

AMERICAN STAGE THEATRE COMPANY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 6, 2011

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American Stage Theatre Company's next production opening follows-up Oscar Wilde's classic comedy, AN IDEAL HUSBAND, with the fifth chapter in our August Wilson's Century Cycle, SEVEN GUITARS, directed by Bob Devin Jones.

Previews: Jan 18 & 19 Opens: Jan. 20 Closes: Feb. 26

ST. PETERSBURG, FL –American Stage Theatre Company follows-up Oscar Wilde's classic comedy, **AN IDEAL HUSBAND**, with the fifth chapter in our August Wilson's Century Cycle, **SEVEN GUITARS**, directed by **Bob Devin Jones**.

Written in 1995, **SEVEN GUITARS** tells the story of, Floyd Barton, a natural musician with a hit song and in the expansive atmosphere after World War II, he dreams of the big time. But as the play begins, his wife and friends mourn his death. The story is set in the Backyard of a house in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, summer 1948.

In Wilson's only play constructed in flashback, **SEVEN GUITARS** takes us back to explore what happened. Who killed Floyd Barton, but more importantly, why? The plot of **SEVEN GUITARS** involves Floyd's struggle to right the wrongs in his life and challenges the seven African American characters to face each other's humanity.

"I have tried to extract some measure of truth from the characters' lives as they struggle to remain whole in the face of so many things that threaten to pull them asunder." - **AUGUST WILSON, American playwright, SEVEN GUITARS.**

—MORE—

SEVEN GUITARS media release

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First Add

*“American Stage is the only theatre of its size embarking on producing all ten plays in Wilson’s Century Cycle over the next decade,” said **Todd Olson**, producing artistic director for American Stage Theatre Company.*

The cast includes **Joshua Elijah Reese** as Floyd; Josh is a native of Pittsburgh and a founding member of the August Wilson Theatre Ensemble. **Tia Jemison** plays the character of Louise. Tia’s most recent American Stage credits include ***August: Osage County***, and ***The Vagina Monologues***.

Alan Bomar Jones plays Red Carter, and is returning to American Stage for his fourth August Wilson role in ***Seven Guitars***. **Kim Sullivan** plays Canewell and his previous August Wilson credits include ***Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*** as Toledo, ***Fences*** as Bono, ***King Hedley the Second*** as Stoolpigeon and ***Gem of the Ocean*** as Solly Two Kings.

Ron Bobb-Semple plays Hedley and was last seen at the American Stage as Slow Drag in ***Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom***. Newcomers, in their first August Wilson plays are Brandy Grant as Ruby and Ambe Williams is performing as Vera.

SEVEN GUITARS originally opened on January 21, 1995 at The Goodman Theatre in Chicago, and has received the following awards and nominations: 1996 New York Drama Critics’ Circle Award for Best Play, 1995 Pulitzer Prize nomination for Drama, 1996 Drama Desk Award nomination for Best Play, 1996 Tony Award nomination for Best Play.

The New York Times says, “

AUGUST WILSON was born on April 27, 1945 and grew up in the Hill district of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His childhood experiences in this black slum community would later inform his dramatic writings. Then, in 1984, August Wilson was catapulted to the forefront of the American theatre scene with the success of ***Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom***, produced at Yale and later in New York in 1984. Wilson continued to work in close collaboration with Lloyd Richards of the Yale School of Drama, and by early 1990’s, had established himself as the best-known and most popular African-American playwright.

Wilson also set for himself a daunting task--to write a ten-play cycle that chronicles each decade of the black experience in the 20th century. Each of Wilson’s plays is a chapter in this remarkable cycle of plays and focuses on what Wilson perceives as the largest issue to confront African-Americans in that decade.

In April of 2005, ***Radio Golf*** premiered at the Yale Repertory Theatre. Two months later, August Wilson was diagnosed with liver cancer. On October 2, 2005, August Wilson passed away at the age of 60.

—MORE—

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Second Add

American Stage Theatre's Mainstage Lecture Series presented for SEVEN GUITARS, This Sunday, January 8, 2012, from 1:00 to 2:30 pm

American Stage Education Mainstage Lecture Series features Dedee Aleccia, a retired literature professor, who will speak on the history and background of **SEVEN GUITARS**. Following her presentation, a member of the artistic staff, Saidah Ben Judah, Costume designer, will talk about her approach to the production being discussed. The lectures are \$5 for subscribers and \$7 for the general public.

SEVEN GUITARS Performances and ticket prices are as follows:

Wednesday and Thursday evening curtain is at 7:30pm

Friday and Saturday evening curtain is at 8pm

Saturday and Sunday matinee curtain is at 3pm.

Tickets prices are \$29-\$47 depending on date and time of performance.

Active military tickets are FREE with valid military I.D. presented to our box office for serving our country.

Student Advance tickets are \$20 and Student Rush tickets are \$10, 30 minutes prior to curtain. Group Ticket Pricing Packages are also available. For tickets, please call the American Stage Box Office at (727) 823-PLAY (7529)

American Stage Theatre Company is located at the Raymond James Theatre, 163 3rd Street North in the heart of downtown St. Petersburg, Florida.

AMERICAN STAGE THEATRE COMPANY is a not-for-profit professional theatre founded in 1977. The company's mission is to create the most satisfying live theatre in the Tampa Bay area, accessible to all members of the community. Their vision is to preserve the greatest human stories from our past, while creating the most defining stories and storytelling of our time. American Stage presents its six-play Mainstage Series in its brand new, 182-seat Raymond James Theatre each year. The theatre's other programming includes: American Stage in the Park, "After Hours" Series, Cabaret Series, and Educational Programming including, School Tours, summer camps and acting classes for children and adults. The Hough Family Foundation is the Season Sponsor, Raymond James Financial is the Mainstage Sponsor, Bank of America is the Education Partner, WUSF 89.7 is the Radio Sponsor of American Stage. **SEVEN GUITARS** title sponsorship by Alfred T. May and is co-sponsored by the Law Offices of Diane Bailey Morton, david reynolds jewelry & coin, Bill & Sally Snyder, and Mary Lou & Burrage Warner. Opening night host is Lorraine & Neil Franckle.

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