



## August Wilson's Fences (Modern Theatre Guides)

By Ladrica Menson-Furr

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*Fences* represents the decade of the 1950s, and, when it premiered in 1985, it won the Pulitzer Prize. Set during the beginnings of the civil rights movement, it also concerns generational change and renewal, ending with a celebration of the life of its protagonist, even though it takes place at his funeral. Critics and scholars have lauded August Wilson's work for its universality and its ability, especially in *Fences*, to transcend racial barriers and this play helped to earn him the titles of "America's greatest playwright" and "the African American Shakespeare."

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#### Review

'*Fences*, the centerpiece of August Wilson's epic ten-play cycle, is a moving tale of one man's struggle to create a home and family in a world that seems bent on destroying his dreams...In this book, Menson-Furr displays her considerable talents as an award-winning teacher, explaining the play with a straight-forward facility that should connect with students of all levels. This book is an excellent introduction to one of the most important American plays of the late 20th century, serving also as an excellent introduction to August Wilson, one of the most important American playwrights of the last fifty years.' - William W. Demastes, Louisiana State University, USA

"It is wonderful... [with] value to scholars and theatre artists alike. Anyone looking to structure a semester of study around this classic of American theatre will find this to be an invaluable resource. Likewise, for any actor, or other theatre artist, looking to stage a production of *Fences*, the workshop information, coupled with the background and contextual analysis that Dr. Furr provides, will greatly support their desire for a fully realized and in depth representation of what Mr. Wilson envisioned." - Reginald C. Brown, Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre and Dance, University of Memphis

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#### About the Author

Ladrica Menson-Furr is Assistant Professor of African American literature at the University of Memphis, USA.

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