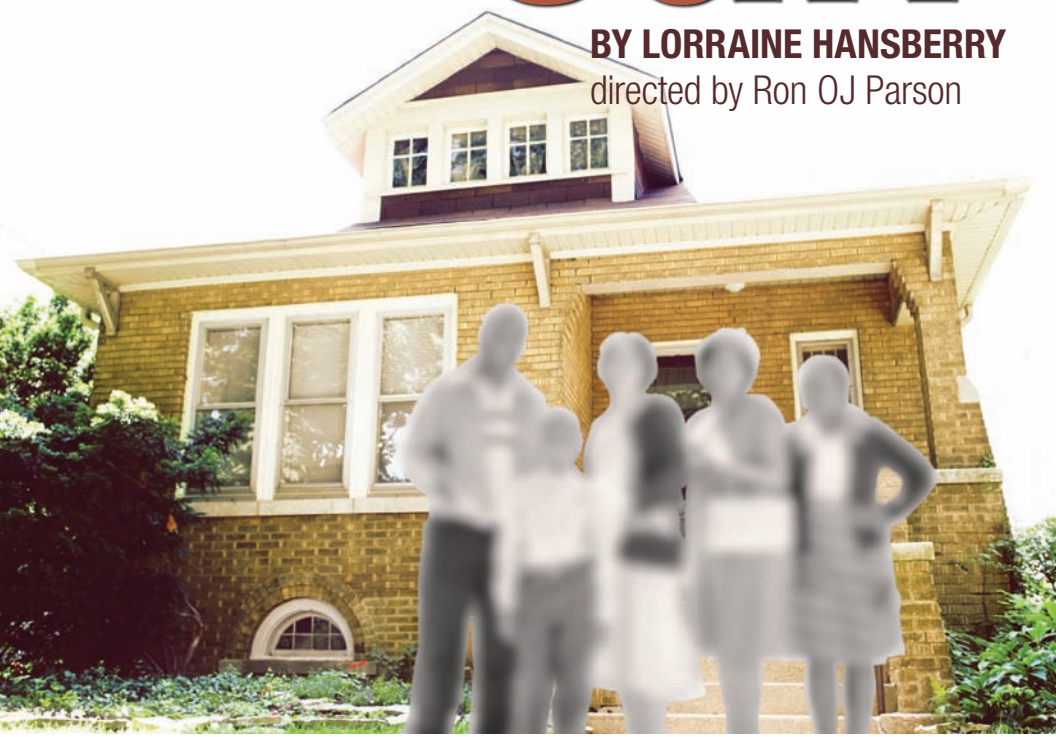
# BACKSTORY

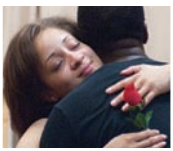
YOUR GUIDE TO TIMELINE PRODUCTIONS

# a raisin in the sun

**BY LORRAINE HANSBERRY**

directed by Ron OJ Parson





YESTERDAY'S STORIES.
TODAY'S TOPICS.

Timeline Theatre Company

From Artistic Director PJ Powers

# a message

Welcome to TimeLine's 17th season and Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun.*

Since we announced this play I've been struck by the number of people who've responded with "Why *that play* again?" This hasn't been a majority response, but I've heard it more than expected. Yet when asked, most people have trouble answering when they last saw it performed. (It's been 13 years since a major Chicago revival by the Goodman Theatre and seven years since Court Theatre produced a musical adaptation.)

Perhaps "Why *that* again?" is asked of any American classic. We wonder what new could possibly be mined from *The Glass Menagerie, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Our Town, The Crucible*, etc., until we see one of those plays with fresh eyes and are knocked out by its impact.

The label of "classic" is ascribed to these plays for a reason—each has a resonance that is timeless.

Though written more than 50 years ago, *A Raisin in the Sun*—arguably the greatest play ever set in Chicago—has as much to say now as it did then. While Hansberry wrote during a time that feels distant (preceding the Civil Rights movement), Chicago was then and is now a tale of two cities, splintered into neighborhoods with stark contrasts.

The issues that impact us most are intrinsically tied to where we reside—to where our real estate is. Be it rampant violence, gang activity, drug trafficking, economic investment, park beautification or the battle over the quality and quantity of our schools, our deep connection (or relative indifference) to these headlines comes down to where we find ourselves in this great metropolis. When one of those stories is rooted in a part of town other than our own, is our investment and concern as great?

*A Raisin in the Sun* is a play about hopes and dreams. A grandmother strives to give her kids and grandson a better life than what she knew. A father instills in his son the belief that he can do anything he sets his mind to. And a daughter works to break barriers of gender, education and career achievement. But they all see their dreams as unnattainable if they remain where they currently dwell.

So, why this play again? *A Raisin in the Sun* is about our community and the ever-shifting but ever-existing neighborhood barriers that keep it a tale of two cities. It's a story about Chicago—then and now and hopefully not forever.

I'm delighted to have director Ron OJ Parson at TimeLine for the first time. I've greatly admired his work for more than 15 years, and you can read in this *Backstory* about his long and storied history with this play.

We've got a powerhouse line-up this season, with *The Normal Heart* playing nearby at Stage 773, *The How and the Why*, the first-ever Chicago production of the musical *Juno*, and a new downtown commercial production of *To Master the Art*, which was originally commissioned and premiered at TimeLine. It promises to be a year of great discussion and discovery, and I thank you for being a part of it.

Fondly,

**Why this play again? It's a play about Chicago—then, now and hopefully not forever.**

Hansberry v. Lee

# the history

In 1937, Lorraine Hansberry's father decided to purchase a new family home in Washington Park, Chicago. A scholar and successful business man, Carl was an active member of the Chicago chapter of the NAACP and socialized with famous black leaders of the time such as Paul Robeson and Langston Hughes.

The Hansberrys anticipated that the community would not welcome them with open arms, but they did not expect the degree to which they would be disrespected. A young Lorraine recounted a brick flying through her living room window as a child—nearly hitting her in the head. Instead of being a clean slate and a move away from poverty toward a bright future, the experience in the new neighborhood was terrorizing.

Anna Lee, a white neighbor, sued Hansberry for purchasing the property. She claimed that 500 land owners had signed a restrictive covenant stating that property would not be sold to black families. Lee felt Hansberry had purchased the property in violation of the Property Owners Association's agreement and sued for $100,000. She won her case at the Illinois Supreme Court. The case then went to the United States Supreme Court.

In what turned out to be a revolutionary case and verdict, Hansberry won the case. The restrictive covenant upon which Lee's case focused was ruled not technically valid because it required signatures from at least 95 percent of homeowners in the area—she only had 54 percent.

Notably, the Supreme Court ruled the restrictive agreement that property would not be sold to African Americans unlawful only by technicality. The case was not won based on an unlawful and unjust attempt to deny someone a fair purchase of property based on skin color. But it was and still is seen as a victory and a step toward housing, social, political and economic equality.


28 PAGES 10¢ AND MORE

THE Chicago Defender WORLD'S GREATEST WEEKLY

CITY EDITION

Vol. XXXVI, No. 30 CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1940

HANSBERRY DECISION OPENS 500 NEW HOMES TO RACE

Promoted

HOLD YOUTH, 20 FOR MURDER IN GANG ROW

STRATEGY BOARD IN HANSBERRY RESTRICTIVE COVENANT CASE

COURT HOLDS COVENANTS NON EXISTENT

## A Timeline of the Harlem Renaissance and Civil Rights from 1900 to 1955

**1900** U.S. census records a total population of 76,994,575, including a black population of 8,833,944 (11.6%).

"Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," composed by James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamond Johnson, is first performed. It will become a black anthem.

**1901** Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* is published. Washington becomes the first black man to be invited to dine at the White House.

**1903** W.E.B. DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk* is published, calling for agitation on behalf of African American rights.

**February 12, 1909** The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded on the 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, with the intention of promoting the use of the courts to restore the legal rights of black Americans.

**1910** The first issue of *The Crisis*, edited by DuBois, is published by the NAACP.

**December 19, 1910** The City Council of Baltimore approves the first city ordinance designating the boundaries of black and white neighborhoods. This ordinance is followed by similar ones in nine other cities.

**1911** The National Urban League is formed to help African Americans secure equal employment.

Lorraine Hansberry

# the playwright

Born May 19, 1930 in Chicago, Lorraine Vivian Hansberry was the youngest of four children of Carl Hansberry, a successful real-estate businessman and politician, and Nannie Louise Perry, who was a school teacher. Both her parents were active participants in the NAACP and the Urban League.

Raised on the teachings of Langston Hughes, W.E.B. DuBois and Paul Robeson, Hansberry was highly educated about progress and dreams for equality in a racially divided nation.

When she was 8 years old, her father bought a house in Washington Park, Chicago. The surrounding neighbors reacted violently and emotionally—in a 1964 letter to the editor of *The New York Times*, Hansberry recounted how a brick was thrown through a window and almost killed her. She described her neighbors as "hellishly hostile."

The community's legal efforts to force the Hansberrys out of their home culminated in the U.S. Supreme Court's 1940 decision in Hansberry v. Lee, holding the restrictive covenant in the case contestable, though not inherently invalid *(see further details on previous page)*.

Hansberry was a rebel. Instead of studying at a traditional black university, Hansberry attended the University of Wisconsin–Madison, but found it uninspiring. At a time when women attending college was somewhat revolutionary, quitting school was no small event. She went to New York City in 1950 and within a year was a staff writer for *Freedom Magazine*, edited by Robeson.

In 1953, she married Robert Nemiroff, a Jewish publisher, songwriter and political activist. Hansberry began writing her first play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, that same year. While writing it, she continued to contribute short pieces to various magazines under her initials "LHN." Hansberry wrote on subjects of racial divide, womens' rights, her atheist beliefs and homophobia, calling for change.

It is rumored that Hansberry was a lesbian, causing her to separate from Nemiroff in 1957 and divorce him in 1964, but that is not confirmed. Nemiroff continued to love and support Hansberry through their separation and compiled and published her work after her untimely death.

*A Raisin in the Sun* debuted in 1959, becoming the first play written by an African-American woman to be produced on Broadway. It won the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award as Best Play of the Year. She was the youngest American, the fifth woman and the first black person to win the award. Her success opened the floodgates for a generation of modern black actors and writers who were influenced and encouraged by her writing.

*Lorraine Hansberry.*

After her initial success with *A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry lived only six more years. She was able to complete one more play, a movie, and a television script that proved too racially controversial to be aired.

Her second play, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, received mixed reviews and ran for 101 performances, due mostly to the support of the theatre community. It closed January 12, 1965—the night she died at age 34 from pancreatic cancer.

After her death Nemiroff finished and produced her final work, *Les Blancs*. He also adapted a collection of her writing and interviews in *To Be Young, Gifted and Black*.

$10,000 Then and Now

# the money

A *Raisin in the Sun* brings up multiple important questions about family dynamics and support, how to love each other, how to make progress as an individual, and how to survive in a world that is racially divided and unfair.

One of the more simple questions is, what will Mama do with her $10,000 check? The family eagerly awaits her decision.

In our 2013 mindset, $10,000 is not altogether that much money. A $10,000 gift is nothing to scoff at, but it certainly wouldn't buy you a home, a luxury car or a year of medical school tuition.

Converting $10,000 into its current value requires adjusting for inflation. The Consumer Price Index is used to figure out what the purchasing power of $10,000 would be in 2013.

The result: In 1954, $10,000 had the same purchasing power as $85,354 today.

So, as you watch this production, please keep in mind: That check that's coming to Mama – it's worth more than $85,000. What would you do with it?

Events and Resources

# the discussion

TimeLine looks forward to engaging our audience in conversations inspired by our productions. We hope you will participate in the array of additional resources and online communities available:

**DISCUSSION EVENTS**

A variety of discussions are scheduled throughout the run. Visit *timelinetheatre.com/raisin_in_the_sun/events.htm* for a schedule and description of the opportunities available.

**BLOG AND MORE!**

Find behind-the-scenes insight and conversation on our blog, **Behind the 'Line**, via *timelinetheatre.com.*

For the latest, "like" us on Facebook (**TimeLine Theatre**), follow us on Twitter (**@timelinetheatre**) and visit our YouTube channel (**youtube.com/timelinetheatre**).

**1912** W.C. Handy's "Memphis Blues" becomes the first blues composition to be published. *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, a novel by James Weldon Johnson, is published.

**1913** President Woodrow Wilson's administration begins segregating blacks and whites in government departments.

**1915** The Ku Klux Klan receives a charter from Georgia's Fulton County Superior Court. The Klan spreads quickly, reaching its height during the 1920s with an estimated 4 million members.

**1915** The Great Migration begins. Approximately 2 million African Americans from southern states move to northern industrial centers during the following decades, seeking relief from racism as well as better jobs and schools. The migration will increase during World War I when jobs open up in war industries. It will continue into the 1960s. In 1890, 85% of the black population lived in the South. By 1960 that number will be 42%.

**1917** The United States enters World War I.

Major race riots occur in East St. Louis, Illinois. More than 10,000 black Americans, organized by the NAACP, march down Fifth Avenue in New York City in a silent parade to protest lynchings and racial indignities. And race riots in Houston lead to the hanging of 13 black soldiers.

**1919** DuBois organizes the first Pan-African conference in Paris.

# the play

Lorraine Hansberry edited and rewrote *A Raisin in the Sun*, as all playwrights do during their process. The play you see at TimeLine is a final version, one that has been distilled by the original producers.

Missing in this version is a scene during which young Travis Younger plays with a rat—he goes out to play with neighborhood boys and returns home to recount the joys of beating a street rat to death. This violence, occurring off stage and merely retold, and lasting just a short page or so, was meant to subtlety show us what might happen if Travis were to stay where he is now. He is already beginning to play with kids who are either bored enough (without proper toys or activities) or frustrated and tired enough to pick on creatures lower on the food chain. Through this small scene, Hansberry warned of the potentially dangerous and surprisingly easy and simple choices one can make in an environment not built properly for growth and prosperity. Though it is a minor cut, the version of the play without that scene lacks a sense of direct danger for Travis if the Youngers choose to stay in their apartment.

Also missing is a central supporting character, similar

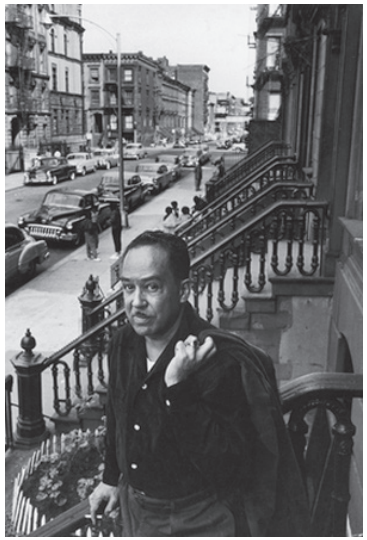
*Lorraine Hansberry at work in her library at home.*

to Beneatha's suitors George and Asagai or Walter's conspirator Bobo. She is Mrs. Wilhelmina Johnson, the Younger's not-so-supportive neighbor. In early versions of the script, she entered the Younger's apartment like a tornado—warning of the dangers and all the downsides of leaving the tenement. Though the Youngers continue to reference her in the final version of the play, her spirit—a wild and loud force of outside opinion—is missed.

The title *A Raisin in the Sun* is taken from Langston Hughes' poem, "Harlem." In previous drafts, Hansberry had named the play *The Crystal Stair,* from Hughes' "Mother to Son."

When studying Hansberry's writing in detail, it seems obvious that she was greatly inspired by the Harlem Renaissance and the art that came out of that period. Having studied under Paul Robeson and befriended Nina Simone, it is no surprise that Hughes' poetry inspired her work so deeply. How interesting, also, that Hansberry indirectly points to "Harlem" and "Mother to Son" by referring to the central images within them, instead of directly copying the titles themselves.

Perhaps Hansberry wants us to take in the image and connect to it personally—find what it means to us, but also where it exists in the ether—leading us to Hughes himself and the original works. Hansberry, in the smallest scale, builds an educational bridge, connecting her work to others, spinning a web of literature for us to explore.



*Langston Hughes was a major force behind the Harlem Renaissance and an inspiration for Lorraine Hansberry.*



# the poetry

**Hansberry builds an educational bridge, connecting her work to others, spinning a web of literature for us to explore.**

These two poems by Langston Hughes inspired both the initial and final titles of Lorraine Hansberry's play:

**HARLEM by Langston Hughes**

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore –
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over –
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

*Or does it explode?*

---

**MOTHER TO SON by Langston Hughes**

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor –
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps
'Cause you find it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now –
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

**1919** "Red Summer" occurs: 26 race riots in Charleston, Washington, Chicago, Arkansas and Texas.

**July 27, 1919** In Chicago, a young black man, Eugene Williams, flees a fight between black and white gangs on 29th Street Beach by swimming into the water, where he becomes exhausted and drowns. A rumor that he has been stoned to death provokes five days of rioting, resulting in the deaths of 23 African Americans and 15 white people, plus 291 injured.

**1920** Marcus Garvey launches the Universal Negro Improvement Association in Harlem, the first mass movement for African Americans.

**1921** The Harlem Renaissance—a remarkable period of creativity for black writers, poets and artists, especially Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Alain Locke and Countee Cullen—begins.

**1922** A federal anti-lynching bill is killed by filibuster in the Senate, the same year that 51 African Americans are known to have been lynched.

**May 19, 1925** Malcolm Little (later Malcolm X) is born.

**1926** Carter G. Woodson organizes the first Negro History Week during the second week of February, to include Abraham Lincoln's birthday and the generally accepted birthday of Frederick Douglass.

**1927** Duke Ellington opens at the Cotton Club in Harlem.

**January 15, 1929** Martin Luther King, Jr., is born.

Past and Future of *A Raisin in the Sun*

# production history

Lorraine Hansberry began working on *A Raisin in the Sun* in 1953—before the riots of the 1960s, the Black Power movement, the "I Have a Dream" speech, sit-ins and bus boycotts. It took producer Philip Rose more than a year to raise the money to produce the play for both its initial tour and Broadway run.

The play toured to theatres around the country, including Chicago's Blackstone Theatre (now the Merle Reskin Theatre of The Theatre School at DePaul University) before opening on Broadway on March 19, 1959. It was the first play to be written by an African-American woman and directed by an African-American man to ever premiere on Broadway.

*A Raisin in the Sun* garnered an overwhelmingly positive reception. It was nominated for four Tony Awards (including Best Actor for Sidney Poitier as Walter Lee Younger) and was named Best Play by the New York Drama Critics' Circle. It continued its Broadway run for more than two years.

The successful Broadway run sparked Columbia Pictures to ask Hansberry to write a screenplay. The film, released in 1961, featured the original Broadway cast and is unique in that most scenes are shot in one take. The actors had such long relationships with their characters that editing was less necessary. The film was nominated for Golden Globes and received a special award at the Cannes Film Festival.

A musical adaptation called *Raisin*—spearheaded by Robert Nemiroff (Hansberry's ex-husband)—opened on Broadway in 1973 and ran for more than 800 performances. Directed and choreographed by Donald McKayle, the production was nominated for 9 Tony Awards and won both Best Musical and Best Leading Actress in a Musical (Virginia Capers). Debbie Allen played Beneatha. Chicago's Court Theatre produced *Raisin* as a part of its 2006-07 season.

In 2008, Kenny Leon debuted a made-for-television film version of *A Raisin in the Sun* at the Sundance Film Festival. The film featured Phylicia Rashad, Audra McDonald and Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, reprising their roles from a 2004 Broadway revival. The film aired to 12.7 million viewers.

In response to Hansberry's play, Bruce Norris wrote the Pulitzer Prize winning play *Clybourne Park*. It premiered at New York's Playwrights Horizons, bringing up issues of gentrification, ownership, memory and race. Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre produced the play as a part of its 2011-12 season. The first act


*The marquee for* A Raisin in the Sun*'s 1959 Broadway premiere.*

focuses on a white couple, Bev and Russ, who have sold their home to a black family—the Youngers. In Norris' story we see the before and after of *A Raisin in the Sun*; the first act is set in the 1950s, the second in modern day.

In 2013, Baltimore's Center Stage presented *Clybourne Park* in repertory with the premiere of *Beneatha's Place* by Kwame Kwei-Armah. This newest play inspired by Hansberry focuses on Beneatha later in her life, now married to Joseph Asagai, as they move into a new neighborhood in Nigeria in 1959. Similar to Norris' play structure, Kwei-Armah sets the second act in present day.

It has been announced that Denzel Washington will play Walter Lee Younger in a Broadway revival beginning in March 2014. Kenny Leon is set to direct the limited run.

**October 1929** The stock market crashes, starting the Great Depression. By 1937, 26% of black males will be unemployed.

**April 6, 1931** The first Scottsboro trial begins in Alabama. Nine black youths are accused of raping two white women on a freight train. The blatant injustice of the case outrages the public throughout the 1930s.

**1935** The National Council of Negro Women is founded.

*Mulatto* by Langston Hughes becomes a Broadway hit.

**1936** Jesse Owens wins four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics.

**1937** Joe Louis becomes heavyweight boxing champion.

**1938** Lorraine Hansberry and her family move into an all-white neighborhood in Chicago.

**1940** President Roosevelt issues a statement that segregation is the policy of the U.S. armed forces.

Richard Wright's novel *Native Son* is published.

**1941** The United States enters World War II. Roosevelt, responding to pressure from black leaders, issues an executive order forbidding racial and religious discrimination in war and governmental training programs and industries.

The first U. S. Army flying school for black cadets is dedicated at Tuskegee.

**1942** The Congress of Race Equality (CORE) is organized in Chicago. It advocates direct, non-violent action. The National CORE will be organized in 1943.

**1944** The United Negro College Fund is founded. The fund will become America's oldest and most successful African American higher education assistance organization.

**1944** Adam Clayton Powell is elected to Congress.

**1945** President Roosevelt dies. World War II ends. More than 1.2 million black Americans have served during the war.

White students in various metropolitan areas protest integration in schools.

The Brooklyn Dodgers sign Jackie Robinson, the first black man to play major league baseball.

The first issue of *Ebony* magazine is published.

**1946** The U.S. Supreme Court bans segregation on interstate bus travel.

**1948** President Truman issues an executive order directing equality of treatment and opportunity in the armed forces.

**1950** Gwendolyn Brooks receives the Pulitzer Prize for poetry.

**1951** *Jet* magazine is founded.

**1952** The case of Oliver Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, begins. Up to now, school segregation has been widely accepted throughout the nation and required by law in most southern states.

**August 4, 1953** The movement of black families into a Trumbull Park housing project in Chicago triggers virtually continuous rioting that will last for more than three years and require more than 1,000 police officers to maintain order.

*Go Tell It to the Mountain* by James Baldwin is published.

**1954** The U.S. Supreme Court decides unanimously in the case of Brown v. Board of Education that segregation is unconstitutional, stating "separate is not equal." The decision overthrows the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson ruling that had set the "separate but equal" precedent. School integration begins in Washington and Baltimore. In the next year the Court will order school integration "with all deliberate speed."

**April 20, 1955** Richard J. Daley is elected Mayor of Chicago; he will hold the office for an unprecedented 14 years and 3 days.

**August 28, 1955** Emmet Till, aged 14, is kidnapped and lynched in Mississippi.

**December 1, 1955** The Montgomery Bus Boycott begins after Rosa Parks, a 43-year-old black seamstress, is arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man. The following night, 50 leaders of the black community meet at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church to discuss the issue, among them the young minister Martin Luther King, Jr. The boycott will deprive the bus company of 65% of its income, but will also result in a $500 fine or 386 days in jail for King. He pays the fine. Eight months later, the Supreme Court decides, based on the school segregation cases, that bus segregation violates the U.S. Constitution.

# the interview

*Ron OJ Parson.*

**TimeLine Artistic Director PJ Powers (PJP)** What was your first experience with *A Raisin in the Sun?*

**Ron OJ Parson (ROJP)** This play has always been a part of my family, basically because of Sidney Poitier and the impact he had in our family. We were proud to see an African American man on stage and screen. People said my Mom looked a lot like Diana Sands, the original Beneatha. And I had to play Mr. Lindner in junior high because there weren't many white kids at my school. I was lighter skinned than many of my classmates, thus I was Mr. Lindner. At first it was weird but then I did what I tell actors, "Embrace your roles." Early stages of non-traditional casting!

**(PJP)** I've heard you say many times, "This play is special." What do you mean by that?

**(ROJP)** Like many of the great classic plays by great playwrights—*Death of a Salesman, A Streetcar Named Desire*—these plays revolutionized the theatre world. With *A Raisin in the Sun,* it meant even more to me and my family because it was a story that many of us could personally relate to. And of course it was a landmark, groundbreaking play on Broadway, the likes of which had never been seen before. So it had, and has, a special place in all our hearts.

**(PJP)** You were in the cast of the 25th Anniversary production that started at the Kennedy Center and toured the country. What was that experience like?

**(ROJP)** What a great experience. I got to understudy Delroy Lindo and play one of the Moving Men. What an honor to work with Esther Rolle and to meet two of the original producers and hear stories of the early productions of the play. The original Mr. Lindner was our Mr. Lindner. And of course to work with a great director like Harold "Hal" Scott, whose directing style has influenced me to this day. It was an experience I will always cherish.

**(PJP)** Why do you think this play continues to resonate with different generations?

**(ROJP)** Well, unfortunately many of the issues that exist in the play—the dreams, aspirations, hardships and housing issues of the 1950s—still exist today. But most of all it is Lorraine Hansberry's strong, rich characters and the beautiful story she has told. Some plays will exist and resonate with generations to come, forever. Great theatre is great theatre.

**(PJP)** Most people who have experienced *A Raisin in the Sun* have seen it in larger spaces. What are you and your design team hoping to achieve in our intimate space?

**(ROJP)** Being in such an intimate space will bring the play so much closer than you normally see these characters. Our idea is to include the audience in the room, to feel the claustrophobia that the Younger family feels. To feel what living in this kind of close quarters can do to your psyche. I always approach work for the audience to feel the play, not just hear or see it.

*This is an edited version of our interview with Ron OJ Parson. To read the complete text, visit timelinetheatre.com/raisin_in_the_sun/resources.htm*

**"Some plays will exist and resonate with generations to come, forever."**



# backstage

## History Makers Society Celebration

On June 3, 2013, TimeLine's Board members, Company members and staff joined members of the History Makers Society—our most generous supporters of $1,000 and more—for an exclusive cocktail party and discussion with *Blood and Gifts* playwright J.T. Rogers at local dining hot spot Frog n' Snail.

*Pictured left to right, from top: Timeline Board Member John Sirek and his wife Colleen Loughlin with J.T. Rogers; Managing Director Elizabeth K. Auman, Board President Cindy Giacchetti and Artistic Director PJ Powers; TimeLine's History Makers enjoyed a wide-ranging conversation about the joys, challenges and perks of playwriting with Powers and Rogers; Powers with Frog n' Snail chef (and season 3* Top Chef *contestant) Dale Levitski and Rogers; History Makers Bruce Feay and Dawn Palmer with Company Member Mildred Marie Langford.*

## Save the Date: Step Into Time 2014

Mark your calendar for TimeLine's biggest party of the year—our Step Into Time Gala benefit—scheduled for Friday, March 14, 2014 at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. The evening includes cocktails, a formal dinner, silent auction, exclusive entertainment and more! All proceeds benefit TimeLine's mission and programs. For updates about Step Into Time, visit *timelinetheatre.com/step_into_time.*

## BACKSTORY: THE CREDITS

*Dramaturgy & Historical Research by* Alexis Jade Links *and* Jacob Shuler

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A Raisin in the Sun *photo illustration and photography by* t. HARRISON HILLMAN

*Backstory is published four times each season.*

*Pictured on front cover (from left): Director Ron OJ Parson with assistant director Tyla Abercrumbie; actor Toni Martin; actor Greta Oglesby; actor Jerod Haynes; actor Wardell Julius Clark; and actors Daryl Satcher and Mildred Marie Langford.*

**Our Mission:**

TimeLine Theatre presents stories inspired by history that connect with today's social and political issues.

Our collaborative artistic team produces provocative theatre and educational programs that engage, entertain and enlighten.


Commissioned by TimeLine in 2008, *To Master the Art* received its world premiere as part of our 2010-11 season, garnering more than 20 rave reviews and five Jeff Award nominations. Now we've partnered with the Chicago Commercial Collective and Broadway in Chicago to bring the adventure and romance of Julia and Paul Child's life in Paris back to Chicago, this time downtown at the Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place. **Don't miss this limited return engagement!**

There's much more at TimeLine this season! Read all about our 2013-14 subscription season via the stuffer in your program, or visit ***timelinetheatre.com/subscribe***