FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, December 12

MARIN THEATRE COMPANY,
LORRAINE HANSBERRY THEATRE,
AND UBUNTU THEATER PROJECT
PARTNER ON THE BAY AREA PREMIERE OF

August Wilson’s How I Learned What I Learned

MILL VALLEY, CA—Marin Theatre Company (MTC), Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and Ubuntu Theater Project are proud to partner on the Bay Area Premiere of August Wilson’s final, autobiographical play, How I Learned What I Learned.

In this one-man piece, Wilson walks us through his life as a young black man growing up in Pittsburgh’s Hill District; a neighborhood that later serves as inspiration for his acclaimed American Century Cycle of plays. Through powerful anecdotes and lessons-learned, Wilson imparts his first encounters with love, friendship, music, racism and violence—experiences that profoundly shape him, and his writing.

“We all know the plays of August Wilson but many of us, especially the younger generation, don’t know much about the man himself. This play allows us to be in a room with him. His gift of storytelling, sense of humor and his love of history are expressed in an intimate night at the theater. The idea of presenting the play at three vastly different theaters, MTC, Ubuntu and the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, with different types of audiences is the way theater should be done. Our job as Artists is to take the work to the people, especially the community for whom it was written. I’m proud that that is part of our mission.”

— Margo Hall, on directing How I Learned What I Learned

Led by two Bay Area legends—Margo Hall directs and Steven Anthony Jones stars—this production of August Wilson’s How I Learned What I Learned will begin its run at Marin Theatre Company (Mill Valley) in January, moving then to Lorraine Hansberry Theatre (San Francisco) in February, and ending its run at Ubuntu Theater Project (Oakland) in March.

Since their inaugural season in 1981, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre has produced seven of August Wilson’s ten American Century Cycle plays (Fences, Joe Turner’s Come And Gone, King Hedley II, The Piano Lesson, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, Jitney and Two Trains Running) and supported numerous other productions of his work across the Bay Area. Founded on a commitment to create and produce “works by, for and about African American people and other
people of color,” Lorraine Hansberry Theatre has become a staple of San Francisco’s downtown theatrical landscape, setting an example for collaborative projects and inclusive practices.

**Ubuntu Theater Project**, while new to the work of August Wilson, have a mission to create work that “sparks a deep sense of interconnectedness and mutuality that changes attitudes and behaviors”—a sentiment echoed in Wilson’s own writing. Ubuntu, likewise, supports many artists and emerging playwrights of color who cite Wilson as an influence; the work of Suzan-Lori Parks, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Katori Hall, Marcus Gardley and many others have found a home on Ubuntu’s site-specific stages. Ubuntu Theater Project brings an unparalleled passion for humanity and community engagement to this partnership.

*How I Learned What I Learned* is Wilson’s final play—written and performed in 2003, just two years before his death. Through this partnership, **Marin Theatre Company** affirms a commitment to supporting new American plays and playwrights—from Wilson’s powerful and ground-breaking work, to the emerging playwrights inspired by his voice and forged from the crucible of his success. In the coming years, MTC hopes to continue elevating vital works and voices through similar partnerships; building a theatrical model that benefits Bay Area theatre artists and theatre-goers alike.

Due largely to the dedicated collaboration of all three participating theatres, August Wilson’s evocative and intimate memoir, charting his lifelong journey of self-discovery through adversity, will engage audiences across the Bay Area through three uniquely different performance venues.

**Sentiments from the Partnering Artistic Directors**

“The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre is honored to continue its decades-old relationship with America’s theatrical historian, August Wilson, by participating in this unique partnership with Marin Theatre Company and Ubuntu Theater Project, directed by veteran LHT director Margo Hall, and starring former LHT Artistic Director Steven Anthony Jones. The entire Bay Area will have an opportunity to better appreciate the two time Pulitzer Prize winning playwright’s dynamic story of how he found his song.”

— Aldo Billingslea

Interim Artistic Director | Lorraine Hansberry Theatre

“We are thrilled to be part of this collaboration across the Bay Area on a piece by one of America’s greatest playwrights. We look forward to sharing the work of Margo Hall and Steven Anthony Jones in the East Bay, and celebrating August Wilson’s brilliance with our audience—some of whom may be encountering his work for the first time.”

— Michael Socrates Moran

Ubuntu Executive and Artistic Director | Ubuntu Theater Project
“It is a great honor to be partnering with both the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and Ubuntu Theater Project on this Bay Area premiere from one of America’s greatest playwrights, August Wilson. As we continue our mission of developing and premiering the best new American playwrights and plays we are grateful to both LHT and Ubuntu for joining us to explore how Bay Area audiences are receiving new work, how they are moving from neighborhood to neighborhood to see work and how they can be encouraged to see more new work. We hope we will learn as much from this new collaboration as we have from our previous models with ACT, Magic and Theatreworks about better serving our Bay Area audiences.”

— Jasson Minadakis
Artistic Director | Marin Theatre Company

More About the Playwright, August Wilson and Co-conceiver, Todd Kreidler

“One of the reasons I agreed to do this show was because I would have the opportunity to tell anyone who was willing to listen that we are not Black by the accident of our births. That our births are moments of profound creativity engineered by our genetic muscle as it aspires toward perfection.”

— August Wilson, on writing *How I Learned What I Learned*

*August Wilson* (playwright) authored *Gem of the Ocean*, *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* (New York Drama Critics Circle Award), *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom* (NYDCC Award), *The Piano Lesson* (Pulitzer Prize and NYDCC Award), *Seven Guitars* (NYDCC Award), *Fences* (Pulitzer Prize, Tony and NYDCC Awards), *Two Trains Running* (NYDCC Award), *Jitney* (Olivier and NYDCC Awards), *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. His plays have been produced at regional theatres across the country and all over the world, as well as on Broadway. In 2003, Wilson made his professional stage debut in his one-man show, *How I Learned What I Learned*. He received an Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of *The Piano Lesson*. His early works included the one-act plays *The Janitor, Recycle, The Coldest Day of the Year, Malcolm X, The Homecoming* and the musical satire *Black Bart and the Sacred Hills*. Wilson received many fellowships and awards, including Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in Playwriting, the Whiting Writers Award, Heinz Award and the National Humanities Medal. Following his death in October 2005, the Broadway theatre located at 245 West 52nd Street was renamed the August Wilson Theatre.

*Todd Kreidler* (co-conceiver) directed August Wilson’s *How I Learned What I Learned*, and served as dramaturg for August Wilson’s *Radio Golf* and *Gem of the Ocean* in their early productions at the Huntington and other regional theatres and on Broadway. His adaptation of *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* appeared at the Huntington in the fall of the 2014-2015 season. He wrote the Broadway musical *Holler If Ya Hear Me*, an original story featuring the lyrics of Tupac Shakur, and is writing a musical with Nikki Sixx, based on Sixx’s memoir and music, *The Heroin Diaries*. His stage adaptation of the film *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* ran at Arena Stage in Washington, DC and premiered at True Colors Theatre Company in Atlanta. Most recently, he directed *How I Learned What I Learned* at Off Broadway’s Signature Theatre and at Pittsburgh Public Theater. He originally directed and co-conceived the piece with Mr. Wilson
performing at Seattle Repertory Theatre in 2003. He co-founded the August Wilson Monologue Competition, a national program aimed at integrating August Wilson’s work into high school curriculum, of which the Huntington facilitates the Boston competition.

More About How I Learned What I Learned Director, Margo Hall

Margo Hall is an award winning actor/director/playwright. She has performed and directed in theatres throughout the Bay Area, and was last seen at MTC on stage in Skeleton Crew. She recently directed Barbecue for SF Playhouse (which she also starred in) which won the San Francisco Bay Area Critics Circle Award for Best Direction, and Best Production for 2018. Other directing credits include Red Velvet and The Story for SF Playhouse, Brownsville Song, b-side for tray for Shotgun Players, where she also co-directed Bulrush with Ellen Sebastian Chang. She is a founding member of Campo Santo, and has directed, performed and collaborated on several new plays with artists such as Naomi Iizuka, Jessica Hagedorn, Philip Kan Gotanda, and Octavio Solis. She debuted as a director with the World Premiere of Joyride, from the novel Grand Avenue by Greg Sarris, for Campo Santo. The production won the Critics Circle Award and SF Weekly Black Box Award for Best Director. She also co-directed Mission Indians with Nancy Benjamin, The Trail of Her Inner Thigh with Rhodessa Jones, Hotel Angulo, and Simpatico for Campo Santo. Other directing credits include Thurgood for Lorraine Hansberry Theater starring Steven Anthony Jones, and Friend of my Youth and Sonny’s Blues for Word for Word. She is also a professor at Chabot College where she directed Fabulation, Hamlet Blood in the Brain, The Trojan Women, It Falls, SPUNK, Ragtime, and A Streetcar Named Desire and Polaroid Stories at UC Berkeley.

Steven Anthony Jones Stars as August Wilson

Steven Anthony Jones was the artistic director of the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre (LHT), the premiere African American theatre company in the San Francisco Bay Area. He directed Philip Kan Gotanda’s After the War Blues for the UC Berkeley Dept. of Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies. He has worked professionally on stage, television and in film for 42 years. He has performed in the works of August Wilson, (Charles) Fuller, Fugard, Stoppard, Gotonda, Becket, Pinter, Moliere, Shakespeare, Chekhov and others. He was in the original cast of A Soldier’s Play produced by the Negro Ensemble Company, which won an Obie Award for ensemble acting and the Pulitzer Prize for best drama. He performed, taught and directed at the American Conservatory Theater for 22 years as a member of the core acting company. His many film and television credits include two seasons of Midnight Caller and a recurring role on the NBC series Trauma. Mr. Jones received his early theatre training at Karamu House in his hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. Other experience includes the Cleveland Playhouse, Berkeley Rep, San Jose Rep, and San Francisco Shakespeare Festival.

CALENDAR LISTING
Theatre | Performing Arts
WHAT
August Wilson’s *How I Learned What I Learned*

WHO
By August Wilson
Directed by Margo Hall

FEATURING
*Steven Anthony Jones: AUGUST WILSON

* Denotes member of Actors’ Equity Association

WHEN
**Marin Theatre Company:** January 10 - February 3
**Lorraine Hansberry Theatre:** February 14 - February 24
**Ubuntu Theater Project:** March 2019

PERFORMANCES
**OPENING NIGHT:** Tuesday, January 15, 7:30PM (MTC)
**OPENING NIGHT:** Friday, February 15, 2019 (LHT)

Evenings
Tuesday - Sunday, 7:30pm (MTC)
Thursday - Saturday, 8:00pm (LHT)

Matinees
Sunday (Preview), January 13, at 4:00pm
Thursday (Perspectives), January 24, at 1:00pm
Saturday, January 19 & 26 and February 2 & 9, at 2:00pm
Sunday, January 20 & 27 and February 3, at 2:00pm
Sunday, February 17 & 24 at 3:00pm (LHT)

WHERE
**Marin Theatre Company** | 397 Miller Ave | Mill Valley, CA 94941
**Lorraine Hansberry Theatre** | 762 Fulton St | San Francisco, CA 94102
**Ubuntu Theater Project** | 2020 4th Street | Berkeley, CA 94710

ABOUT
From the late August Wilson, one of America’s greatest playwrights and creator of award-winning titles like *Fences* and *Jitney*, comes this autobiographical tour de force. In his one-man show, Wilson takes us on a journey through his days as a young poet: his first few jobs, a stint in jail, the support of his lifelong friends, and his encounters with racism, music, and
love as a struggling writer in Pittsburgh’s Hill District. Originally performed by Wilson himself, *How I Learned What I Learned* is a heartfelt theatrical memoir—charting one man’s journey of self-discovery through adversity, and what it means to be a black artist in America.

**Tickets** $25 - $70, at Marin Theatre Company
For information on tickets for the run at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, visit their website at LHTSF.org, [HERE](#).
For information on tickets for the run at Ubuntu Theater Project, visit their website [HERE](#).

**Discounts** for seniors, under 30, teens, military families, and teachers are available.

**Group Discounts**: Purchase 8 or more tickets and receive a $7 discount off each ticket. MTC will also waive any applicable order fees. As the organizer of a group, your ticket is free! Contact the Box Office for more details.

**Press Photos** will be available for August Wilson’s *How I Learned What I Learned* on Friday, January 11th.

**MTC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS**

- **Window on the Work**: Join members of MTC’s artistic staff and cast of the show to discuss artistic and production elements of MTC’s production of *August Wilson’s How I Learned What I Learned* at 7:00pm on Thursday, January 3rd, at the Mill Valley Public Library.

- **Young Professionals Night**: Starting this season, MTC will host a Young Professionals Night, complete with a pre-show reception, on the first Wednesday of each production. For *August Wilson’s How I Learned What I Learned*, the YPN event will take place on Wednesday, January 16th with a reception starting at 7:00 PM, followed by the 7:30pm performance. Interns, apprentices, students, and other young professionals in *any* field are encouraged to attend, and are eligible for discounted tickets. To book, use promo code PROFESH20 online, in person, or by calling MTC’s Box Office.

- **Perspectives**: The third Thursday of each show is the Perspectives matinee performance which includes a pre-show topical lecture. For *August Wilson’s How I Learned What I Learned*, the Perspectives matinee is scheduled for Thursday, January 24, with the pre-show lecture beginning at 12:30pm, and the performance beginning at 1:00pm.

- **Pre-Show Discussions**: Join members of MTC’s artistic staff to discuss the play, playwright and play’s themes on Wednesdays before the 7:30pm performances.

- **After Words**: Join a member of MTC’s artistic staff (often with one or more members of the cast) for a Q&A talkback after every performance, except Saturday evenings and Opening and Closing Nights.

**ACCESS**
Marin Theatre Company provides open captioned performances of each of the plays in our mainstage series on the Thursday matinee. The open captioned performance for **August Wilson's How I Learned What I Learned** will be Thursday, January 24, at 1:00pm.

For visually impaired patrons, Large Print playbills are available with one week's advance notice. To request a Large Print playbill, call MTC's Box Office, (415) 388-5208, or use the California Telecommunications Relay Service by dialing “711.” For hearing impaired patrons, amplified sound Assistive Listening Devices are available. Our system will also work with personal assistive hearing devices equipped with a T-coil.

**BOX OFFICE CONTACTS**

Marin Theatre Company | marintheatre.org | (415) 388-5208 | boxoffice@marintheatre.org
Lorraine Hansberry Theatre | LHTSF.org | (415) 474-8800 | boxoffice@lhtsf.org
Ubuntu Theater Project | http://www.ubuntutheaterproject.com | info@ubuntutheaterproject.com

**ABOUT MTC**

Marin Theatre Company is the Bay Area's premier mid-sized theatre and the leading professional theatre in the North Bay. We produce a six-show season focused on new American plays. We are committed to the development and production of new plays, with a comprehensive New Play Program that includes productions of world premieres, two nationally recognized annual playwriting awards and readings and workshops by the nation's best emerging and established playwrights. Our numerous education programs serve more than 4,500 students from over 40 Bay Area schools each year. MTC strives to create intimate, powerful and emotional experiences that engage audiences to discuss new ideas and adopt a broader point of view. We believe in taking risks and inspiring people to participate in live theatre, regardless of personal means. MTC celebrates the intellectual curiosity of our community, and we believe that theatre is an important tool to help build empathy. MTC was founded in 1966 and is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

**ABOUT LORRAINE HANSBERRY THEATRE**

Founded in San Francisco in 1981, the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre (LHT) is the premiere African American theatre company in the San Francisco Bay Area. LHT has produced more than 140 plays, including west coast and world premieres, experimental works, classics in the African-American canon, lively musicals, and poignant socio-political dramas. The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre presents plays by both emerging and established African American and multicultural playwrights and provides employment and career building opportunities for actors, directors, designers, and technicians from the African American and multicultural communities. LHT draws from the cultural and economic resources of the San Francisco Bay Area to enrich and strengthen the Performing Arts by actively seeking and participating in collaboration with Bay Area arts institutions and performing arts organizations.
ABOUT UBUNTU THEATER PROJECT
Ubuntu Theater Project is a collection of artists that are committed to creating compelling theatrical experiences that explore the human condition, are affordable to all, and unite diverse audiences. Founded in Oakland, California in 2012, the company is now proud to offer year-long theater for Oakland and the Bay Area with its fourth annual season: Moral Humans / Immoral Society. The word Ubuntu is from a Zulu proverb: “I am a person through other people. My humanity is tied to yours.” Most simply, it translates to “I am because we are.” Ubuntu Theater Project believes in fostering lasting and powerful human connections to increase collective human experience and understanding of one another. Executive Director Michael Socrates Moran said, “We believe in creating a theatrical experience that invigorates and enlivens our interconnectedness that is too often neglected.”

PRESS CONTACTS
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