



AUGUST 8-10, 14-18, 21-24

#### GENERAL **INFORMATION**

#### **BOX OFFICE HOURS**

MONDAY - FRIDAY | 12PM - 5PM MONDAY - FRIDAY PERFORMANCE DAYS | 12PM - CURTAIN SATURDAY | 5PM - CURTAIN SUNDAY | 1PM - CURTAIN

#### LATE ARRIVALS

Patrons arriving late will be seated at the House Manager's discretion.

#### NO STANDING

No standing is permitted in the back of the theatre. If you become uncomfortable and/or have to move out of your seat for any reason, you may stretch your legs in the upper or lower lobby.

#### ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Please turn off all electronic devices that light up or make noise. Please, no texting. The taking of pictures and/or recordings (audio or video) is prohibited; the device may be taken from you and held until after the show.

#### EMERGENCY CALLS

If you anticipate the need to be reached in the event of an emergency, you may leave your name and seat number with the House Manager. A House Manager will also be available in the House during the run of the show. Our emergency contact number is **616 632 2996.** In the event that someone is not available at this number, Aquinas College Campus Safety's number is 616 632 2462; a dispatcher is available 24/7.

#### YOUNG AUDIENCE

Most Main Stage productions are geared toward mature audiences and may not be appropriate for younger audiences. Our Magic Circle productions provide wonderful family entertainment and an introduction to the live theatre experience. Please call the box office at 616 456 6656 for information on age appropriateness of any of our shows. Children below school age may not attend our Main Stage productions. Please, no babes in arms or toddlers. At no time can a child enter the auditorium without a ticket.

#### SPECIAL PATRON SERVICES

An induction loop is provided for the benefit of hearing aid users. To use, please switch your hearing aid to "T." Handicapped and wheelchair seating is available and easily accessible. When reserving tickets, please notify the box office personnel of any special needs or seating reauirements.

#### **SMOKING**

Aguinas College is a smoke-free campus.





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#### Greetings!

Welcome to our August play of *A Raisin in the Sun*! We are thrilled to produce this production as it still is a timeless and groundbreaking story. Meet the Younger family, with all their flaws, and how they grow with one another and learn to accept each other as they are. This story of family, love, hope, and acceptance is as important today as ever. We hope you enjoy the show!

Lynn Atkins-Rykert

President of the Board of Directors

Jun atkins Fylest

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Official Photographer

Official Headshot Photographer

SJK Video Productions

Production & Archival Videographer

Caroline Cahoon

**Production Graphics** 

#### **LAND** ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We collectively acknowledge that Grand Rapids Circle Theatre occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg - Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. The Grand Rapids Circle Theatre is built on native land of The Three Fires People, as they are indigenous to this land. We understand that we are guests on this native land, and in doing so we would like to acknowledge the histories and traditions of the The Three Fires People. It is important to us that we are continuously advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in our community.

#### FINALE **PARTNER LEVEL**

#### **CIRCLE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES**

Warner Norcross + Judd

#### **OFFICIAL HEADSHOTS**

Everything Under the Sun | Artwork & Photography

#### ACT 2 **PARTNER LEVEL**

**SEASON PRINTED MATERIALS** 

**AllQuest** 

#### **WEBSITE PROVIDER**

Intellectual Ninjas

#### **OFFICIAL VIDEOGRAPHER**

SJK Productions

#### **OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER**

Ashlee Lambart Photography

#### COMMUNITY EQUITABLE ACCESS PROGRAM PARTNER

Steelcase

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#### SPECIAL THANKS

Mr. Torrey from Torreyography - 'Old Fashioned' Choreography
Amy McFadden - Dialect Coach

This season is made possible with the support from the Wege Foundation, as well as the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner Agency of The National Endowment for the Arts.









A force for impact, for equity, for good, for all.



Steelcase Social Innovation



## ASH LEE PHOTO

ASHLEELAMBARTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM



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# ARASININI SININI SININI

BY LORRAINE HANSBERRY

#### **DIRECTOR**

Amisha Groce

#### **STAGE MANAGERS**

Shanell Haigh, Ruth Ann Molenaar

A RAISIN IN THE SUN is presented through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

THE VIDEOTAPING OR OTHER VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED

**RATING: PG13** 

Adult content, mild language, racist/homophobic slurs and stage violence

WHERE SOUTHSIDE CHICAGO

WHEN LATE 1950's

#### Act I

SCENE I FRIDAY MORNING.
SCENE II THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

#### ACT II

SCENE I LATER, THE SAME DAY.
SCENE II FRIDAY NIGHT, A FEW WEEKS LATER.
SCENE III MOVING DAY, ONE WEEK LATER.

Act III
AN HOUR LATER.

#### CAST



JORDAN ALLEN



**ALISHA BROWN** 



ALFRED CAZEAU II



**CHLOE CHAVERS** 



MIKE COON



JUDAH DORBAND



**KEO FOSTER** 



JHAIELL KILGORE



RUTH ANN MOLENAAR



JULIAN NEWMAN



JULIAN NEWMAN (CAST 1)



LEWIS RICHARDS



LORETTA ROBINSON



LENA (MAMA) YOUNGER RUTH ANN MOLENAAR (CAST 1)



WALTER LEE YOUNGER

	KEO FOSTER (CAST 2)
RUTH YOUNGER	MAJESTY WHITE (CAST 1)

BENEATHA YOUNGER BIOLA ZUNIGA (CAST 1)

#### TRAVIS YOUNGER

#### JOSEPH ASAGAI

#### GEORGE MURCHISON/BOBO

#### KARL LINDER...

CHLOE CHAVERS (CA	4512
JORDAN ALLEN (C	AST 1
JUDAH DORBAND (CA	AST 2
ALFRED CAZEAU II (C	AST 1
LEWIS RICHARDS (CA	AST 2
JHAIELL KILGORE (CAST	1 & 2

.....ALFRED CAZEAU II (CAST 1) LEWIS RICHARDS (CAST 2) JHAIELL KILGORE (CAST 1 & 2)

LORETTA ROBINSON (CAST 2)

**KEO FOSTER (CAST 2)** 

ALISHA BROWN (CAST 2)

CHLOE CHAVERS (CAST 2)

.MIKE COON (CAST 1 & 2) MRS. JOHNSON LISA RENE' NORRIS (CAST 1 & 2)

#### PRODUCTION **STAFF**



Amisha Groce



CaSaundra Ce'Moune



Shanell Haigh



Ruth Ann Molenaar



Rosanne Steffens



Catie Marlett-Dreher



Jess Luiz



Camille Ernst



Sam Johnson-Begay



Noah King-Bates



Meaghan Gietzen



Christina Barrera



Sarah Denick



Kelsey Edwards



Sam Verburg

#### PRODUCTION STAFF

DIRECTOR	AMISHA GROCE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	CASAUNDRA CE'MOUNE
CO-STAGE MANAGER	SHANELL HAIGH
CO-STAGE MANAGER	RUTH ANN MOLENAAR
SCENIC DESIGNER	ROSANNE STEFFENS
LIGHTING DESIGNER	CATHERINE MARLETT-DREHER
COSTUME DESIGNER	JESS LUIZ
ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER	CAMILLE ERNST
SOUND DESIGNER	SAM JOHNSON-BEGAY
SOUND TECHNICIAN	NOAH KING-BATES
PROPERTIES DESIGNER	MEAGHAN GIETZEN
WIG & MAKEUP DESIGNER	CHRISTINA BARRERA
INTIMACY COORDINATOR	SARAH DENICK
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	KELSEY EDWARDS
ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	SAM VERBURG
LIGHTBOARD OPERATOR	DIRK GRASMAN
WARDROBE SUPERVISOR	CAMILLE ERNST
DRESSER	KAYLA FELTY

#### WHO'S WHO | CAST

Jordan Allen He/Him (Travis Younger/Cast 1) is no stranger to the Circle Theatre stage! Jordan was last seen on stage during our 2019 production of Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat as a part of the children's chorus! He is entering 9th grade at The Potter's House High School and want to study the Fine Arts. In his free time, he enjoys playing piano, playing basketball, and dancing!

Alisha Brown She/Her (Ruth Younger/Cast 2) is making her Circle Theatre debut and we're so happy to have her! Previous credits include Spongebob the Musical (Mayor), Clyde's (Letitia), and Beautiful (Little Eva) at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. Alisha is a radio personality on Magic 104.9 weekdays from 3-7pm! She is excited to work with some familiar faces and experience something new at Circle.

Alfred Cazeau II He/Him (Joseph Asagai/ Cast 1) is a brand new face to the Circle community! Alfred is a graduate of Jackson State University in Spring of 2023 in Theatre. When he's not on stage, he enjoys working out, reading, and sewing clothes.

Chloe Chavers She/Her (Beneatha Younger/Cast 2) is making her Circle Theatre debut! Other stage credits include productions at GVSU, Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. Southwestern Michigan College. and Ebony Road Players. Chloe received her Bachelor's degree in Theatre from Grand Valley State University in 2018 and is continuing her acting journey by exploring more creative ways to tell stories through film. Her interests include singing, dancing, and writing. "I want to thank my family and friends that have continued to support me throughout this journey. I would also like to thank the cast and crew for being such a joy to work with and most importantly, my director Amisha Groce for believing in me and being so passionate about what she does."

#### WHO'S WHO | CAST

Mike Coon He/Him (Karl Linder/Cast 1 & 2) was last on the Circle stage for our 2023 season as Charles Condomine in Blithe Spirit. Mike received his Master's Degree in Education from Grand Valley State University in 2018 and is currently serving as a Senior Director of State Partnerships for Instruction Partners, a not-for-profit organization. When not on stage, he is regularly found lurking about local game stores playing Magic: the Gathering.

Judah Dorband He/Him (Travis Younger/Cast 2) is no stanger to the stage, but a brand new face to Circle! Past credits include School of Rock (Tomiko), Kinky Boots (Young Lola), and Beauty and the Beast (Ensemble) at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. Judah is going to be a sophomore at Caledonia High School! In his free time, he likes to bake, sing, and dance. "Special thank you to my friends who always keep me smiling."

Keo Foster He/Him (Walter Lee Younger/Cast 2) is making his Circle Theatre debut! Other credits include Paradise Lost (God the Sun) at Actors' Theatre. Keo is a creative entrepreneur who currently designs and sews custom plushies/dolls. When not on stage, he enjoys writing, singing, sewing, playing guitar, and drawing - he just likes to make things! "I'd like to thank my family and friends for always fostering beautiful, honest, love-filled environments where I felt free to explore and discover my own voice."

Jhaiell Kilgore He/Him (Donald) was last seen on the Circle Theatre stage earlier this season as Donald in You Can't Take it With You! He has also been in an umber of shows with GRCC Players and Aquinas College. Jhaiell is a 2022 graduate of Public Museum High and is currently studying theater at Grand Rapids Community College. He works at a retirement home called Cook Valley Estates and is a server in their dining hall. This is his second year acting.

Ruth Ann Molenaar She/Her (Lena Younger/Cast 1) is no stranger to the Circle Theatre stage. Ruth Ann has a variety of stage credits from community theatres all over West MI including, Circle Theatre, Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, Actors' Theatre, Ebony Road Players, and more. While also being on stage in this production, this is her first time being a stage manager! She wanted to learn what it would be like on the other side of the production table. "Shout out to my son Leandro Lara. Even though he's living California he's still got my back. I love you my Offspring!"

Julian Newman He/Him (Walter Lee Younger/Cast 1) is making his Circle Theatre debut! He has previously been involved with productions at Ebony Road Players in Grand Rapids, MI. Julian S. Newman is an altMBA and film school graduate with various creative credits as an actor, writer, and director. He is also the founder and CEO of Culture Creative and The FutureCast Foundation. Julian is a proud #GirlDad of four lovely daughters and advocate for women's empowerment. In his free time, he enjoys reading, writing, working out, watching movies, and hanging out with his family.

Lisa Rene' Norris She/Her (Mrs. Johnson/ Cast 1 & 2) was last on stage in For Colored Girls Who Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf (Lady in Brown) with Ebony Road Players in 2018. Lisa is making her Circle Theatre debut! She is a 38+ career educator and currently works

#### WHO'S WHO | CAST

at Grand Valley State University. Lisa is on the board with Ebony Road Players and enjoys traveling with her husband of 33 years, Isaac. They are excited to have our children, Ivria, Lianna, and Van celebrate this debut with Circle.

Lewis Richards He/Him (Joseph Asagai/ Cast 2) After a 15 year hiatus of being on off stage as a theatrical performer, Lewis is excited to finally be back on stage and has gone full circle. Working with all 5 of the major community theaters in Grand Rapids: GRCT, Circle, Heritage Theater, Jewish Theatre, and Actors' Theatre. He is grateful to own his own personal training studio and ballroom dance company, Strong Dance LLC, giving him the opportunities to dance and travel the world with roughly 19 countries represented on this resume.

Loretta Robinson (Lena Younger/Cast 2) is making her Circle Theatre debut and we are elated to have her for this production! "To GOD be the glory!"

Majesty White She/Her (Ruth Younger/Cast 1) is so excited to perform in the classic that is A Raisin in the Sun. She is currently a graduate student in the MBA program at Davenport Unviersity. She also serves as one of the bilingual admissions representatives for the institution! In her free time, she likes to fish, adventure outdoors, and play card games! "Special thanks to my family for always supporting throughout my acting career."

**Biola Zuniga** She/Her (Beneatha Younger/Cast 1) is a brand new face to Circle and we're so happy to have her! Biola graduated for Godwin Heights in 2018, where she did theatre and choir throughout her high school career. After

graduating from high school, she went to study music performance at GRCC and is currently in the works of getting her Associate's. When not on stage, Biola loves to read, watch movies, and enjoying nature. "A special thanks to my mom for nurturing my love for performance and theatre from a younge age, to my directors Amisha and Cece for being encouraging and creating a safe place where i can be vulnerable myself. to my stage Managers Ruth and Shanell for creating a fun environment and being supportive, and a special thanks to my cast members and to the community that we've built."

#### WHO'S WHO | PRODUCTION STAFF

Amisha T. Groce She/Her (Director) is making her debut at Circle Theatre as a director this season and we are thrilled to welcome her to our community. Amisha is a director/educator impassioned by the power of storytelling. Amisha's directing credits include Detroit 67, For Colored Girls, Anne of Green Gables Murders Everyone with Ebony Road Players, and a prized co-playwriting credit, Don't Mind Me. Her assistant directing credits include Miz Martha Washington with Ebony Road Players, Kinky Boots, and Once On This Island with Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. Amisha is excited to continue her directing journey this season with Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in The Sun. A complex contemplation of life's trials and triumphs is what happens to a dream differed.

CaSaundra Ce'Moune She/Her (Assistant Director) was last seen on the Circle stage in our 2023 Season as Ma Rainey in Ma Rainey's Black Bottom. Other credits include The Piano Lesson (Berniece) and Colored Girls (Lady in Red) with Kalamazoo Epic Theatre, Flyin' West (Minnie Dove Charles), Zooman & the Sign (Ash), A Raisin in the Sun (AD), and Tambourines to Glory (AD) at Western Michigan University. CaSaundra is a 1999 & 2002 graduate of WMU where she received her Liberal Arts/Performance Theatre degree & an MFA in Playwriting with a Specialty in 19th Century African American Literature. She is currently an Multi-Lingual Intervention Specialist at Challenger Elementary School.

Shanell Haigh She/Her (Co-Stage Manager) is a new face to Circle, but not to the West MI theatre community! Her previous stage managing credits include Clyde's, Once on this Island, The

Revolutionists, Black-Bold-and Beautiful at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. Shanell graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelors in Special Education, and has just completed her Masters from Grand Valley State University in Educational Leadership. She is currently the Dean of Students. Shanell loves football - Go Lions!!

Ruth Ann Molenaar She/Her (Lena Younger/Cast 1) is no stranger to the Circle Theatre stage. Ruth Ann has a variety of stage credits from community theatres all over West MI including, Circle Theatre, Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, Actors' Theatre, Ebony Road Players, and more. While also being on stage in this production, this is her first time being a stage manager! She wanted to learn what it would be like on the other side of the production table. "Shout out to my son Leandro Lara. Even though he's living California he's still got my back. I love you my Offspring!"

**Steffens** She/Her Rosanne (Scenic Designer) has designed for dozens of productions for local arts organizations and community theatres all over West MI. Her last show scenic designing for Circle was Treasure Island in 2012 and we're so happy to have her back! Rosanne has designed for Opera Grand Rapids, Actors' Theatre, Circle Theatre, Heritage Theatre Group and Civic's Summer program. She has taught Art for Godfrey-Lee Public Schools since 2009. "Thank you to Michael Pergiel for his love and support."

Catie Marlett-Dreher She/Her (Lighting Designer) has designed lights for over 300 productions in the West Michigan area, including shows for Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, Circle Theatre, Actors' Theatre,

#### WHO'S WHO | PRODUCTION STAFF

Jewish Theatre Grand Rapids, Opera Grand Rapids, Aquinas College, GVSU, Grand Rapids Community College, and Cornerstone University. She also design lights for corporate events and teach Theatrical Design at Aquinas College. Catie worksas the Production Manager and Resident Lighting Designer at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre.

Jess Luiz She/Her (Costume Designer) is familiar to the Circle Theatre community for her roles in Hands on a Hard Body (Norma), Evita (Ensemble), and Jesus Christ Superstar (Ensemble). She has been the costume designer for multiple productions at Circle Theatre, Actors' Theatre, and Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. In addition, this is her first season at Circle Theatre as the Costume Shop Manager! When not designing or performing, Jess can be found teaching theatre arts to kids and adults of all of abilities throughout West Michigan. "Special Thanks to my husband Jason for being 'Super Dad' and 'Super Partner'-and to my kiddos who provide the best hugs and playtime!"

Camille Ernst She/Her (Assistant Costume Designer) is a new face to the Circle community this season! Camille recently graduated from MSU with a BFA in Fashion Design and is excited to work hand in hand in the costume shop amongst our many other talented designers.

Sam Johnson-Begay He/Him (Sound Designer) has designed 250+ productions all over West MI and has been Civic Theatre's resident sound designer since 2016. Select favorites include Ragtime at Grand Valley Opera, Carrie, and Freaky Friday at Circle Theatre, Sister Act, Shrek, The Little Mermaid, Newsies, and Matilda

at Grand Rapids Civic Theatre, and If/ Then at Actors' Theatre. Sam is a freelance audio technician for multiple companies, manages a production company, Epik Productions, offering sound design, sound rentals, recordings, DJ and facepainting. "For Dez and Ean, all my love, always."

Noah King-Bates He/Him (Sound Technician) is no stranger to Circle Theatre! He was last working with Circle for our 2023 Season production of Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (Levee). We are thrilled to have him back as the sound technician for A Raisin in the Sun. As a Chicago native himself, this show is near to his heart.

Meaghan Gietzen She/Her (Properties Designer) past credits include Into The Woods (Little Red), The Wolves (#13), and Xanadu (Sonny Malone). Meaghan graduated from Kendall College of Art & Design in 2019 with a BFA in Medical Illustration, she is currently working as a freelance artist and illustrator working on all different kinds of projects from teaching backstage classes to working in the anatomy lab at MSU's College of Human Medicine. "I would like to thank my amazing moms, my sister, and my Aunt Debbi for always supporting my theatrical journey whether it be onstage, backstage, or anywhere in between."

Christina Barrera She/Her (Hair & Makeup Designer) is back for another Circle Theatre season and we're so happy to have her! Christina has previously been the Makeup & Hair designer at Circle for Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (2023) and Cabaret (2021). She will be back again this season in the same role for our August play, A Raisin in the Sun. Christina is the Co-Founder of B. Styled Hair Studio, 16 year

#### WHO'S WHO | PRODUCTION STAFF

veteran in hair and beauty, teacher, wife & mother of four. Currently, Christina's entrepreneurship has extended into her full service salon where she offers services from weaves to braiding as well natural to bridal makeup. Christina has worked as a makeup artist for the Van Andel Institute as well as Couture for a Cure.

Rainey's Black Bottom (Circle Theatre). "I would like to sincerely thank Catie Marlett-Dreher for teaching me everything I know about lighting, having the trust in my abilities, and supporting me throughout my journey in theater and in life. Thank you for everything!"

**Denick** She/Her Sarah (Intimacy Coordinator) has practiced in West Michigan within the social work field since 2015. Sarah is passionate about working with those who have experienced trauma. Sarah is trained in several therapeutic approaches, including Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, EMDR Therapy, expressive arts therapy, and play therapy. When she isn't spending time with her cat, Pooka, you may find Sarah playing the piano, or reading a mystery novel.

Kelsey Edwards She/Her (Technical Director) is Circle Theatre's and Aquinas College's resident Technical Director that makes all of the shows come to life on stage! She graduated from Adrian College in 2021 and is excited for this upcoming season! In her free time, she enjoys reading, knitting, crocheting, and spending time with her dog, Maggie. "I would like to thank all my loved ones for all 10 their love and support!"

Sam Verburg They/He (Assistant Technical Director) is our newest addition to the Circle Theatre team as our Assistant Technical Director! Sam has numerous credits as a lighting designer for many theatrical productions in the West MI area as well. Some of his lighting design credits include Kill Move Paradise and MacBitches (GRCC Players), Ada and the Engine (Aquinas College), and Ma



Mis

September 13 through
October 6, 2024
MUSICAL



October 15 through
October 19, 2024

MUSICAL





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January 17 through February 2, 2025 **PLAY** 



February 28 through March 16, 2025 **MUSICAL** 



April 18 through May 4, 2025 **MUSICAL** 













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Joan Wilson
Stacy Holtsclaw
Lou VanderHave
In Memory of Sharyl Brown
Susan Marschall
Rita Citron
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#### THANK YOU

Your generous donations have enabled Circle Theatre to continue to bring high quality plays, musicals, and children's theatre to West Michigan. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your continued support of local performing arts.

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SEPTEMBER 16

TICK, TICK...BOOM!
YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU
MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT
DYNAMIC DUOS CONCERT
DANCE SENSATIONS CONCERT
A RAISIN IN THE SUN
PURPLE REIGN CONCERT
JAZZ NOW & THEN CONCERT
URINETOWN
DYNAMIC DUOS CONCERT
DANCE SENSATIONS CONCERT