



2910 La Jolla Village Drive La Jolla, CA 92037  
[www.LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://www.LaJollaPlayhouse.org)

---

Contact: Becky Biegelsen  
(858) 228-3094; [bbiegelsen@ljp.org](mailto:bbiegelsen@ljp.org)  
OR  
Ellen McDonald  
(816) 213-4355; [publicity@kcrep.org](mailto:publicity@kcrep.org)

## LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE AND KANSAS CITY REPERTORY THEATRE ANNOUNCE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR **BLUEPRINTS TO FREEDOM: AN ODE TO BAYARD RUSTIN**

**DEVELOPED DURING DNA NEW WORK SERIES, MICHAEL BENJAMIN WASHINGTON'S  
PROVOCATIVE PIECE CONTINUES PLAYHOUSE'S 2015/2016 SEASON OF ALL NEW WORKS**

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse and Kansas City Repertory Theatre announce the cast and creative team for its **world-premiere** production of ***Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin***, by **Michael Benjamin Washington**, directed by **Lucie Tiberghien** (*Blood and Gifts*). Tiberghien replaces Phylicia Rashad, who had to depart the project due to scheduling conflicts. A co-production with **Kansas City Repertory Theatre**, *Blueprints to Freedom* runs **September 8 – October 4** in the Playhouse's Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre and **October 16 – November 15** at Copaken Stage in Kansas City. Tickets are available at [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org) or **858-550-1010** and at [Kansas City Repertory Theatre](http://Kansas City Repertory Theatre) or **816-235-2700**.

The cast of *Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin* features **Ro Boddie** (Helen Hayes Award winner for Forum Theatre's *Angels in America*) as "Martin Luther King, Jr.," **Mandi Masden** (Theatre for a New Audience's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) as "Miriam Caldwell," **Jonathan Peck** (Classical Theatre of Harlem's *Three Sisters*) as "A. Philip Randolph," **Mat Hostetler** (*War Horse* national tour) as "Davis Platt, Jr." and **Michael Benjamin Washington** (Playhouse's *The Wiz*, *Memphis* – also on Broadway) as "Bayard Rustin."

The creative team includes **Neil Patel** (Playhouse's *American Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), scenic design; **Beth Goldenberg**, costume design; **Lap Chi Chu** (Playhouse's *The Orphan of Zhao*, *Ruined*), lighting design; **Joe Huppert**, sound design; John Narun, projection design; **Gabriel Greene**, dramaturg and **Peter Van Dyke**, stage manager.

"Since its electric first reading on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the March on Washington, we've been deeply committed to Michael Benjamin Washington's provocative new piece. With victories and setbacks to the cause of equality in the news every day, the ideas and themes of *Blueprints to Freedom* call out urgently to us. We're proud to welcome this dynamic and talented cast and creative team to illuminate Bayard Rustin's quest for identity and redemption," said Playhouse **Artistic Director Christopher Ashley**.

**Kansas City Repertory Theatre Artistic Director Eric Rosen** stated, "Our 2015-16 season is about the exploration of how someone creates and follows his or her own voice, in spite of, or because of, numerous obstacles. *Blueprints* is an exploration into how Mr. Rustin was able to create this absolutely crucial and historic event in spite of what many would define as impossible odds. How does this happen that someone is driven to follow a calling at such great cost?"



In the sweltering political and racial heat of 1963, Bayard Rustin – the brilliant proponent of non-violent civil disobedience – is assigned to orchestrate an unprecedented march for jobs and freedom. Exiled from the Civil Rights movement by both internal and external forces, Rustin grapples with his last chance for professional restoration and spiritual redemption.

*Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin* was given its first reading at the Playhouse on August 28, 2013 – the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the March on Washington. It was further developed as part of the Playhouse's acclaimed **DNA New Work Series**, a two-week run of workshops and readings that offers playwrights and directors the opportunity to develop a script by providing rehearsal time, space and resources, culminating in a workshop presentation or public reading. Several mainstage productions were developed during the DNA New Work Series, including *The Who & The What* and *Chasing the Song*.

**Michael Benjamin Washington** has appeared as the Tinman in the Playhouse's production of *The Wiz*, directed by Des McAnuff; *Memphis*, directed by Christopher Ashley; *Most Wanted* (workshop), directed by Michael Greif; and *Letters to Barack* (reading), directed by Christopher Ashley. His Broadway credits include *Mamma Mia!* (original company), *La Cage Aux Folles* (2005 Tony-winning revival). Off-Broadway credits include Stephen Sondheim's *Saturday Night*. Film and television appearances: *Love and Other Drugs*, directed by Ed Zwick; *Gnome*, directed by Jenny Bicks; *30 Rock* (Donald Jordan); *Glee* (Tracy Pendegrass); *100 Questions* (Andrew); *Law & Order*. A member of Broadway Inspirational Voices, Washington received his B.F.A. from New York University/Tisch School of the Arts and is a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. He serves on the writing adjudication panel for the National Young Arts Foundation.

**Lucie Tiberghien** directed La Jolla Playhouse's acclaimed production of *Blood and Gifts*, as well as the DNA New Work Series readings of *Tranquil* and *Being Henrietta*. Other credits include the world premieres of Charles Randolph-Wright's *Love in Afghanistan* (Arena Stage); Stephen Belber's *Don't Go Gentle* (MCC), *Geometry of Fire* (Rattlestick) and *A Small Melodramatic Story* (LAByrinth); Craig Wright's *Blind* (Rattlestick); Katori Hall's *Hoodoo Love* (Cherry Lane); Lee Blessing's *Great Falls* (Humana Festival) and *Flag Day* (CATF). Other credits: Lee Blessing's *The Winning Streak* (George Street Playhouse) and Craig Wright's *The Pavilion* (Rattlestick and CATF). She has also developed new plays at Sundance, O'Neill, Ojai, Orchard Project, New Dramatists, Playwrights Center, TerraNOVA and PlayPenn.

The Tony Award-winning **La Jolla Playhouse** is internationally-renowned for creating some of the most exciting and adventurous work in American theatre, through its new play development initiatives, its innovative Without Walls series, artist residencies and commissions, including BD Wong, Daniel Beaty and Kirsten Greenidge. Currently led by Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Michael S. Rosenberg, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, and reborn in 1983 under the artistic leadership of Des McAnuff, La Jolla Playhouse has had 25 productions transfer to Broadway, garnering 35 Tony Awards, among them *Jersey Boys*, *Memphis*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Big River*, as well as Billy Crystal's *700 Sundays* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *I Am My Own Wife*, both fostered as part of the Playhouse's Page To Stage Program. Visit [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org).



## About Kansas City Repertory Theatre

Kansas City Repertory Theatre, one of the nation's oldest and most respected regional theaters, is the center of a great theatre town. KC Rep produces theatrical excellence, creating and sharing stories at the center of our nation's creative crossroads. KC Rep's mission is to advance the art form while cultivating passionate audiences, artists, and advocates to invest in our region's creative future. We build community by connecting people through productions and outreach that educate, entertain, challenge and inspire. Lauded by *The Wall Street Journal*, *TIME* magazine, *Variety* and *The Toronto Sun*, KC Rep produces mainstage plays and special events at Spencer Theatre, where it serves as the professional theatre in residence at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), and Copaken Stage located in downtown Kansas City. KC Rep employs more than 250 professional artists, technicians and administrators, and serves more than 100,000 patrons and 12,000 school children annually. Kansas City Repertory Theatre is led by Artistic Director Eric Rosen and Executive Director Angela Lee Gieras.

## FACT SHEET

**WHAT:** *Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin*  
By Michael Benjamin Washington

**WHEN:** **La Jolla Playhouse: September 8 – October 4, 2015** (Press Opening: Wednesday, September 16); Performances: Tue/Wed at 7:30pm; Thu/Fri/Sat at 8:00pm; Sun at 7:00pm; Sat/Sun at 2:00pm

**KC Rep: October 16- November 15** (Press Opening Friday, October 23)  
Sun/Tues/Wed/Thurs at 7:00pm; Fri/Sat at 8:00pm; Sat/Sun at 2:00pm

**WHERE:** **Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse**  
2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037

**Copaken Stage**  
1 H&R Block Way, Kansas City, MO 64105

**WHO:** Scenic Design: Neil Patel  
Lighting Design: Lap Chi Chu  
Dramaturg: Gabriel Greene  
Costume Design: Beth Goldenberg  
Sound Design: Joe Huppert  
Stage Manager: Peter Van Dyke

Cast: Ro Boddie  
Mandi Masden  
Jonathan Peck  
Mat Hostetler  
Michael Benjamin Washington  
*Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
*Miriam Caldwell*  
*A. Philip Randolph*  
*Davis Platt, Jr.*  
*Bayard Rustin*

**BACKGROUND:** In the sweltering political and racial heat of 1963, Bayard Rustin – the brilliant proponent of non-violent civil disobedience – is assigned to orchestrate an unprecedented march for jobs and freedom. Exiled from the Civil Rights movement by both internal and external forces, Rustin grapples with his last chance for professional restoration and spiritual redemption.



### **ADDITIONAL EVENTS at La Jolla Playhouse**

- ACCESS/ASL-Interpreted Performance: Sat, September 26 at 2:00pm
- Open Captioned Performance: Sun, September 20 at 2:00pm
- Talkback Tuesdays: September 15 after the 7:30pm performance
- Insider Events: Wed, September 30 at 6:45pm and Sat, October 3 at 1:15pm
- Discovery Sunday: October 4 after the 2:00pm performance
- Foodie Friday: September 25 starting at 6:00pm,

### **Conversation Series at Kansas City Repertory Theatre**

Patrons are invited and welcome to attend these FREE post-show forums to learn more from the artists and creative teams about the production.

**Making the Play:** 30 minutes prior to select performances, free pre-show conversation with the artistic staff

**Meet the Creative Team:** Oct. 21, following the 7 pm performance

**Scholars' Forum:** Oct. 31, following the 2pm performance

**Actor's Forum:** Nov. 1, following the 2pm performance and Nov. 3, following the 7 pm performance

**BOX OFFICE:** (858) 550-1010; [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org) or  
(816) 235-2700; [Kansas City Repertory Theatre](http://KansasCityRepertoryTheatre.org)

**SPONSORS:** La Jolla Playhouse: Vivien and Jeffrey Ressler; Brian and Silvija Devine