

**MAINSTAGE**  
HOME  
October 5 - November 3

**LATE NITE SERIES**  
Non-English Speaking Spoken Here  
November 16 - 17

All performances are at 3501 Chicago Ave. S.  
For reservations and more information  
call 612-825-0459

# PILLSBURY HOUSE THEATRE

theatre that lives with you

3501 Chicago Avenue South,  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

pillsburyhousetheatre.org  
Box Office: 612-825-0459



## FALL NEWSLETTER 2007

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## breaking ice

### A busy spring included Breaking Ice on PHT's Mainstage

Spring of 2007 provided fertile ground for PHT's Breaking Ice Company to explore new ways of providing audiences with opportunities to talk about tough issues. In a performance workshop for Neighborworks America youth leadership forum in Baltimore, Maryland Breaking Ice company members shared their theatre making tools with an intergenerational group of 40 participants including survivors of Hurricane Katrina. The group learned to create theatre and stimulate dialogue within their own communities.

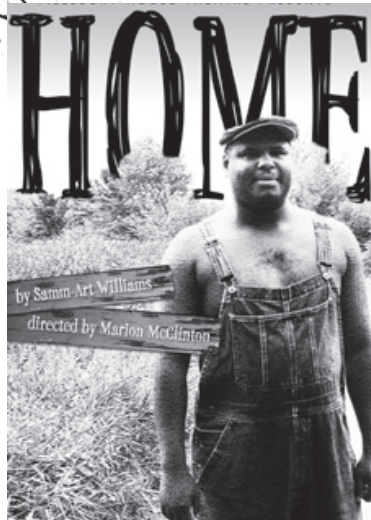
For the first time ever Breaking Ice hit the mainstage of PHT with an original piece entitled *Fling My Arms Wide* challenging audiences to think differently about identity and belonging.



Photo by Studiokobechi

*Stand in the Light*, a theatre performance commissioned by the Minneapolis MOSAIC festival, was presented at the Pantages Theatre in June. The production captured the rich cultural diversity of the city of Minneapolis.

Breaking Ice is at work this fall creating original plays for Augsburg College, University of St. Thomas, Delta College in Michigan, Minnesota Department of Support and Recovery, Minnesota Nurses Association, the City and County of Denver, and Seward Co-op.



## HOME opens Oct. 5

Call 612-825-0459 for tickets

October 5-November 3, 2007  
By Samm-Art Williams  
Directed by Marion McClinton



**"Everybody has a feeling about home..."**

**MARION MCCLINTON**  
directs the classic tale of an everyman, Cephus Miles, played by Payton Woodson.

## mainstage Marion Comes Home

I walked into Pillsbury House as I have so many days over the last decade. It was a Tuesday in early September. When I stepped off the elevator I heard a man talking to community members, telling stories as he rested on the couch in the third floor lobby. Those he spoke to were mesmerized, smiling, and even those not directly engaged in conversation were leaning in to hear what he had to say. The storyteller was Marion McClinton director of *Home* which opens at Pillsbury House Theatre on October 5.

I stopped to talk with him to ask him a few questions about the production -

### Why the play Home?

I've really wanted to do something with this theatre for some time and Faye (Price PHT Artistic Director) brought the play to me. I had actually served as an assistant director on a production of *Home* many years ago at Penumbra. The play is a classic tale of an everyman, Cephus Miles, who leaves his home in the country for the city, but finds there really is no place like home. It seemed like a surprising choice for me to direct but the more I read it, the more I realized that it played into exactly what I'm doing as an artist right now - storytelling pieces that have complicated emotional rhythms, jazz rhythms...

### Why Pillsbury House Theatre?

Your audience - pure and simple. I have directed around the world and on Broadway. I remember once at a performance of the revival of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* on Broadway I stood behind August (Wilson) at the back of the house, looked out at the crowd and thought this is the audience that has been in my way most of my life.

But at Pillsbury House the theatre audience is more reflective of its surroundings and of the nation. I've seen some things here, and I've looked around and said - this is cool, now these people I can have a conversation with!

Everybody has a feeling about home, whether it's a place that you've left or need to return to. Over the last few years the title of this play has taken on something new - we need to know where we can go back to when things get rough, and shit does get rough. Many people in this neighborhood have relatives who came from the south... came up north to Minnesota and this play will touch them. Cephus could be their Grandfather. Home is that place of comfort, where you can be yourself. We all need it. If we don't have a sense of home, we don't have a healthy community.

By Heidi Hunter Batz

**FAYE:** "I think this theater hits you in the heart."  
**NOEL:** "It is all about people feeling really engaged... the moments where you can feel the audience holding their breath or the moment where there is one collective laugh."



## Talking with Faye and Noel

Co-Artistic Directors of Pillsbury House Theatre

This time of year PHT's artistic staff is busy making final decisions on next year's season of plays. Co-Artistic Directors Faye Price and Noel Raymond took some time to talk about what it's like to run Pillsbury House Theater.

*Did the two of you know each other before you started working together?*

**FAYE:** No, we didn't – but really our paths should have crossed long ago.

**NOEL:** We both had worked at the Guthrie and Penumbra but not at the same time.

**FAYE:** When I decided to apply for the position I asked Noel to lunch.

**NOEL:** At French Meadow, right? I remember you were wearing a bowling shirt.

**FAYE:** And I remember asking you why you worked at Pillsbury House and you said "because it is fun."

**NOEL:** For me this place has always combined a unique combination of things: the opportunity to work at a place that does so many different kinds of things and where I can be a producer, director and actor – at a theater that is so tied into the community.

*You are both actors and producers. How does that work for you?*

**FAYE:** I think it useful. I think I look for plays that are going to have juicy roles for actors. I guess you could say that I know how the decisions I make are going to affect everyone else who works here because of my experiences as both an actor and producer.

*How do you work together?*

**NOEL:** We each have areas of focus that we're overseeing but it is wonderful to have this counterpart for another perspective and to help with the hard decisions.

**FAYE:** I'm very deliberative.

**NOEL:** And I am very impulsive. It works for us.

*How do you select the plays you produce?*

**FAYE:** Our process really varies from year to year. Sometimes I hear about a play and I send it on to Noel to review. Sometimes I'll go see work in another city and sometimes friends will hand us a script that they may have just seen or done somewhere else.

**NOEL:** Faye really does more prospecting for plays than I do. But I have a list on my computer called The Long List O' Plays that we keep returning to. Sometimes it is a theme we're ready to explore, sometimes it's right for a certain actor and sometimes it depends on what we can get the rights to and what we can afford to produce.

**FAYE:** But, we recently realized that we have developed a bit of a pattern with a play selection – each of the three plays makes a connection to either the heart, head or groin. We like to mix it up – different styles, genres and themes and keep it really diverse.

**NOEL:** Maybe we should think about that play I did at PlayLabs a few years ago?

**FAYE:** The Japanese one? Wow – that is a really brilliant and beautiful little play and it is really different from anything else we would do – We should take a look at that again.

**NOEL:** I think I would understand the cultural contexts more now too.

*What do you think Pillsbury House Theater does best?*

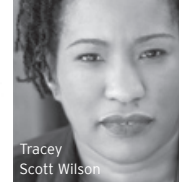
**FAYE:** I think this theater hits you in the heart.

**NOEL:** I think it really gets to you – whether it is the mainstage work, our work with kids in the Chicago Avenue Project or our work with businesses and groups with Breaking Ice – it is all about people feeling really engaged. It's that sense of connection – the moments where you can feel the audience holding their breath or the moment where there is one collective laugh.



### Ruth Easton Fund Match

We met our match! Thanks to the new and increased donations from our foundation partners and individual supporters we are thrilled to announce that we have met a \$25,000 challenge from the Ruth Easton Fund of the Edelstein Family Foundation which supports the creation of original work. Thanks to the Ruth Easton Fund, the foundation community and hundreds of individuals for helping us rise to the challenge!



Tracey Scott Wilson

### New Commission

Pillsbury House Theatre is very excited to announce the official launch of our Beth Milligan Commissioning Program. Playwright Tracey Scott Wilson, whose play *The Story* was produced at PHT in 2005 and who has written for the Chicago Avenue Project, will be developing *Refugee* as a co-commission with Pillsbury House Theatre and the Guthrie Theater. *Refugee* will examine the clash of cultures among members of a family who have fled violence and persecution in their home country and have immigrated at different times to Minneapolis.

The two theatres will work with Tracey through the writing and development stage with an eye to a 2009 co-production.

This project is a perfect fit with the long term goals of the Beth Milligan Fund which are: to support women playwrights, to strengthen PHT's national reach, and to add new plays with socio-political themes to the canon of contemporary literature.

## AROUND THE HOUSE

### Company Updates

**FAYE PRICE** will be performing in *Well* at Park Square Theatre in January and is the dramaturg for *Kirby* at the History Theatre.

**NOEL RAYMOND** recently directed a workshop of Carlyle Brown's play *Are You Now Or Have You Ever Been...* for the 2007 Playlabs festival. He will be directing a reading of *Vengeance Can Wait* by Yukiko Motoyama, held on October 19 in the Guthrie's Dowling Studio.

**STACEY PARSHALL'S** play *Shipside* will be produced by Exposed Brick Theatre and directed by Suzy Messerole at the Playwrights' Center November 16 - 24. Her play *Same Sides*, is on tour with the Science Museum of Minnesota and will have a DVD release in the near future.

**BRIAN GORANSON** just completed a two year run as artistic director for Theatre L'Homme Dieu in Alexandria, Minnesota. He currently heads the theatre department at St. Paul Conservatory for the Performing Arts.

**ELLEN FENSTER** will be co-producing *Lights Up* at Illusion Theatre January 2007 and is a teaching consultant for CHAT's emerging program Dawning Theatre – old stories in a new light.

**KIMBERLY JOY MORGAN** is continuing to shop her original award winning play *Hot Comb*, which played to sold out houses at PHT.

**BLAYN LEMKE** is teaching drama at the Blake School. He directed *Mrs. Man of God* written by Beth Gilleland and Donald Bazzini which had a successful run at the Manna Fest in August.

**STEPHEN DIMENNA** just returned from five weeks in Africa doing playwrighting workshops with students in rural Tanzania in addition to creating and directing a play with HIV+ children at the Artists for Charity Orphanage in Adis Ababa, Ethiopia.

## chicago avenue project

The Chicago Avenue Project's *Face The Music* – an evening of plays written by youth and performed by adult actors from the Twin Cities theatre community played to standing room only audiences August 27 and 28. Each of the five plays incorporated an original song that each playwright wrote in collaboration with an adult composer. The plays truly rocked the house.

Chicago Avenue Project classes will continue this fall in preparation for our next production in the spring. For more information call 612-825-0459.



Face the Music, 2007.



"...so many school teachers would be like 'you cannot write this. You cannot write that' but here, you can write anything. Who would have thought of us writing a song? Nobody." Jordan Allen, CAP Participant

**THE MISSION: TO CREATE CHALLENGING THEATRE THAT INSPIRES CHOICE, CHANGE, AND CONNECTION.**  
**THE PROGRAMS:** **MAINSTAGE** Professional, high quality and daring theatre productions that illuminate the differences that make each person unique and the similarities that bring people together. **BREAKING ICE** An improvisational performance program that develops performances and workshops that fosters discussion on tough issues. **CHICAGO AVENUE PROJECT** A theatre mentoring program which brings together neighborhood youth with professional theatre artists to create original theatre.

Pillsbury House Theatre is an integral part of

