

# Ripples

## from the Community Circle Players at Riverwalk Theatre

Season 30 • Number 4  
November, 2018

228 Museum Dr. • PO Box 12249 • Lansing, MI 48901 • 517-482-5700 • Office Hours: Tues.-Fri. 10 am to 5:30 pm • e-mail: RWT@riverwalktheatre.com • web site: RiverwalkTheatre.com

### August Wilson's **JITNEY** takes Riverwalk for a ride

One reviewer called it, "August Wilson's under-appreciated masterpiece."

A *New York Times* review of the 2017 Broadway production of *Jitney* said it is Wilson's declaration not only that black lives matter, but that black life matters.

*Jitney* takes the Riverwalk stage October 18-21 and 25-28, directed by Vanessa Cunningham Sanders.



Janell Hall and Lekeathon Wilson as Rena and Youngblood

PHOTO BY WWW.ARNIKO.COM

Set in 1977 in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, it focuses on the people who have set up an unlicensed taxi company.

There's a father-son generational clash, a Korean War veteran who is suffering from PTSD, although the world didn't really call it that then. There's a hotel doorman and an aging alcoholic with an occasional glimpse into a glittering past.

Wade as Becker, the man who runs the jitney station; Ken Nelson as his recently released-from-prison son; and Janell Hall as Rena, Youngblood's girlfriend, who refuses to forgive him for his past unfaithfulness despite his best efforts to show he has changed.

"*Jitney* is the first in Wilson's Pittsburgh cycle, which also includes *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *Fences*." Wilson won the 1985 Pulitzer prize for *Fences*.

Kathleen Lavey

### WHAT'S ON AT RIVERWALK

- 👤 October 18-21 & 25-28 - **JITNEY** - African American drama, Director: Vanessa Cunningham Sanders
- A** October 27, 28 & 29, Sat. 2-5 pm, Sun. & Mon., 7 pm, **AUDITIONS for Chitty Chitty Bang Bang**, musical comedy, Director: Brian Farnham
- 👤 Nov. 29-Dec. 2 & Dec. 6-9 - **NOISES OFF** - comedy farce Director: Michael Hays
- ★ Nov. 3 - 8 pm - **RIVERWALK SATURDAY NIGHT - MUSIC & FUN** with Tom Heideman, Mary Koenigsnecht, whimsical poet David James... and more!
- ★ Nov. 17 - 8 pm - **PARTY LINES** - FREE staged reading directed by Bob Robinson
- A** December 16 & 17 - Sun. & Mon., 7 pm, **AUDITIONS for The Elephant Man**, powerful drama - Director: Amy Rickett
- 🎵 January 24-27 & January 31-February 3, **CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG** - family musical comedy - Director: Brian Farnham
- February 14-17 & 21-24 - **THE A-TRAIN PLAYS** - exploring connection - Director: Doak Bloss

**Saturday, November 3, 8 pm**

**\$10 or more suggested donation: all proceeds go to Riverwalk Theatre. THANKS to these artists!**

### RWT Saturday Night!

Singer Songwriters Tom Heideman and Mary Koenigsnecht, Theatre veteran Colleen Bethea with pianist James Geer, R&B Artist Tim Carter, Classical Flute and Guitar with Bryan Guarnuccio and Chris Rollins — plus whimsical poetry with David James!

- 👤 **PLAYS:** 7 pm Thurs.; 8 pm Fri. & Sat.; 2 pm Sun. Fri./Sat./Sun. \$15 (\$12 sr/student/military) **Bargain Thursdays \$10/\$8**
- 🎵 **MUSICALS:** 7 pm Thursdays; 8 pm Fri./Sat.; 2 pm Sundays \$24 (\$20 sr/student/military) (\$12 age 12 & under)
- **BLACK BOX SHOWS:** 7 pm Thursdays; 8 pm Fridays & Saturdays; 2 pm Sundays \$12 (\$10 sr/student/military) **Bargain Thursdays \$10/\$8**
- A** **AUDITIONS** - More info at RiverwalkTheatre.com
- ★ **SPECIAL EVENT:** see website



by Cary  
Pepper,  
directed  
by Bob  
Robinson

### Staged Reading

**Saturday, November 17, at 7 pm**

Did you enjoy *Party Favors* at this year's Renegade Festival? Independent candidate Malcolm Wilkes is trailing the incumbent by only 80%. No one's ever done this well before. This fact brings a major party's representative to Malcolm's sparse headquarters with an offer of "help." But Malcolm has sworn never to take party support. What does he do now?

That was only a part of the story! If you're like us, you've been wondering how it ended and now you can find out!

For one night only and at no cost come see the full length play *Party Lines*, performed as a staged reading. Featuring Cassie Little, Chris Goeckel, Erin Barger, and Greg Pratt.

### Farewell, Joe Mull

The theatre community is heartbroken over the passing of Joseph Mull who was killed October 1 when a tree fell on his car in DeWitt township as storms moved through the area.

Go-fund-me accounts have been set up to support his fiancée and 1-year old daughter as well as his memorial.

<https://www.gofundme.com/support-baby-amelia>

<https://www.gofundme.com/joseph-mull-memorial-fund>

A great light has gone out in Lansing's theatre community; Joe's inspiring performances, as well as the sheer joy with which he approached life will be endlessly missed. We're all lucky to have known him, even if ever so briefly, his friendship to the entire community has assuredly left an indelible mark.



With Susan Carpenedo-Zupan  
in *Becky's New Car*



With Abby Murphy in *Beauty Queen of Leenane*

### REVIEW

## Shining Lives

The Riverwalk Black Box has been developing a habit of producing some pretty outstanding shows. *These Shining Lives* is no exception, and has certainly raised the bar for these performances. The story is relevant, and thought-provoking, and it was performed with excellence.

Taylor Rupp as Catherine Donohue made us excited to enter the workforce at

a time when women typically stayed at home. She was a pleasure to watch and her performance was captivating. The audience had the opportunity to ride up and down the emotional roller coaster Catherine Donohue experienced through Taylor's portrayal.

Erin Hoffman was impressive to watch. She played the brassy Charlotte, the strong co-worker that is difficult to get to know, but

who evolves into a solid and true friend to the others. Erin's performance was worthy of any professional stage, completely on point and refreshing to watch. Charlotte was fun. She was pushy and brash and completely fearless until fear was all she and her co-workers had left.

Erin Barger and Anasti Her added humor and depth to the ensemble, making this play a true team effort, and creating a believable scenario that was engaging to watch.

Heath and Charles Sartorius added balance to the ensemble, and it is always a pleasure to watch two generations on the same stage. Charles played multiple roles very well, moving through each of them seamlessly and with a precision that removed any ques-

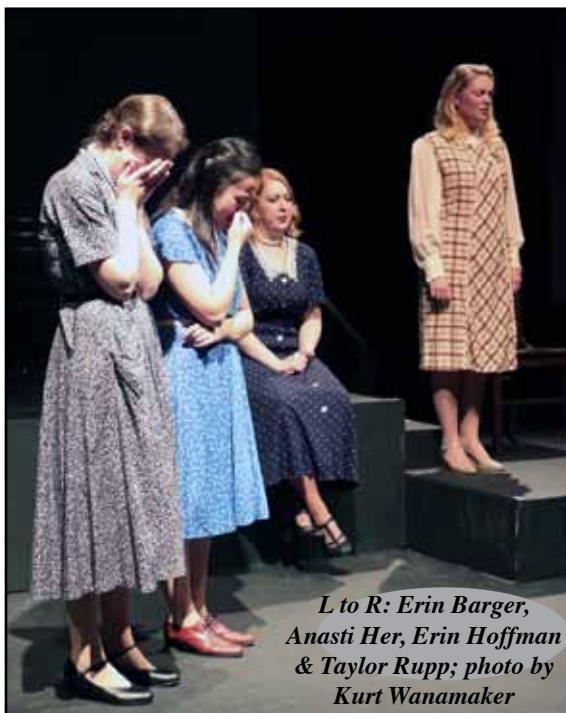
tioning from the audience. Heath also played multiple roles, but was most prominent in his portrayal of Catherine's husband, Tom, first encouraging her in her quest for work; later failing to hear her fear that something was wrong. His performance added to the portrait of this regular family, just trying to get ahead, and facing great loss as a result.

This level of performance is uncommon for most community theatres. The cast worked well together and Sue Chmurynsky's direction was present and not heavy handed. Her resolution to the costume changes and the refreshing of the set were choreographed as part of the scene and done in such a way that it was not intrusive and did not diminish the performance in any way. I enjoyed this performance. The cast was interwoven and worked well together. The story was an excellent selection and it was very well done.

Thanks to Assistant Director, Anna Maier; Producer, Diane Cooke; Costumer, Kris Maier with Theresa Dunn; Props Ladies, Sharon Straubel, Sandy Norton, and Jan Anderson; Lighting Designer, Ted Daniel with Technician, Cody Skalmowski; Sound Designer, Leon Green with Technician Kelly Jo Garland; Set Designer, Leroy Cupp with Leon Green, Bob Nees helping construct; Graphics by Matt Ottinger; and Running Crew, Caleb Liggett.

Excellent job everyone!

Oralya Garza



L to R: Erin Barger,  
Anasti Her, Erin Hoffman  
& Taylor Rupp; photo by  
Kurt Wanamaker



**Family Musical directed by Brian Farnham AUDITIONS: Sun. & Mon. Oct. 28 & 29, 7 pm**

**YOUTH role auditions: Sat., Oct. 27, 2-5 pm for youth roles (18 under).**

*We encourage youth to audition Saturday but they won't be turned away from Sunday/Monday auditions.*

**Show Dates: Jan. 24-27 & Jan. 31- Feb. 3, 2019**

Based on the beloved 1968 film version of Ian Fleming's children's book, this musical comedy follows the Potts family and their fantasmagorical flying car on a journey of self-discovery and intrigue.

**Caractacus Potts:** male, 30s to 40s. Brilliant but eccentric inventor, loving father, good-guy hero type. Strong acting, singing (baritone), and dancing.

**Truly Scrumptious:** female, 20s to 30s. Lovely, strong-willed heiress to the Scrumptious candy fortune. Ahead of her time – feisty, but loving. Strong acting/singing (soprano), some dancing.

**Grandpa Potts:** male, 50s to 60s. Caractacus' father – eccentric, not quite as brilliant - lovable Brit. Character acting, singing (baritone), some dancing.

**Jeremy Potts:** male, 8-15. Caractacus' son. Genuine and sincere, loves and believes in his father above all. Strong acting and singing (baritone or tenor).

**Jemima Potts:** female, 9-16. Caractacus' daughter. Cares deeply about looking after her brother and father. Strong acting/singing (alto/soprano).

**Baron Bomburst:** male, any age 18+. The nefarious ruler of Vulgaria. A truly petulant little man, he both hates and loves his domineering wife. Strong character acting, some singing (baritone) and dancing.

**Baroness Bomburst:** female, any age 18+. The power behind the throne of Vulgaria. Dotes on her childish husband, ironically, as she hates children above all. Strong character acting, singing (alto), and dancing.

**Boris and Goran:** male or female, any age 18+. Two bumbling Vulgarian spies tasked with obtaining Chitty Chitty Bang Bang for the Bomburst dynasty. The comic relief of the show. Strong character acting, some singing (baritone/alto), and some dancing.

**The Childcatcher:** male or female, any age 18+. The evil, creepy, and fiendish right hand of the Baroness Bomburst. Enforcer of Vulgaria's no-child policies. Strong character acting - likely double-cast in the ensemble.

**The Toymaker:** male or female, 18+. The put-upon royal toymaker helps foment the rebellion against the Bomburst regime. Acting, singing (alto/baritone), and some dancing – likely double-cast in the ensemble.

**Adult/Kids ensemble:** 8-10 adults and 5 kids (8-17 years) to play multiple characters - will be very active, and need strong skills in acting singing and dancing

*Be prepared to learn a dance combination and to perform a short reading from the script. Please bring a complete list of all conflicts from November 2018 through February 3, 2019 including weekends and holidays. Prepare an audition piece, 16-32 measures. Bring the sheet music. NO a capella singing allowed.*

**PERUSAL SCRIPTS** for all shows are available at the Riverwalk office, Tuesday - Friday, 10 am - 5:30 pm. Call 517-482-5700 to check availability: [rwt@RiverwalkTheatre.com](mailto:rwt@RiverwalkTheatre.com)  
audition forms are available at [www.riverwalktheatre.com/auditions.html](http://www.riverwalktheatre.com/auditions.html)

### Welcome, Adam Carlson, Riverwalk Custodian



Adam Carlson is our latest, greatest custodian of Riverwalk cleanliness and de-mess-ification. It's great to have a theatre person providing sincerely dramatic cleaning and maintenance results for our theatre. Years of Daddy duty (with actress wife Ann

Carlson and their two lovely offspring) have well prepared him for efficient mess-tackling.

Adam has been a notable actor at Riverwalk for many years with roles in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *The Full Monty*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Macbeth*, *Book of Days*, *Almost Maine*, and *Burn This*. He assistant directed *The Bremen Town Musicians* and, most recently, was the beloved, beleaguered husband in *Wonder*

*of the World*. Adam has also worked with *Over the Ledge*, where he directed *Norma and Wanda* as well as *Zombies from the Beyond*. Adam also did some shows with the now-defunct Lansing Civic Players and Holt Dimondale Community Players.

This curriculum vitae was compiled in a lucky final swipe at Matt Ottinger's wonderful theatre database (in the week before its web host killed it off; Matt is in the frustrating process of relocating the info to a different site) because Adam is also known for his delightful but uninformative program bios, which have included such comments as, "Next thing you know my verbs and nouns will get blurkled like a vrompf. The inevitable mushroom badger twangled leflong!"

Be good to Adam; don't trash your dressing room; follow the no-food-in-auditorium rule. Riverwalk hopes to enjoy a relatively spotless future with Adam at the vacuum cleaner.

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**Actor** — \$15-24, Ripples, voting on board members & Members Choice favorite show award.

**Technician** — \$25-49, Ripples, voting, program listing

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**Director** — \$100-249, Ripples, voting, program listing, two comp tickets

**Producer** — \$250-499, Ripples, voting, program listing, four comp tickets

**Star** — \$500-999, Ripples, voting, program listing, six comps, name on theatre seat

**Angel** — \$1000+, Ripples, voting, program listing, 12 comp tickets, name on a theatre seat and on the donor board in the lobby

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## Riverwalk Theatre

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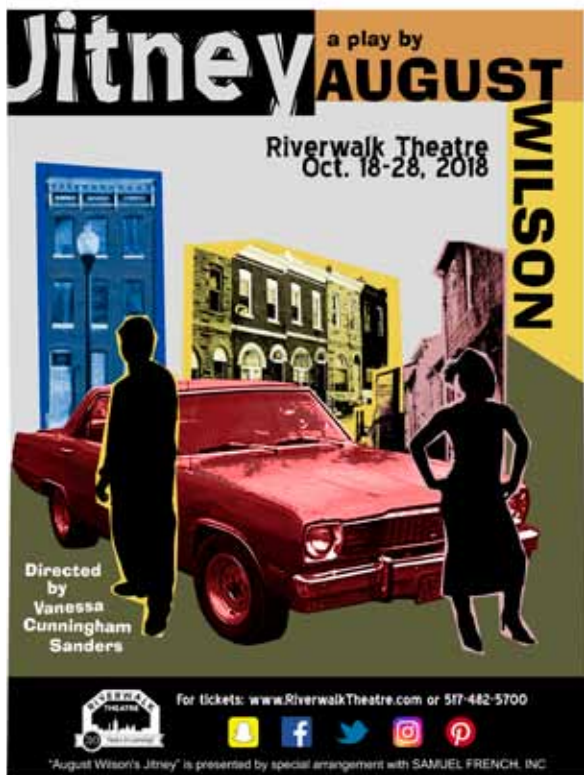


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## RWT Saturday Night!



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