

KENNY LEON'S

true colors

THEATRE COMPANY

GEM OF THE OCEAN
JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE
MA FINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM
THE PIANO LESSON
SEVEN GUITARS

August Wilson
MONOLOGUE COMPETITION

FENCES
TWO TRANS RUNNING
JIMMY
KING HEDLEY II
RADIO GOLF

The August Wilson Monologue Competition

Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company is proud to present the 14th Annual August Wilson Monologue Competition for Greater Metro Atlanta area high school students, grades 9-12. This competition, coordinated by True Colors Theatre's Director of Education, Nikki Toombs, focuses on the plays of August Wilson's *American Century Cycle*, which chronicle the African American experience through the 20th century. Each play is set in a different decade and is filled with soaring, lyrical monologues that take the song, laughter, pain, and rich content of African American life and places it in the mouths of the greatest and varied ensemble of characters written since Shakespeare.

The inspiration for the competition was sparked by two of August Wilson's closest living collaborators, Kenny Leon and Todd Kreidler. Kenny Leon, the Co-Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus of Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company, worked closely with Wilson; directing most of the *American Century Cycle* plays on Broadway and at regional theatres. Todd Kreidler, former Associate Artistic Director for Kenny Leon's True Colors Theatre Company, was Dramaturg for Wilson's last play and Director of his one-man show. As a result, both have intimate knowledge of August Wilson as an artist and as a person. According to Kreidler, "The goal of the competition is to help garner partnerships with communities, schools and theaters across the United States, and to create educational materials about August Wilson that allow students, of all races, to connect these important theatre works with educational curricula like history, social studies and literature."

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's competition will be virtual. Each student will perform a 1-3 minute monologue, of their choosing, from one of the ten plays in August Wilson's *American Century Cycle*. The selection can be a written speech or dialogue taken from one character within a scene, but should include a point-of-entry into the character and a personal connection to the selected material. Contestants will be judged by a panel of Atlanta theatre professionals on the basis of preparedness, understanding of the text, emotional connection to the material, and commitment to the performance. Due to the mature language and subject matter of the works of prolific writer, August Wilson, students must have parental consent to participate in the competition. We also ask that teachers, administrators and coaches support students in determining monologues that allow for culturally responsive instruction and support the comfort level of the student, parents/legal guardian or participating institution. True Colors offers free acting workshops and a compendium for teachers in order to prepare participants for the competition. Lastly, this year, we are introducing free virtual in-school residencies for our Atlanta school partners (see website for details). Out-of-state-residency options are also available (please review our website for more information and pricing.)

There are three rounds of this competition: preliminary, semi-final and final. Our virtual preliminary round is February 8-12, 2021. All videos should be uploaded to our Lauchpad6 platform by 11:59 PM EST. The semi-finals will be held on March 6, 2021 at 12:00 PM, 4:00 PM and 7:00 PM (students will sign up for a specific time). All semi-finalists will be notified on or before February 22, 2021. Semi-finals will be a live (virtual) presentation. Students will be allowed to invite guests to view the student presentations. The August Wilson Monologue Competition Virtual Regional Finals will be March 19, 2021 at 7:30 PM EST. This event will be invitation only. Students will receive a program t-shirt and recognition of participation, while the top three regional contestants will be awarded a cash prize and trophy.

Typically, the culminating event consists of an all-expense paid trip to New York to compete and perform in front of college recruiters, industry professionals and guests. This year's culminating event will be more of an exhibition rather than a competition. This closed event will have master classes, guest celebrity appearances and more. Applications are currently available online at truecolorstheatre.org or contact our education department via email at awmcatlanta@gmail.com or education@truecolorstheatre.org. We send best wishes on your artistic journey and can't wait to have you participate in this year's competition.

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BOLDNESS

LAUGHTER

ABUNDANCE

RESPECT