

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Director Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Alexander
press@arenastage.org, 202-600-4055

February 21, 2018

For additional press materials, visit the online press room:
arenastage.org/about/press-room/press-kits-photos/productions/two-trains-running/
Username: arenapress / Password: arena1718

**ARENA STAGE ANNOUNCES FULL COMPANY FOR AUGUST WILSON'S
TWO TRAINS RUNNING, DIRECTED BY JULIETTE CARRILLO
MARCH 30-APRIL 29, 2018**

***** Wilsonian Warrior Eugene Lee leads cast in masterpiece drama on
the civil rights movement in a production deemed "simply top notch" (*Broadway World*) *****

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces the full company for **August Wilson's quintessential epic drama *Two Trains Running***. Confronted with a rapidly changing world in the wake of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the looming demolition of Memphis Lee's diner, Memphis and his regular customers struggle to maintain their solidarity and sense of pride. Hailed by the *New York Times* as "Mr. Wilson's most adventurous and honest attempt to reveal the intimate heart of history," ***Two Trains Running***, under the direction of **Juliette Carrillo**, is a co-production with Seattle Repertory Theatre and runs **March 30-April 29, 2018 on the Fichandler Stage**.

Reprising their roles from the celebrated Seattle Repertory production hailed by *The Seattle Times* as "powerful...deeply resonant" are **Eugene Lee** (Broadway's *Gem of the Ocean* and Arena Stage's *every tongue confess*) as Memphis Lee, **Carlton Byrd** (Woolly Mammoth's *Antebellum*) as Sterling, **William Hall Jr.** (Seattle Shakespeare Company's *Othello*) as West, **Reginald Andre Jackson** (Seattle Repertory's *Well*) as Wolf, **Nicole Lewis** (Broadway's *Hair*) as Risa, **Frank Riley III** (Arena Stage's *A Raisin in the Sun*) as Hambone and **David Emerson Toney** (Broadway's *Juan Darién* and Arena Stage's *The Piano Lesson*) as Holloway.

"The powerful work of August Wilson has a real home in the Fichandler. This is a co-production with our sister theater Seattle Rep, and the wonderful Juliette Carrillo will move the production from their proscenium space into our signature space in the round," says **Smith**. "Especially with August Wilson, having the community experience of seeing your fellow audience members increases the power of his words. Having Juliette return to Arena as she cuts her teeth, as an inaugural member of the Allen Lee Hughes Fellowship program, is truly exciting."

"As the Black Lives Matter movement has brought the concerns of the African American community into the center of public eye in recent times, this 1992 play (set in 1969) has become startlingly current," shares **Carrillo**. "Wilson's genius everyday poetry illuminates the emergence of personal dignity and self-worth during the one of the most turbulent eras in our country. As a Latinx female director, it has been a great honor and privilege to partner with this artistic team to bring these very human stories to light at a time when the struggles of the civil rights movement continue to resonate."

—continued—

Page 2— Full company announced for August Wilson’s *Two Trains Running*

Arena Stage has a celebrated history of prominently featuring August Wilson’s work. Most recently in 2015, Arena produced *King Hedley II*, and his other works including *Gem of the Ocean*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, *Fences* and *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* have been seen at Arena Stage.

August Wilson (*Playwright*)’s plays include *Gem of the Ocean*, *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, *The Piano Lesson* (Pulitzer Prize winner), *Seven Guitars*, *Fences* (Pulitzer Prize winner, Tony Award winner), *Two Trains Running*, *Jitney* (Olivier Award winner), *King Hedley II* and *Radio Golf*. In 2003, he made his stage debut in his one-man show, *How I Learned What I Learned*. He received an Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay for *The Piano Lesson*. Other works include *The Janitor*, *Recycle*, *The Coldest Day of the Year*, *Malcolm X*, *The Homecoming* and the musical satire *Black Bart and the Sacred Hills*. Other awards include eight New York Drama Critics Circle Awards, Rockefeller and Guggenheim Fellowships in Playwriting, a Whiting Writers Award, 2003 Heinz Award, 1999 National Humanities Medal and induction into the Theater Hall of Fame.

Juliette Carrillo (*Director*) is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and has directed critically-acclaimed premieres and revival productions in theaters across the country including Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, Yale Repertory, Denver Center and Seattle Repertory. As a member of the Cornerstone Theater ensemble, she has developed work for and with various communities such as the Los Angeles River community, the addiction and recovery community, the Hindu community and seniors and their caregivers. She was an artistic associate and Director of the Hispanic Playwright’s Project at South Coast Repertory for seven years, developing work with writers such as Nilo Cruz, Octavio Solis, José Rivera and Karen Zacarías. She is on faculty at University of California, Irvine. www.juliettecarrillo.com

Cast Biographies

Carlton Byrd (*Sterling*) is honored to be making his Arena Stage debut! Select theater credits include *Sunset Baby* (Theater Works), *Bad Apples* (ACT Theatre), *Antebellum* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company), *Romeo & Juliet* and *Ain’t Supposed to Die a Natural Death* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), and *The Bacchae*. TV credits include *Castle*, *Major Crimes*, *Blue Bloods* and *Law & Order: SVU*. Film credits include *Life of a King*, *Woodlawn* and *Holding Patterns*. Graduate of New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts and The Maggie Flannigan Studio. Ron Howard Foundation Scholarship recipient. Hebrews 12:1.

William Hall Jr. (*West*) make his Arena Stage debut. Seattle Repertory credits include *Another Part of the Forest*, *I’m Not Rappaport*, *Gem of the Ocean* and *Birdie Blue*. He is proud to have been a co-founding member of the nationally acclaimed Group Theatre where he appeared in many productions including *Sejwiz Banji is Dead* and *Buffalo Soldiers*. Recent productions include *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Intiman Theatre), *Othello* (Seattle Shakespeare Company), *Cry the Beloved Country* and *Bud, Not Buddy* (Book-It Repertory Theatre), *Wine in the Wilderness* (ACT Theatre) and *Death of a Salesman* (Langston Hughes).

Reginald Andre Jackson (*Wolf*) makes his Arena Stage debut. He has appeared at Seattle Repertory in *Well*, *The Great Society*, *Inspecting Carol*, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, *Romeo & Juliet* and *The Cider House Rules, Part Two*. He has also worked with The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Intiman, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, ACT Theatre, Artists Repertory Theatre, ArtsWest, and Seattle Shakespeare Company, among others. As a playwright, he is the recipient of the American Alliance of Theatre & Education’s Distinguished Play Award for his adaptation of Christopher Paul Curtis’ novel *Bud, Not Buddy*.

Page 3— Full company announced for August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*

Eugene Lee (*Memphis Lee*) returns to Arena Stage after appearing in *every tongue confess* and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. He appeared on Broadway in *Gem of the Ocean* and is a "Wilsonian Warrior," having performed in all but two of Mr. Wilson's plays. Off-Broadway credits include *A Soldier's Play*, *Home*, *Manhattan Made Me*, *Nightline*, *Eyes of the American* and *The Redeemer* (Negro Ensemble Company). Regional credits include *stop. reset* (Goodman); *How I Learned What I Learned* (True Colors, Round House, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Huntington); the Kennedy Center's *August Wilson's 20th Century*; and others. Film/TV credits include *Wolf*, *Coach Carter*, *The Lying Game*, *American Crime*, *The White Shadow*, *Good Times*, *NYPD Blue* and *The Guiding Light*. Eugene is an artist-in-residence at Texas State University and Artistic Director for the Texas State Black and Latino Playwrights Conference. eugeneleeonline.com

Nicole Lewis (*Risa*) makes her Arena Stage debut! Broadway credits include *Hair* (Tony Award Best Revival), *Rent* (Joanne) and *Lennon*. Off-Broadway credits include *Sense and Sensibility* (Bedlam), *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* (The Public); *Murder Ballad* and *Boy Gets Girl* (MTC). Regional credits include *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Two River Theater); *Disgraced* (Arizona Theatre Company); *Good People* (Geva Theater/Indiana Repertory); *Race* (Philadelphia Theatre Company); *All My Sons* (Intiman Theatre); *A Civil War Christmas* (Center Stage); *The Tempest* (Williamstown Theatre Festival). Film/TV credits include *The Blacklist*, *Mozart in the Jungle*, *Odd Mom Out*, *Law & Order: SVU Blue Bloods*, *London Betty*, *Across the Universe* and *The Comedian*. B.A. Yale University, M.F.A. American Conservatory Theater. Many thanks to Seattle Repertory, Arena Stage, Juliette, Constanza, Michelle Shay, Heather Simms, Julia Berman and the Leach/Lewis families. NicoleLewisNYC.com

Frank Riley III (*Hambone*) is a native of Richmond, VA and currently lives in the D.C. metropolitan area. He returns to Arena Stage after appearing in *A Raisin in the Sun*. Other area credits include *To Kill a Mockingbird* as Rev. Sykes in Alexandria, VA; *Cinderella The New Musical* in Alexandria, VA; *Dead Man Walking* at the Kennedy Center; and *Yet I Stank* in Alexandria, VA. He appeared in the Amazon TV series *DailyBread* and will be in an episode of *For My Man*, which airs on TV One. A former pro wrestler in the local circuit of VA and NC in the early 90s and a single father of two sons, Frank is several months retired from the Alexandria, VA Police Department.

David Emerson Toney (*Holloway*) returns to Arena Stage after appearing in four decades of stage productions, including such roles as Doaker in August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson*, Roy Wilkens in Robert Schenkkan's *All the Way* and Lonnie in Zora Neale Hurston's *Polk County*. Broadway credits include *A Free Man of Color* and Julie Taymor's Tony Award nominated musical *Juan Darién*. Regionally he was seen as Alonzo in *The Tempest* and Lucio in *Measure for Measure* (Folger Theatre); *Army in the Persians* and *Othello* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); Jacques in *As You Like It* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); *Splash Hatch on the "E" Going Down* (Yale Repertory); and The Fool in *King Lear*. David is an Assistant Professor of Acting at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The creative team for *Two Trains Running* includes Set Designer **Misha Kachman**; Costume Designer **Ivania Stack**; Lighting Designer **Sherrice Mojgani**; Composer and Sound Designer **David R. Molina**; Casting Directors **Kaytlin McIntyre** (Seattle Repertory), **Victor Vazquez** (Arena Stage), **Lauren Port**, CSA (New York, Caparelliottis Casting); Stage Manager **Cristine Anne Reynolds**; and Assistant Stage Manager **Marne Anderson**.

For full company bios please visit arenastage.org/about/press-room/press-kits-photos/productions/two-trains-running/.

Two Trains Running is generously sponsored by PNC Financial Services Group. Additional support is provided by JMA Solutions.

Page 4— Full company announced for August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*

Post-Show Conversations

Connect with our shows beyond the performance at a post-show conversation with artists and staff—April 11, April 18 and April 24 following the noon performance; April 17 following the 7:30 p.m. performance; and April 12 following the 8:00 p.m. performance.

Production Information

Two Trains Running

By August Wilson

Directed by Juliette Carrillo

In the Fichandler Stage | March 30-April 29, 2018

ABOUT: It's 1969 and the Civil Rights Movement is sending tremors through Pittsburgh's Hill District. At the center of the community is Memphis Lee's diner, slated to be demolished – a casualty of the city's renovation project. Confronted with a rapidly changing world, Memphis and his regular customers struggle to maintain their solidarity and sense of pride. From Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright August Wilson comes this masterpiece about everyday lives in the shadow of great events, and of unsung citizens who are anything but ordinary. "Mr. Wilson's most adventurous and honest attempt to reveal the intimate heart of history." (*New York Times*)

CAST:

Sterling: Carlton Byrd

West: William Hall Jr.

Wolf: Reginald Andre Jackson

Memphis Lee: Eugene Lee

Risa: Nicole Lewis

Hambone: Frank Riley III

Holloway: David Emerson Toney

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director: Juliette Carrillo

Set Designer: Misha Kachman

Costume Designer: Ivania Stack

Lighting Designer: Sherrice Mojgani

Composer and Sound Designer: David R. Molina

Casting Directors: Kaytlin McIntyre (Seattle Repertory), Victor Vazquez (Arena Stage), Lauren Port, CSA (New York, Caparelliottis Casting)

Stage Manager: Cristine Anne Reynolds

Assistant Stage Manager: Marne Anderson

Plan Your Visit

TICKETS: Tickets for *Two Trains Running* are \$50-99, subject to change and based on availability, plus applicable fees. For information on savings programs such as pay-your-age tickets, student discounts, Southwest Nights and hero's discounts, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/single-tickets/savings-programs.

Tickets may be purchased online at arenastage.org by phone at 202-488-3300 or at the Sales Office at 1101 Sixth St., SW, D.C.

Sales Office/Subscriptions: 202-488-3300

Group Sales Hotline for 10+ Tickets: 202-488-4380

TTY for deaf patrons: 202-484-0247

Info for patrons with disabilities: 202-488-3300

Page 5— Full company announced for August Wilson’s *Two Trains Running*

PERFORMANCE DATES:

Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday at 2 p.m.

Weekday matinees at noon on Wednesday, 4/11; Wednesday, 4/18; and Tuesday, 4/24

Full calendar: tickets.arenastage.org/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=24776&_ga=2.212017234.716752655.1517932711-217948701.1503946140

Audio-described performances: 4/21 at p.m.

Open-captioned performances: 4/19 at 8 p.m. and 4/25 at 7:30 p.m.

ARENA STAGE CAFÉ: Prix fixe meals are available at Richard’s Place, Arena Stage’s casual dining café, and include a choice of soup or salad, main entrée and dessert. Pre-ordered meals are only \$22 (\$25 if purchased that day). To pre-order and see the menu, call 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org/plan-your-visit/the-café/. The café opens two hours before the show, and reservations are recommended. To **pre-order drinks** for up to 50% savings (\$6 house wine and beer), visit tickets.arenastage.org/cart/precart.aspx?p=1007.

METRO: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is only one block from the Waterfront-SEU Metro station (Green Line). When exiting the station, walk west on M Street toward Sixth Street, and the main entrance to the Mead Center is on the right.

PARKING: Parking is available in Arena Stage’s on-site garage. Subscribers may purchase parking in advance for \$16. Single ticket buyers may purchase parking in advance for \$19 or on the day of the performance for \$22 on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited handicapped parking is available by reservation. Advanced parking must be reserved by calling 202-488-3300. The entrance to the Mead Center garage is on Maine Avenue between Sixth and Seventh streets, and the garage closes one hour after the day’s last performance ends. Patrons can also park at the Public Parking Garage at 1101 Fourth Street, one block from the Mead Center, for \$14.

VALET PARKING: Arena Stage offers valet service at no additional cost to patrons with accessibility needs who call 202-488-3300 in advance to request valet parking. On days when valet parking is being used for accessibility, it is also available to general patrons one hour prior to show time for \$25, based on availability. To use valet parking, pull up to the main entrance on Sixth Street.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Director Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays and impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org

###

