ordered them to do so, and the case made it to the Supreme Court as *Hansberry v. Lee*, ruling restrictive covenants illegal. She wrote A RAISIN IN THE SUN based on those events, which opened on Broadway to great success. Hansberry was the first black playwright and the youngest American to win a New York Critics' Circle award. Throughout her life she was heavily involved in civil rights. She died at 34 of pancreatic cancer.

CAST

Enoch King* (Walter Lee Younger)

Sheryl Carbonell* (Ruth Younger)

Fanni Green* (Lena Younger)

Kiara Hines (Beneatha Younger)

Elijah Jordan (Travis Younger)

Jaiden B. Gray (Travis Younger)

Patrick A. Jackson* (Joseph Asagai)

Troy D. Wallace (George Murchison)

Cranstan Cumberbatch (Bobo)

Dee Selmore (Mrs. Johnson)

Gavin Hawk* (Carl Lindner)

CREATIVE

L. Peter Callender (Director)

Catherine Cann (Costume Designer)

Joseph P. Oshry[#] (Lighting Designer)

Steven Mitchell[#] (Scenic Designer)

Jerid Fox (Properties Master)

Rachel Harrison* (Production Stage Manager/Sound Designer)

Ellyse Helms (Scenic Artist)

Allison Davis (Scenic Artist)

* = Member of Actors' Equity Association; # = Member of the United Scenic Artists Union

For Cast Bios please visit americanstage.org/RAISIN

LINK to press releases: AmericanStage.org/media

LINK to promotional photos: [Flickr American Stage](https://www.flickr.com/photos/americanstage/)

**Photo credit: Joey Clay Photography. Please note that publicity photos are not typically available until 2 weeks prior to opening. Please contact marketing@americanstage.org for immediate needs.*

FEATURED EVENTS

Spotlight Series: BEHIND-THE-SCENES: Sun, January 14, 1PM

Opening Night + Signature Art Unveiled: Fri, January 26, 8pm, \$59 tickets (includes opening night reception at 7pm, and a dessert reception with the cast following the performance.)

Spotlight Series: CHATBACK: Thurs, February 1, Sun, February 4, & Sun, February 11 (Post-Performance)

WE THE PEOPLE - Artist Meet & Greet Reception & Young Professionals Night:

Fri, February 2 | Happy Hour 6-8PM | Performance at 8PM

LADIES Night: Fri, February 9 | Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

Spotlight Series: COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS: Sun, February 11 | 6PM

PRIDE PLUS Night: Fri, February 16 | Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

FEATURED VISUAL ARTIST

Zulu Painter, featured artist for A RAISIN IN THE SUN, will unveil his Signature Original Artwork on Opening Night which will kick-off a gallery show that will be up through the close of the production. This 2017-18 Season, 'WE THE PEOPLE', celebrates a partnership with local talents of seven visual artists and one photographer to create elements of the 2017-18 season selections. For A RAISIN IN THE SUN, American Stage is collaborating with Zulu Painter.

Zulu will be invited to attend rehearsals, interact with the development of the set, lighting and costume designers which will further inform his artistic perspective. Inspired by the collaborative creative process of theatre-making, he will create a Signature Original Artwork that will be donated as a fundraiser for the American Stage 40FORWARD fund campaign.

Going one step further in this process, American Stage will donate the use of their gallery space to further highlight the impact of artists of all disciplines within the community. Zulu Painter will present a **Gallery Show & Artist Reception, sponsored by Creative Loafing**, at American Stage on Friday, February 2nd. This exhibit will run concurrently with A RAISIN IN THE SUN, inspired by themes from the play. This season American Stage asks the community to be a part of the WE THE PEOPLE movement and celebrate the arts in the Tampa Bay area!

"I immediately think of uplifting unity with the We The People theme. As if all of this season will be filled with empowering messages."—Zulu Painter, Featured Visual Artist for A RAISIN IN THE SUN

BEFORE & AFTER THE SHOW

Throughout the run of A RAISIN IN THE SUN, ticket holders are invited to arrive early for an exclusive **PROLOGUE** presented by select American Stage apprentice Tarilabo Koripamo 30 minutes prior to each performance.

American Stage is also excited to present **TGIF!** where guests can kick off their weekend in style and join us for fancy, fun, fierce, and fabulous nights out at the theatre with Happy Hour drink specials prior to the performance the first four Fridays of every mainstage production.

Also, enjoy drink specials every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night post-show. Stick around after the show for lively café conversations. You never know what special guest may arrive.

TALKS & EVENTS – FULL DETAILS

American Stage has also programmed several audience experience opportunities surrounding the production of A RAISIN IN THE SUN. Visit americanstage.org/RAISIN and click the **TALKS & EVENTS** tab for a full listing of events.

Sunday, January 14 at 1pm

Spotlight Series: BEHIND-THE-SCENES – A RAISIN IN THE SUN

Featuring Director L. Peter Callender, Actors Fanni Green & Enoch King*, and Moderator Patrick A. Jackson**

The perfect primer! Take a peek behind the curtain before the opening of A RAISIN IN THE SUN with this informative and entertaining presentation about the play, the playwright, and the American Stage artists who bring it all to life. Professor Emerita Dedee Aleccia will provide relevant details about the history and central themes of the play, while members of the artistic team will give an insider's perspective on their process.

Pricing: \$10 for General Public

Free for American Stage Subscribers and Act 1 Club Members

Friday, January 26 | Reception at 7PM | Performance at 8pm

Opening Night + Signature Art Unveiling by Zulu Painter

Celebrate with the stars! Enjoy a pre-show reception sponsored by Parkshore Grille Catering with hors d'oeuvres and an open bar, rub elbows with the cast & creative team, witness the unveiling of an original piece of art inspired by A RAISIN IN THE SUN, and be among the first to see one of our first-class productions. There will also be a post-show dessert reception with the cast.

Thursday, February 1 | Sunday February 4 & 11 (Post-Performance)

Spotlight Series: CHATBACK – A RAISIN IN THE SUN

Stick around immediately following select performances to talk with the cast and other audience members while the experience of the play is fresh! Ask questions about the play, the characters, and the process, plus respond to the story and ideas aroused by the production. Free for ticket holders to the performance.

Friday, February 2 | Happy Hour 6-8PM | Performance at 8PM

WE THE PEOPLE - Artist Meet and Greet Reception & Young Professionals Night

On the second Friday, stop by our lobby to celebrate the visual artwork of **Zulu Painter**. American Stage will host a gallery show for four weeks and will also display an original work inspired by the art on stage.

Community Engagement Sponsor: Creative Loafing

PLUS – Young Americans Night: PLUS - Young Professionals Night: Young professional under 40 can enjoy drink specials and conversation with the artists. YOUNG AMERICANS under 30 can access our 'Netflix-style' subscription, offering 'unlimited theatre' for only \$15 per month. Call the Box Office at [727-823-7529](tel:727-823-7529) or email youngamericans@americanstage.org.

Friday, February 9 | Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

LADIES Night: Grab friends, bring a date and turn your ordinary Friday evening into a scintillating, one-of-a-kind night out highlighting some really awesome local women.

Sunday, February 11 | 6PM

Spotlight Series: COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Great theatre inspires contemplation and challenges our assumptions while inviting us to come together for conversation and a deeper connection. From social and political hot-button issues to ethical dilemmas, American Stage's COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS dig deeper into the intriguing and sometimes provocative topics explored by our mainstage productions. Join a panel of local experts as they guide us through a lively

discussion, and answer questions about the relevancy of the subject matter explored in the play.
Pricing: \$10 for General Public. Free for American Stage Subscribers and Act 1 Club Members

Friday, February 16 | Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

PRIDE PLUS Night

Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

Enjoy a night OUT at the theatre, with Happy Hour drink specials, and meet some local LGBT+ trendsetters and change-makers.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT: American Stage presents A RAISIN IN THE SUN by Lorraine Hansberry

WHERE: Raymond James Theatre

163 3rd Street North

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

WHEN: January 24–February 18, 2018

Preview Wednesday, January 24, 7pm, “Pay What You Can”

Preview Thursday, January 25, 8pm, \$29 tickets

Opening Night: Friday, January 26, 8pm, \$59 tickets (includes opening night reception at 7pm, and a dessert reception with the cast following the performance.)

Continues: Wednesdays-Sundays through February 18, 2018

Arrive 30 minutes early to get the inside scoop on the play.

TIMES & PRICES

Wednesdays 7pm, \$39 tickets

Thursdays 8pm, \$39 tickets

Fridays & Saturdays 8pm, \$49 tickets

Saturdays & Sundays 3pm, \$39 tickets

Under 30 years of age: Our ‘Netflix-style’ subscription, offering ‘unlimited theatre’ for only \$15 per month.

Under 20 years of age (suggested 12-19): FREE tickets to American Stage’s mainstage season. A bold experiment in 2018.

Contact the box office about our Young Americans Initiative. Visit americanstage.org/ya for details.

SERVICE & FACILITIES

Physical Accessibility: The theatre features accessible parking, entrances, restrooms, and seating.

*Displaying a valid disabled parking permit will allow you to park at City metered spaces for FREE, for as long as your event requires, including those posted with time limit signs (green signs). **This does not apply to loading zones or otherwise restricted parking signage (red signs).***

Large Print Program: Theatregoers may peruse large print programs for each Mainstage production.

Listening System: Theatregoers may enjoy the free infrared listening system from any seat.



AMERICAN STAGE | AS/40

American Stage celebrates **40 Years Strong** this season. Since 1977, American Stage, has contributed to the vitality of Tampa Bay as a regional professional theatre. American Stage’s mission is to reinforce the power of live theatre with high quality productions that excite and challenge a diverse audience. Our year-round programming seeks to realize this through our Mainstage season, Spotlight Series, 21st Century Voices: New

Play Festival, American Stage in the Park and Improv. American Stage Education's offerings include award-winning Teaching Artist Outreach focused on bringing theatrical arts experiences to underserved populations, helping them to excel onstage & beyond.

We believe that through the telling of dynamic stories, live theatre has the power to unite us in our shared experiences and to deepen our connection to one another through the illumination of diverse perspectives. American Stage artists and stakeholders are responsible for helping a small theatre touring company blossom into a thriving world-class professional theatre providing nearly 70,000 Tampa Bay residents and tourists with accessible, relevant art and arts education annually.

Powerful Stories. Boldly Told. 40 Years Strong.

SOCIAL MEDIA



@americanstage

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION:

Phone: (727) 823-PLAY (7529)

Email: BoxOffice@americanstage.org

Location: 163 3rd St. North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

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