

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?

“Harlem”, Langston Hughes

MTV  
arts  
*Classics Series*

# A Raisin in the Sun

*by Lorraine Hansberry*



May 2-5, 2019  
Woodward Opera House

Funding made possible by





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Classics Series production of

# A Raisin in the Sun

Written by LORRAINE HANSBERRY

Directed by BRUCE JACKLIN and STEVE JEFFERSON

Presented by special arrangement with  
Samuel French, Inc.

Woodward Ad??

# Director's Notes



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# Setting

Chicago's Southside, sometime between World War II and the present.

## Act I

Scene One: Friday morning.

Scene Two: The following morning.

## Act II

Scene One: Later, the same day.

Scene Two: Friday night, a few weeks later.

Scene Three: Moving day, one week later.

## Act III

An hour later.

# Cast

Walter Lee Younger.....	Nigel Salvador
Lena Younger.....	Kathy Mendenhall
Beneatha Younger.....	Shauna Marie Davis
Ruth Younger.....	Shannon Simpson
Joseph Asagai.....	Jay Artist
George Murchison.....	Christopher Smith
Bobo.....	Steve Jefferson
Karl Lindner.....	Bruce Jacklin
Travis Younger.....	Collin McFarlane
Moving Man.....	James Derby

# Production crew

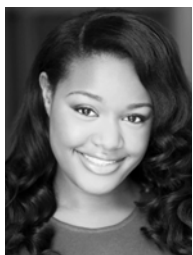
Director.....	Bruce Jacklin, Steve Jefferson	Hair and Wigs.....	Ruth Frady
Producer.....	Janis Stone	Make Up.....	Kerri Mahan
Production Manager.....	Eli Chung	Light Designer.....	Kurt Mueller
Run Crew.....	Kyle Boucher, James Frady	Sound Designer.....	Rodney Cheek
Set Designer.....	Bruce Jacklin	Sound/Mic Operator.....	Rodney Cheek
Set Construction.....	Joseph Bell	Ticketing.....	Scott Swingle
Costumer.....	Susan Brown	Dramaturg.....	Eli Chung

## cast Bios



**JAY ARTIST** (Joseph Asagi) is a Columbus, Ohio native singer-songwriter. This is Jay's first performance with MTVarts! Former roles have included 2nd Alt Mr. Gay Ohio and Talent winner (2019), CC White in DREAM GIRLS

(Imagine Theater Company,) Mr. Jefferson in RENT (Imagine Theater Company,) and company member in HAIRSPRAY (Ohio Dominican University.) As founder of #ProjectSafeSpace (a resource, lifeline and emergency fund for at risk LGBTQ individuals,) Jay is all about safe places to completely be yourself and wants to thank MTVarts for being a place like that for him! Looking forward to working more with the community soon. ENJOY THE SHOW!



**SHAUNA MARIE DAVIS** (Beneatha Younger) is extremely excited to make her debut with MTVarts! Beneatha is a role close to her heart and she is so grateful for the opportunity. She would like to thank her friends and

family for their support and the amazing production team for this opportunity. As always, a special shout out to her fiancé Alex for supporting her endlessly every day so she can follow her dreams and do what she loves. Shauna was most recently seen as Smitty in Imagine Productions' HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING. She is currently a touring artist with Columbus Children's Theatre and has been seen in Columbus at Short North Stage in HAIR (Abie/Tribe,) DREAMGIRLS (Joanne/ Ensemble), and PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT (Diva #1).

**JAMES DERBY** (Moving Man) is making his theatrical debut in MTVarts' A RAISIN IN THE SUN. James was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. His grandmother was a Cherokee



woman from Mississippi who migrated to Louisiana, and his uncle was a slave all his life. He came to Mansfield, Ohio in 1987, and recently moved to Mount Vernon. He now works at the Mancan Temp Agency. James loves music,

football, basketball, and being around people in his free time. He was approached by Bruce and his neighbor Eli to play the Moving Man in A RAISIN IN THE SUN. This will be his first time being in a play!



**BRUCE JACKLIN** (Karl Lindner) has directed and acted in more than 150 productions in the last 30 years, including professional, summer stock, collegian and community productions. Bruce is a certified adjudicator for

the Ohio Community Theater Association and American Association of Community Theater. He has received awards in acting and directing from OCTA, AACTfest, Columbus Theater Roundtable and OTA festivals for productions including DEATH OF A SALESMAN, OF MICE AND MEN, HIDDEN IN THIS PICTURE, DONKEY BASEBALL, NIETZSCHE' ATE HERE, and others. Bruce is a member of AFTRA/SAG and has appeared in numerous national and local television films and commercials. Bruce was also in the film treatment of Roy Berkowitz's NIETZSCHE' ATE HERE. He won Best Supporting Actor at the San Francisco Actor's Film Festival and in 2014 he received the Red Cross Education Hero Award. PBruce is the artistic director for both MTVarts and The Alcove Theater productions.

**STEVE JEFFERSON** (Bobo) was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. He is a graduate of John F. Kennedy High School and a Vietnam veteran of the U.S. Navy.

## Cast Bios



After 22 years as a professional in the engineering technology, he received his certification as a vocational instructor from the Ohio State University and taught drafting technology at the Knox County Career

Center for 14 years. After returning to Mount Vernon in 2012, he was introduced to the local theatre industry by Aaron Moreland. Mr. Moreland directed Mr. Jefferson in his first performance in the MTVarts production of *Of Mice and Men*. Other experience includes roles in *DRIVING MISS DAISY*, *DEATH OF A SALESMAN*, *12 ANGRY MEN*, *LILIES OF THE FIELD*, *THE BLACK CYCLONE*, and his most recent performance in *I'M NOT RAPPAPORT*.



### **COLLIN MCFARLANE**

(Travis Younger) is thrilled to be in his third production with MTVarts. He played Percy in *THE MIRACLE WORKER*, participated in *THE JUNGLE BOOK* and was the gingerbread man in the

*Wiggin Street* kindergarten play. He takes piano lessons with Mrs. Janet Thompson for six years. Collin is a fifth grader who swims competitively, plays soccer and baseball,

and likes to play with his friends and his little sister. Collin thanks his parents for introducing an early love of music in his life.

### **KATHY MENDENHALL** (Lena Younger) is



excited to be coming back to the stage as an actress after 36 years! She has always kept her finger on the pulse of her passions, Music, Theatre, and Dance. Kathy has stayed active in the arts during these last 36

years singing with a gospel recording choir, church choirs, and various groups. She also taught and directed a teen Liturgical Dance team for many years, and currently teaches Interpretive Dance in Columbus Academy's Summer Experience program a couple of weeks each summer. Kathy completed the requirements of the 2 year vocational program at the Fort Hayes Performing Arts Center where she majored in theater, 1981-83, under the Direction of Dr. Phillip S. Wilson, Director of Theatre Department. Kathy is grateful for the opportunity to grace the stage once again as a cast member in one of her favorite plays!

**NIGEL SALVADOR** (Walter Lee Younger) is currently employed in the IT industry but has aspirations to be a professional actor. So far he has been featured in two plays

MTV arts

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## Cast Bios



written and produced by local playwright Ariel Wiles, and has plans to study in New York at the Stella Adler Studio of acting in the coming year. His role as Walter Younger in *A RAISIN IN THE SUN* will be his debut in a MTVarts

production.



**SHANNON SIMPSON** (Ruth Younger) performed in numerous plays as a child and teenager. From a musical family, she was also a member of numerous orchestras, choruses, and ensembles in

the Cleveland area, performing cello, voice, and piano. As an English major in college, Shannon spent most of her time writing plays for others to perform in, while also taking improv classes at Second

City. She's had a couple pieces that she's written performed in Cleveland and in a New York City play festival. While working as an academic librarian for the last ten years, Shannon continues to write but is extremely excited to venture out from behind the page for the first time in many years for one of the most admired plays of the 20th century.



**CHRISTOPHER SMITH** (Geroge Murchison) is originally from Augusta, GA where he attended John S. Davidson Fine Arts magnet school. While Chris focused on music and dabbled in dance, he always enjoyed stage

productions from the orchestra pit. He is very excited to return to the stage as an actor after 20+ years when he played Travis Younger in a Paine College production of *A RAISIN IN THE SUN*. Chris is new(ish) to the Mt. Vernon/ Gambier community and this is his MTVarts debut.

**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?**



Langston Hughes, "Harlem"  
from *Collected Poems*.

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# Dramaturg Note

The enduring drama of *A RAISIN IN THE SUN* lies not merely in the depiction of family dynamics and financial struggles, but how race intersects and interacts with all aspects of the characters' lives. These aspects range from their family, socioeconomic class, romantic relationships, education, and faith, to—indeed—their dreams.

*A RAISIN IN THE SUN* is a timeless classic because it captures the everyday plight and joy of an American family in the details of historical realism, including the race relations between blacks and whites, the overcrowded living condition of many black families in Southside Chicago, the overpriced “houses for colored,” gender norms, and the prevailing frustration of a black working class male who subscribes to the American Dream but finds it unattainable for his race and class. What shines through the adversity and struggle, however, is the resilience of black American men and women and everyday heroism which, like Walter says toward the end of the show, is no abstract causes but inspired by the pursuit of dignity, shelter, and prosperity of the loved ones.

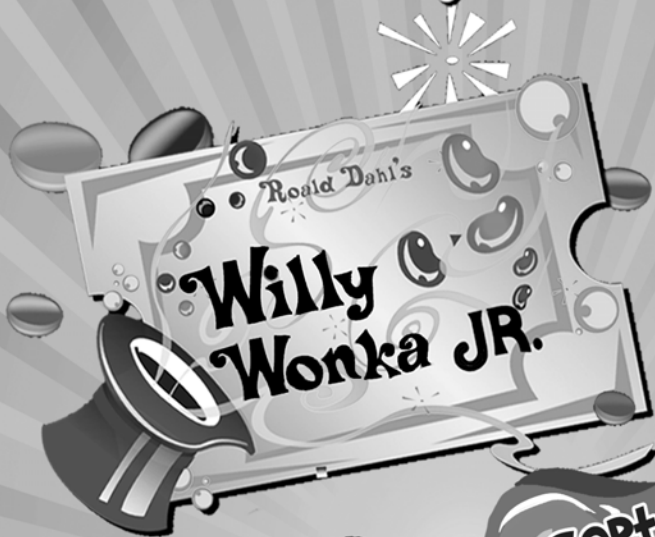
Racial segregation by housing discrimination is a major theme in *A RAISIN IN THE SUN*. A common misconception of segregation was that it was a body of laws which separated blacks from whites. The reality of the issue was, however, that there wasn't a law to prohibit people from denying others in more vulnerable positions (as renters, the poor, the minority, etc.) because of their race. This was especially the case in northern states where segregation and discrimination was more so a matter of fact rather than law. The permission of discrimination was a tangible manifestation of racism that Hansberry personally experienced as a black Chicago native in the 1930s. The Hansberry family's own experience of being racially profiled and consequently barred from housing in Chicago directly inspired *A RAISIN IN THE SUN* and grounded Hansberry's political and social insights.

No individual, no matter how kind or disciplined, is immune to our shared racial history. To challenge racism, we must commit to dismantle the economic, social, and political structures that perpetuate it. I hope that our production of this American classic illustrates some of the ways in which racism manifests, and inspires audience to that deeper commitment—to, on the parts of all races, confront racism as it manifests in personal relationships, on the ballots or on a report card, through housing investment or how workplaces are organized, and actively struggle with it.

*-Eli Chung, Dramaturg  
April, 2019*

YI-LIN ELI CHUNG (Stage Manager/Dramaturg) is a newcomer in Mount Vernon. Eli was born and raised in Taiwan, where he was first exposed to theatre and began stage managing in his high school productions. He came to the US in 2011 and received his Theatre M.A. from San Diego State University in 2018. Eli relocated to Mount Vernon, Ohio, shortly after graduation and was fortunate to be taken in by MTVarts. His recent stage management and dramaturgy credits include ANON(YMOUS) (2017, SDSU,) THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK (2017, MOXIE,) BINGO HALL (2018, Native Voices,) VOYEUR DE VENUS (2018, MOXIE,) and DIRT (2019, Red Herring.) Eli wants to thank his family and his partner, Christina, for supporting his dream of storytelling as a medium to foster understanding. His biggest dream is to one day tell Taiwanese stories to American audience, whose choices and attitudes influence the fate of his country.

MTV  
artsIQ



September  
20, 21, & 22



Sept 13 & 14

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The MTV arts logo features the letters "MTV" in a bold, sans-serif font above the word "arts" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic of concentric circles and lines, resembling a signal or a camera lens.A black and white photograph of a young child with their hands raised to their face. The hands are covered in white paint, and the child is looking directly at the camera with a curious expression.

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