

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

Written by August Wilson

USC LIBRARIES RESOURCE GUIDE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2016, MARK TAPER FORUM, LOS ANGELES

Photo: Craig Schwartz Photography

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

An American masterpiece, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* is an incredibly powerful depiction of rage, racism, and exploitation set in 1927 Chicago during a recording session at a white-owned studio with a singer inspired by Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, widely considered the Mother of the Blues. Tony Award winner Phylicia Rashad directs this groundbreaking play from August Wilson's *American Century Cycle*, a series of ten plays chronicling the African American experience of the 20th century for which Wilson won two Pulitzer Prizes. The play will be presented by the Center Theatre Group, one of the nation's most influential nonprofit theatre companies.

ANTHONY ANDERSON of the USC Libraries has selected the following resources to help you learn more about the play and its author. View the online version of this guide at libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=571084 for more resources.

Recommended Books

August Wilson and Black Aesthetics (2004)

By Dana Williams

Doheny Memorial Library: P S 3 5 7 3 . I 4 5 6 7 7 Z 5 7 2 0 0 4

August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle: Critical Perspectives on the Plays (2016)

By Sandra Garrett Shannon

Doheny Memorial Library: P S 3 5 7 3 . I 4 5 6 7 7 Z 5 7 5 2 0 1 6

Conversations with August Wilson (2006)

By Jackson R. Bryer

Doheny Memorial Library: P S 3 5 7 3 . I 4 5 6 7 7 Z 6 3 2 0 0 6

Gem of the Ocean: Essays on August Wilson in the Black Diaspora (2015)

By Olasope Oyelaran

Doheny Memorial Library: P S 3 5 7 3 . I 4 5 6 7 7 Z 6 6 2 0 1 5

Ma Rainey and the Classic Blues Singers (1970)

By Derrick Stewart-Baxter

Music Library: M L 4 0 0 . S 8 4

Understanding August Wilson (2011)

By Mary L. Bogumil

Doheny Memorial Library: P S 3 5 7 3 . I 4 5 6 7 7 Z 5 8 2 0 1 1

Recommended DVDs

Films from Leavey Library's DVD collection may be checked out from the library's circulation desk.

August Wilson

"A conversation between television journalist, Bill Moyers, and playwright, August Wilson, in which they discuss Wilson's plays and the Black experience in America."

Leavey Library: LVYDVD 1991

August Wilson: The Ground on Which I Stand

"Explore the life and legacy of August Wilson, the playwright some call America's Shakespeare, who chronicled the twentieth-century black experience. Features James Earl Jones, Phylicia Rashad, Laurence Fishburne, Viola Davis, new dramatic readings, and rare footage."

Leavey Library: LVYDVD 9659

The Piano Lesson

"August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning tale of a family caught between their heritage and a dream for the future. The Charles family clashes over the fate of a magnificent, carved piano that carries their family's story from their days as slaves. Boy Willie wants to sell the piano to buy a farm—the same fields their family worked as slaves. But his sister, Berniece, refuses to part with it. For her, the piano is their very soul, a legacy of pride and struggle that symbolizes their survival as a family. To resolve the conflict they must first deal with the past."

Leavey Library: LVYDVD 3766

Selected Electronic Resources

Find scholarly sources about *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and playwright August Wilson through these electronic resources, accessible through the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

Arts and Humanities Full Text

International Index to the Performing Arts

Literature Criticism Online

Literature Resource Center

LitFinder

MLA Bibliography

WorldCat