

by Romare Bearden's painting illustrated family conflict over an heirloom built by a slave ancestor. This 1986 play earned the New York Drama Critics Award, the Tony for Best Play, the Drama Desk Award, the American Theatre Critics Outstanding Play Award, and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Wilson's subsequent plays continued to receive accolades and awards, solidifying his position in American Theatrical history.

August Wilson was not only a champion of Black America by representing and dignifying African American culture during a time when it wasn't otherwise appreciated; he was a pioneer in the world of literature and theatre. Although his body is no longer with us, his work and his impact on American History will continue on for posterity. On October 17, Broadway's Virginia Theatre will be renamed the August Wilson Theatre in Mr. Wilson's honor. His final play, "Radio Golf" is scheduled to be produced on Broadway during the 2006-2007 season. Mr. Wilson is survived by his wife, Constanza Romero; their daughter, Azula, 8, and an adult daughter from a previous marriage, Sakina Ansari.

I submit to you an article from the October 4, 2005 edition of the Washington Post, illustrating the type of man and impact August Wilson had on this country.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 4, 2005]

#### THE CYCLE OF AUGUST WILSON'S LIFE

(By Peter Marks)

The death of August Wilson does not simply leave a hole in the American theater, but a huge, yawning wound, one that will have to wait to be stitched closed by some expansive, poetic dramatist yet to emerge.

To say that Wilson was the greatest African American playwright the nation has produced—as some inevitably do—is to limit the scope of his significance as a contributor to the country's dramatic heritage. Wilson wrote scathingly about racism, yes, in "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," and the indelible scars of slavery, in "The Piano Lesson" and "Gem of the Ocean." He also wrote about the Oedipal conflict of fathers and sons ("Fences") and the universal quest for the easy score ("Two Trains Running"). His concerns were as multifaceted as the hard-pressed people he wrote about.

Over the past 20 years, Wilson had staked a legitimate claim to the title of nation's most important dramatist. During that time he won two Pulitzers and a Tony, and among his plays he polished off at least three that will rank among the classics: "Ma Rainey," "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" and "The Piano Lesson," along with what will perhaps endure as his favorite with audiences: "Fences," the story of an embittered former baseball prospect, played on Broadway by James Earl Jones.

All this may not have meant as much as it did in the days when playwriting giants roamed the countryside, when a new play by Tennessee Williams or Arthur Miller or Eugene O'Neill had the power to galvanize public discourse, and even land an actor on the cover of a national magazine. We've moved away, sad to say, from the era of the stage as a truly vital pulpit. In the commercial realm, Wilson's plays were usually not moneymakers. But the fact that he could consistently count on clicking the "send" button and having a play end up in the in box of Broadway—even in this lean and inhospitable time for serious drama—stamps him as a theater man of nothing but consequence.

Wilson died ludicrously young on Sunday, at the age of 60 in his adoptive home town of

Seattle, where he wrote plays, big, garulous, angry, lyrical, ponderous, often beautiful plays, in an office in his basement. He went public with his terminal liver cancer a little more than a month ago and when he did, he came forward with a breathtaking serenity. He pronounced himself prepared for what was coming. "I've lived a blessed life," he told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, the paper of the city of his birth, the metropolis that served as backdrop for many of his major plays. "I'm ready."

He cannot, of course, have been content to leave his family, especially his 8-year-old daughter, Azula, whom he proudly told me last December was writing her own plays. Work-wise, however, he may have been expressing a measure of relief, in that he had satisfied the exacting requirements of the towering assignment he had given himself: a cycle of 10 plays, one set in each decade of the 20th century. ("Radio Golf," the last one, has yet to reach New York; its regional debut comes at Center Stage in Baltimore in March.)

Not that he was exactly through with writing. In an interview over breakfast at a diner in the Edison, the modest Times Square tourist hotel that was his longtime New York base, he revealed that he was working on a comedy whose milieu now seems heartbreakingly prescient: Pittsburgh coffin makers.

His dramas are connected by a palpable sense of geography, usually, a rambunctious district of Pittsburgh; by the mordant humor of characters who spit at hardship; by an eye that seemed to see a story taking shape in every soul. They also reveal the acumen of Wilson's ear in the cross currents of language that flow from his characters as if pouring out of deep, lustrous, meandering canals.

He wrote for authentic-sounding stage creatures, and yet his dialogue might have found a place in novels. "Now I'm gonna show you how this goes, where you just a leftover from history," Toledo, the piano player, tells the other Black musicians in dialect in "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom." The play, set in the 1920s, was the first of Wilson's to make it to Broadway. It was an auspicious coming out. Wilson, wrote drama critic Frank Rich in the New York Times at the play's 1984 opening, "sends the entire history of black America down upon our heads."

Wilson returned again and again to the idea of Black America's unique historical inheritance, to reminders of how the South's peculiar institution was not at all a dead memory but a living shadow. As many other characters would in the Wilson pantheon, Toledo offers in "Ma Rainey" his own homespun history lesson about the African diaspora:

"Everybody come from different places in Africa, right? Come from different tribes and things. Soonawhile they began to make one big stew. You had the carrots, the peas, and potatoes and whatnot over here. And over there, you had the meat, the nuts, the okra, corn . . . and then you mix it up and let it cook right through to get the flavors flowing together. Then you got one thing. You got a stew."

Wilson's own favorite playwright was Chekhov, and you can see how their theatrical stews might simmer well together. Wilson was a conjurer of characters, not an accomplished spinner of plot or master of compression. He was, in fact, legendary for writing one overlong draft after another, and working with a director—most successfully Lloyd Richards, head for many years of the Yale School of Drama—who could help him pare it down. A script was by no means complete once rehearsals began, he told me. He

even liked to seek out actors and ask them what else they needed from him.

He had a reputation for feistiness and a certain amount of ego. The talk of the theater world in 1997 was his Manhattan debate with Robert Brustein, the director, critic and founder of Harvard's American Repertory Theatre, over their disagreement about whether a theater exclusively devoted to Black experience is desirable. Wilson was a passionate advocate of Black theater, and the evening at Town Hall stands as the last occasion on which a philosophical theater argument grabbed headlines.

When I sat down with him late last year, Wilson seemed anything but combative. He was in a pleasant frame of mind, as a playwright might be with the work of grinding out a play completed. The play was "Gem of the Ocean," set in 1904, which as a result became the prologue of the cycle he'd been writing for much of his professional life.

As it happens, the first in the chain was the last he'd ever get to see on Broadway. The chain he'd long promised, and true to his word, the chain he delivered.

#### HONORING MAUREEN BUFALINO AS SHE RECEIVES THE ATHENA AWARD FROM THE WILKES-BARRE CHAMBER OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 7, 2005*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Maureen Moran Bufalino, regional president of Omega Bank in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on the occasion of her receiving the prestigious Athena Award presented annually by the Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry.

Mrs. Bufalino is truly deserving of this honor because throughout her career she has exemplified what a true community leader should be.

As a former president of the Junior League of Wilkes-Barre, Mrs. Bufalino helped develop many young women for volunteer service within the community. She has served as a role model for businesswomen through her work in the banking industry. And despite her demanding business schedule, she has still found the time to volunteer and serve several non-profit organizations and also raise three children.

She is also a charter member of Circle 200, a regional executive women's networking organization, and is a graduate of the Leadership Wilkes-Barre program.

Mrs. Bufalino serves as vice chair of CityVest Community Development Organization, a group committed to revitalizing Wilkes-Barre's downtown. She is a graduate of King's College.

Mrs. Bufalino was also named one of the top 20 executives under the age of 40 in 2001 by the Northeastern Business Journal, a widely respected business periodical in northeastern Pennsylvania.

On a personal note, I have known Maureen and her family for decades. I know her parents Jack and Maureen are extremely proud of her success, not only as a well-respected professional, but also as a dedicated community

leader and loving mother. It has been a pleasure to watch her develop into such a fine leader for the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mrs. Bufalino on this notable occasion. Her spirit and generosity repeatedly propels her into positions of leadership wherever she goes. An outstanding and highly talented woman, she is a model business and civic leader who epitomizes all the qualities required for a recipient of the Athena Award. Our community in northeastern Pennsylvania is far better off because of Mrs. Bufalino's selfless service.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN VETERANS STAND DOWN 2005 EVENT

**HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 7, 2005*

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of the dedicated volunteers of the Southeastern Michigan Veterans Stand Down organization in helping homeless veterans.

Stand Down assists homeless veterans, by working with area service providers, in securing housing, suitable employment and training, helping them return to the mainstream of life's day-to-day activities.

On October 19–20, Southeastern Michigan Stand Down will host a community event geared towards giving homeless veterans the opportunity to begin the process of regaining their self-esteem and their hope. Organized Stand Down events across the country have helped thousands of homeless veterans since 1988.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me today to extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude, and to recognize the outstanding and selfless volunteers who organize the Stand Down events each year because they are guided by the Stand Down motto: "For Honor, Duty and Country . . . We Leave No Veteran Behind."

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF  
MAYOR LOUIS J. BACCI

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 7, 2005*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Mayor Louis J. Bacci—devoted family man, accomplished community leader, entrepreneur, United States veteran and admired friend and mentor. For 45 years, Mayor Bacci's vision, integrity and love for his constituents reflected throughout the Village of Cuyahoga Heights and miles beyond.

Mayor Bacci was born and raised in Cuyahoga Heights and lived in the same house his entire life. His parents instilled in him a clear sense of service to others and an unwavering devotion to family, friends and community—qualities that defined his public service and framed his life. He consistently went above and beyond the 'call of duty,' and was always willing to assist an individual or family in need.

Mayor Bacci was first elected to represent the Village as a member of Council, a position he held for 16 years. He then went on to serve as mayor for 29 years. Titles, awards and accolades held no significance for Mayor Bacci—his family, friends and Village family always did. Mayor Bacci's easy-going nature, kindness, limitless generosity, sense of humor, vision and insight drew others to him and his advice was consistently sought after by everyone—from the neighbor down the street, to big city mayors.

Unlike many candidates, Mayor Bacci never spent money on campaign literature. Rather, he discussed his intent along the sidewalks and on front porches throughout the Village, offering his homegrown tomatoes and lively conversation. Mayor Bacci was the heart and soul of Cuyahoga Heights, and he afforded every person the same respect and attention, regardless of their social or political status.

Mayor Bacci's tireless efforts in all areas of local government served to elevate the well-being of every resident and business owner within Cuyahoga Heights. His dedication to the youth of the Village was reflected throughout his service as council member and mayor. Mayor Bacci's work and focus on education is reflected in the students and faculty of Cuyahoga Heights School District and is recognized throughout Ohio. His creation of college scholarship programs within the district has given numerous students an opportunity to achieve their academic goals. Cuyahoga Heights School District is ranked as one of the best in Ohio.

Mayor Bacci's work on behalf of local and regional development, environmental preservation and job retention has positively affected the entire region. A founding member of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD), Mayor Bacci was able to coalesce the commitment and support of suburban mayors and county leaders to unite our region for the common good.

The long-term success of NEORSD underscores Mayor Bacci's strength in leadership. NEORSD provides efficient and low cost sanitary and water services to millions of residents throughout Cuyahoga County. Moreover, the focus of NEORSD has also extended to the restoration of our local environment by earmarking billions of dollars to fund successful cleanup projects that have succeeded in restoring and preserving our local river and wetland ecosystems.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor, gratitude and remembrance of Mayor Louis J. Bacci—an exceptional man and caring leader whose life profoundly affected the lives of millions. Mayor Bacci's passing marks a deep loss for countless individuals who called him friend—including me. His brilliant legacy of community progress tempered with preservation will be remembered always by the people of Cuyahoga Heights and by people in neighboring communities throughout Cuyahoga County and beyond. Moreover, it was the power of his kindness, grace, tenacity and heart that uplifted our entire community.

I extend my deepest condolences to Mayor Bacci's beloved wife, Lillian; his beloved children, Charlotte, Laura, Juliann, John, Jack, and the loving memory of John Louis and Louis John; his 12 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren; and to his extended family and many friends.

Mayor Bacci's life and good works will serve as an ageless example of leadership, service

to others and heart—and his legacy will forever resound throughout the Village of Cuyahoga Heights, and throughout our entire community.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF  
JUDGE FERNANDO GAITAN, JR.

**HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 7, 2005*

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today in recognition of the achievements of Judge Fernando Gaitan, Jr., an important resident of the 5th Congressional District of Missouri, and current United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri. Judge Gaitan was recently inducted into the Missouri Walk of Fame, during a reception as part of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference, an event held to honor the achievements of African-Americans who have made significant contributions to Missouri.

Judge Gaitan graduated from Pittsburg State University in 1970, and earned his law degree from the University of Missouri at Kansas City—where he was member of the Law Review. Judge Gaitan served first as a state trial judge for the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit in Kansas City, Missouri. He then went on to serve as an appellate judge on the Missouri Court of Appeals—Western District. He was elevated to the federal bench in 1991 by then-President George H. W. Bush. By the appointment of then Chief Justice William Rehnquist, he also served in the Federal-State Jurisdiction Committee of the Judicial Conference from 1997–2003.

With a great desire to share this incalculable knowledge and experience with others in the community, Judge Gaitan serves as adjunct professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law. In addition, he is a member of many non-for-profit boards as well as local, state and national bar associations.

Throughout his career, Judge Gaitan has been noted for his steadfast judicial prudence. His rulings have been noted for their fairness and adherence to the letter and intent of the law. His scholarly approach to judicial decisions coupled with his fundamental commitment to equality and equity are well regarded across the federal judiciary.

For those reasons and more, it was indeed an honor and privilege to recognize Judge Gaitan at the Missouri Walk of Fame reception, hosted by myself and fellow colleague, Missouri Representative William Lacy Clay of St. Louis.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me in expressing our appreciation to Judge Gaitan and his endless commitment to serving the residents of the State of Missouri. He is a true role model not just to the African-American community in Missouri, but to the entire African American community at large. May his success serve as a stepping stone for many other African-Americans eager to be just as successful in their endeavors.