

University of Massachusetts Boston

## ScholarWorks at UMass Boston

---

Office of Community Partnerships Posters

Office of Community Partnerships

---

4-2-2014

### The Emancipated Century: A Staged Reading Series

Robert Lublin

*University of Massachusetts Boston*, robert.lublin@umb.edu

Clifford Odle

*University of Massachusetts Boston*, cliff.odle@umb.edu

Barbara Lewis

*University of Massachusetts Boston*, barbara.lewis@umb.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umb.edu/ocp\\_posters](https://scholarworks.umb.edu/ocp_posters)



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), [Civic and Community Engagement Commons](#), [Community-Based Research Commons](#), [Dramatic Literature, Criticism and Theory Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Lublin, Robert; Odle, Clifford; and Lewis, Barbara, "The Emancipated Century: A Staged Reading Series" (2014). *Office of Community Partnerships Posters*. 211.  
[https://scholarworks.umb.edu/ocp\\_posters/211](https://scholarworks.umb.edu/ocp_posters/211)

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Community Partnerships at ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. It has been accepted for inclusion in Office of Community Partnerships Posters by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@umb.edu](mailto:scholarworks@umb.edu).





# The Emancipated Century: A Staged Reading Series

Robert Lublin and Clifford Odle, Performing Arts Department and  
Barbara Lewis, Trotter Institute for the Study of Black History and Culture

## Summary

A coordinated series of dramatic staged readings of the plays of August Wilson in theatres throughout greater Boston. This project aims to pay tribute to the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Emancipated Proclamation with a full presentation of August Wilson's monumental 10-play cycle on African American life in each decade of the twentieth century. The accompanying Re-Visioning Tomorrow Forums explored ongoing themes in urban communities.

## Goals and Objectives

1. To join and contribute to a growing public discourse around citizenship and empathy, which are through-lines in August Wilson's plays and were brought to the fore with the April 15 Boston marathon bombing and its aftermath.
2. To highlight an untapped reserve of talent in Boston, those actors and actresses adept at interpreting urban-based work.
3. To research and grow new theatre audiences, so necessary to theater's continued growth in an age of shifting demographics and growing economic insecurity.
4. To mentor an upcoming generation of performers, playwrights, and technical theatre talent.
5. To nurture and bring more resources to the middle segment of Boston's cultural pipeline, creating more opportunities and pathways for artistic and cultural success.
6. To model collaboration, led by the five partner theaters, each located in a distinct district, across greater Boston's neighborhoods, thus combating a silo mentality that is often entrenched in Boston.

The Performing Arts Department and the Trotter Institute at UMass Boston present

THE EMANCIPATED CENTURY:  
**Readings of August Wilson's**  
10-Play Cycle

 <p><b>Aug. 5</b> <b>Gem of the Ocean</b> UMass Boston - McCormack Theatre 100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA</p>	 <p><b>Oct. 21</b> <b>Fences</b> Central Square Theater 450 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA</p>
 <p><b>Aug. 19</b> <b>Joe Turner's Come and Gone</b> The Strand Theatre 543 Columbia Rd. Dorchester, MA</p>	 <p><b>Nov. 4</b> <b>Two Trains Running</b> Boston Playwrights' Theatre 949 Commonwealth Ave. Boston, MA</p>
 <p><b>Sept. 9</b> <b>Ma Rainey's Black Bottom</b> The Strand Theatre 543 Columbia Rd. Dorchester, MA</p>	 <p><b>Nov. 18</b> <b>Jitney</b> Boston Playwrights' Theatre 949 Commonwealth Ave. Boston, MA</p>
 <p><b>Sept. 23</b> <b>The Piano Lesson</b> Hibernian Hall 184 Dudley St. Roxbury, MA</p>	 <p><b>Dec. 2</b> <b>King Hedley II</b> Hibernian Hall 184 Dudley St. Roxbury, MA</p>
 <p><b>Oct. 7</b> <b>Seven Guitars</b> Central Square Theater 450 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA</p>	 <p><b>Dec. 16</b> <b>Radio Golf</b> UMass Boston - McCormack Theatre 100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA</p>

ALL PERFORMANCES BEGIN AT 7 P.M.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE: [Emancipated Century: August Wilson Readings](#)

 DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
and  
WILLIAM MONROE TROTTER INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON
 

## Partnership Information

UMass Boston McCormack Theatre  
100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA 02125

The Strand Theatre  
543 Columbia Rd., Dorchester, MA 02125

Hibernian Hall  
184 Dudley St., Boston, MA 02119

Central Square Theater  
450 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139

Boston Playwrights' Theatre  
949 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215

## Results

- Barbara Lewis's **ongoing scholarly works** (2010-current) led to The Emancipated Century project, and the staged reading series continue to inform her scholarship; Lewis will be a Religion and Theater panelist at Association for Theater in Higher Education's Conference in July 2014, discussing her new essay on the theme of redemption and resurrection in Joe Turner's Come and Gone.
- **Staged 10 plays** at 5 local theatres.
- **Employed over 70 actors**, 9 different directors, 10 academic specialists, and 10 stage managers.
- **15 UMass Boston students** earned roles in the productions.
- **More than 800 audience members** from throughout greater Boston attended productions, and engaged in dialogue.

## Conclusion/Next Steps

- Boston is home to a large number of highly talented, professional African American actors, directors, and scholars.
- Boston residents are very interested in the works of August Wilson and will travel for the opportunity to attend high quality productions of his plays.
- Boston professional theatres are eager to collaborate on significant artistic projects.

### The Trotter Institute is leading next steps:

**April 14, Emancipated Century Reception:**  
Celebrate the success of the August Wilson readings and Re-Visioning Tomorrow forums, reflect on the impact of the staged readings, and explore future enhancements.

**May 8-9, Cultural Equity Forum, Strand Theatre:**  
Join the conversation to amplify and express the cultural and creative community voice in order to build a more culturally inclusive Boston.