The Third Decade: 1983-1993
It started with a simple idea. To commemorate our 50th Anniversary season, we would reach out to fifteen amazing artists who had called Seattle Rep their home and ask them to be part of an Honorary Artistic Council. Perhaps they would share a few stories about their time in Seattle, and then we, in turn, could share those memories with you – our audience.

And that is how it all began. Stories from one conversation would spill into another, leading to more conversations with more artists – and repeated trips into the archives. We began to uncover the wealth of photos, programs, and assorted memorabilia hidden away, but not forgotten. During the course of the season we’ll be sharing these rediscovered treasures.

Tucked into each Bagley Wright Theatre Encore program will be a Decades insert, each tackling a different ten-year period of the theatre’s history. Our goal is not to present an exhaustive overview, but to leave you with a feeling – a sense of the work that was done and the people, particularly the artists, who made it all possible.

Patrons who took in a performance of Pullman Porter Blues gained insight into our inaugural years; those who joined us for Inspecting Carol learned about the campaign for a new home and the theatre’s increased conversations in the community. With this installment, we share memories from the theatre’s third decade, the years 1983–1993.

In addition to our Decades inserts, we have updated our website to reflect our 50 years of life onstage. Visit us at www.seattlerep.org to find more information about our Honorary Artistic Council, an enhanced production history, and an interactive timeline that allows you to share your own memories. You can also find an online version of our Decades publications.

We hope you’ll join the conversation.
Well-established artistically, we joined with the City of Seattle to build the new Bagley Wright Theatre and opened it with grand fanfare and a world premiere in 1983.

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STABILITY AND GROWTH

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Seattle Rep opened the new Bagley Wright Theatre with a vast and complex world premiere play from Michael Weller, *The Ballad of Soapy Smith*. Associate Artistic Director Robert Egan was given the task of directing. To quote Egan: “Dan Sullivan was so generous to give me the opportunity, and it was memorable because it was 99% Seattle artists and they all rose to the occasion brilliantly. We opened to national press that was hugely favorable to our effort. The play went on to run at Joe Papp’s Public Theatre in New York with Denis Arndt and Kevin Tighe still playing the two leads.”

Numbering more than 30, the impressive cast included a host of actors that would become well-known to Rep audiences including John Aylward, Kurt Beattie, Frank Corrado, Clayton Corzatte, Ted D’Arms, Kate Mulgrew, Rod Pilloud, and Michael Santo.

The design team was equally impressive. *Saturday Night Live* designer Eugene Lee was tapped as scenic designer. As Lee recalled: “I was unexpectedly asked to design the FIRST play in the NEW theater at Seattle Rep. I had never been to Seattle before. I flew in on a dark night. I remember looking down and seeing nothing but pitch black, and more black, but at long last the warm lights of the city appeared (like the North Pole)! I was picked up by a very nice lady (from the board) who had brought a large bag of apples—what a nice gesture.

Most is lost in the fog of memory (mostly good) but I remember during previews, suddenly all the lights went to full, the show was stopped until the problem was fixed, (something about a small plug on the new light board that the operator had hit with his foot?). I have been back a few times over the years, and have only high praise for the staff and crew, and of course Seattle, which is a wonderful city.”

Lee’s memory proved correct. As Egan shared with us: “I also remember our first preview performance in the Bagley Wright. I gave the welcome speech and reminded people that this was our first ever audience and if anything might go wrong (impossible!) we would stop, fix the problem and go on. Well, within minutes of the curtain rising—every light in the theatre suddenly went to full. If my memory serves me correctly, every light in the entire building went to full. It was becoming sweltering from the intensity of the lights. What made this even worse is that the play is set in gold rush Alaska and my actors were dressed in heavy, heavy clothing from head to toe and were all about to expire. So I ended up stopping the show from the last row with a ‘I think we may have to stop because this is supposed to be Alaska not Palm Beach.’ I got on stage and talked about the beauty of our new facility until the crew got the lights back to normal and we continued. It never happened again.”

The remainder of the season was equally grand in scope: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn; Make and Break; Garland Wright’s The Misanthrope; Master Harold…and the boys, and As You Like It.*

For Artistic Director Sullivan, a major highlight in the season was the opening of the PONCHO Forum with the world premiere of Bill Mastrosimone’s *Shivaree*. Before Sullivan arrived, the Rep had premiered new work, but the theatre did not place a major emphasis on developing new plays until the inception of the Other Season in 1979. *Shivaree* began as a workshop at the Rep and was chosen to inaugurate the PONCHO Forum as a venue for new work. (Originally designed to be a rehearsal space, a generous grant from fundmaking organization PONCHO transformed the room into a performance venue.)

As Sullivan remarked at the time: “In the Forum, we’ll develop new work in a laboratory setting, and then perform it before an audience.” He went on to present his philosophy for new work, which would shape the Rep’s artistic vision throughout the decade: “We are more interested in playwrights than plays. Sometimes we develop a manuscript that contains the germ of a wonderful idea but is so structurally flawed that it may never succeed as a play. Other scripts are well written and crafted, but lack centers, and may never find a viable identity. We try to set in motion mechanisms by which such plays can realize themselves in the future, but we are also willing to work on a play for the simple reason that we would like to collaborate with the writer.”
DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS

Associate Artistic Director Robert Egan left the Rep in May 1984 to become Resident Director at L.A.’s Mark Taper Forum, leaving behind a strong foundation for new play development and community programs.

Recalling that time period, Egan shared: “My deepest memory is of the creative energy and daring-ness of the artistic community. Seattle was fearless in theatre. Anything was possible and a whole new way of attacking plays and performance was emerging. There was an evolving aesthetic in Seattle in the 80’s that was internal and emotional and honest and felt. But it was also brash, loud, experimental, presentational, imagistic, full of ideas and profoundly playful. It was the beginning of great Rock and Roll Theatre.”

A replacement needed to be found. And in walked Doug Hughes. Hughes remembers the hiring process:

“What was it about the air when I landed at SeaTac the next morning? A little less smog? A few more positive ions? Whatever it was, I gulped the stuff and was instantly certain that I wanted to breathe it in on a regular basis. Preposterously, it became clear to me on what seemed like the endless cab ride into town that not only did I want the job, but that I was going to get it.

It took Sullivan a bit longer to realize that it was his destiny to have me in the adjacent office. I seem to recall an agonizing month or so going by until I got his call. (‘So you still want to come to Seattle, Doug?’). If I’d had any class I would have turned him down. Thank God I was, by that time, utterly bankrupt of class. I took the job, and I would work very hard and very happily at the Rep for the next 12 years.

My interview for the post had taken place at The Mecca. (I hope it’s still there on Queen Anne.) There were several joints like it in Seattle. Two doors, two distinctly different hemispheres, one of the grim, dark, beer and a shot at nine a.m. variety, the other of the fluorescent, greasy spoon, aorta-blocking chicken fried steak, whipped butter and stack of flapjacks variety. Dan and I, I hasten to add, had our first lofty artistic conference in the greasy spoon.”

The next season saw the departure of Producing Director Peter Donnelly to assume the post of Executive Managing Director of the Dallas Theatre Center. Donnelly would return to the area two years later, going on to head the influential grantmaking organization ArtsFund from 1989 to 2005. During all that time, he continued to subscribe to the Rep and champion its successes.

A search for his successor was on, with the position ultimately going to current Managing Director Ben Moore. Like his soon-to-be colleague Doug Hughes, Moore also found the interview process unique.

“I came to interview in August of 1985. It was intense. I met with many board members and Dan. Of course, interviewing with Dan was not a usual sort of experience because he interviewed me while walking around the Seattle Center campus. I didn’t have the luxury of sitting in his office and having his undivided attention. I went home and I waited. And I waited. And I waited. And I never got a call, until October. Then on my 40th birthday in October, I got a call to come back and interview again. And I said, ‘I thought, you know, you guys had moved on.’ ‘No, we just had a little delay.’ And so I came back and interviewed again and got the job.

So, what did I hope to accomplish here? I was eager to partner with an artist in an organization in a way that I had always imagined, which I hadn’t really actually managed to achieve at ACT in San Francisco, because I worked for this kind of giant of a man, Bill Ball. He was very mercurial, kind of nutty, and it wasn’t really a partnership. The notion of really partnering, and gaining experience with what I viewed to be a more traditionally organized and governed organization, was incredibly appealing. Truth be told, I was a little lean in experience with respect to board development; all of that business was sort of brand new to me. And on top of that was the kind of daunting prospect of following Peter Donnelly, who had been here for 21 years. And now I’ve been here for 26—Ha-Ha! I never thought that was going to be the case.”
And so, by early 1986, the new leadership team was in place: Sullivan, Hughes, and Moore. Together they would guide the theatre toward some of its most ambitious and creative programming in the Rep’s history. We asked artists from the period to share their favorite productions from the era. Here are their stories:

**Ben Moore:**
“I thought Dan’s work on *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1987-1988 season) was outstanding. With that production, I realized I had arrived at the place where I was meant to be, and I have never seen anything quite like it since then. I think what he did with the visuals and slides—this was back in the 80s, what they accomplished in terms of technology—was kind of miraculous. I think Dan was at the top of his game when it came to that kind of work. He shifted after that to less and less of the classic work to more and more of new plays, which was great—great for us, great for him.”

**John Aylward, Actor:**
The high point for me was *The Miser* (1990-1991 season)
At the time when that came along, I was pretty much at a physical peak where I could do all that stuff, and because we had extra rehearsal time I was able to force Doug Hughes to let me do the bits the way I wanted to do them. In any normal rehearsal period, I think those bits would have been cut because we wouldn’t have had time to finesse them. We made them work, and that was a complete joy. A lot of hard work, but it really paid off. “

**Barbara Dirickson, Actress:**
“With Dan Sullivan…I loved the way that he thought, but he could be frustrating. I remember *Truffles in the Soup* (1988-1989 season)… there was a bit in which I was to get on a bed in one room and pull on a rope that held a light fixture that hung from the ceiling of the room. (It actually came from the top of the house and was controlled by a member of the crew). I would pull on this rope and when I did, the audience would see the light fixture go up in the room next door, where my character’s love was staying, unbeknownst to me. In that room, he too would then get on his bed and pull the rope back down. Back and forth it went until he would give the rope/light a huge pull and up in the air I would fly, crashing through the wall (that I could not see through) and into the arms of my lover. I remember Dan asking me one rehearsal—after I crashed through the wall, mouth full of whatever the frigging wall was made of, missing the arms of the other actor, missing the bed, and arriving very unceremoniously on the floor—I remember Dan asking me what the problem was.

I really liked working with Doug Hughes. He worked so hard on every project he took on. Every show meant so much to him. And I found that infectious. I think that one of my very favorite experiences working with Doug was on *Hedda Gabler* (1991-1992 season). His attention to detail… our field trip to learn how to shoot a gun, all of the discussion we had about why each character did what they did, everything that helped to make you feel ready to walk onstage.”

**Doug Hughes reminisced:**
“The Rep had given my colleagues and me a safe place to do risky things. I had been given exactly what I needed: the luxury of being in constant practice. If I wished to work with a Russian scholar and translate Ostrovsky’s *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1987-1988 season) for production on the Bagley Wright stage, I could. If I wished to play Claudio (“Aye, but to die and go we know not where…”) in my own production of *Measure for Measure* (1989-1990 season), I could. If I wanted to translate *The Miser* (1990-1991 season) for the acting company and spend eight weeks rehearsing it in rep, I could. I could direct a play about the Holocaust one month, do *Endgame* (1985-1986 season) in the PONCHO the next, and follow those with a production of *You Can’t Take It With You* (1986-1987 season). We did not go in for sweeping mission statements about repertoire. We were interested in variety. We were interested in transformation. We were interested in great roles for our actors.”
Freedom to experiment led to an incredible sense of trust and appreciation for theatre artists during the Sullivan era. In fact, it was a common refrain in many of the memories and anecdotes shared.

As Doug Hughes recalled: “Throughout my 30s, I was always working with actors who were better than I was, and that was a wonderful, if intimidating, way to learn. Denis Arndt, Biff McGuire, Jeannie Carson, Barbara Dirickson, Bob Wright, John Procaccino, Marianne Owen, Kurt Beattie and John Aylward formed the inner core of the company. All of them had phenomenal radar for the stage. All of them had great technique, great soul and great courage.

There is, or there used to be, a long whitewashed cinder block corridor behind the stage of the Bagley Wright. This is where the early evening ritual of ‘Hall Life’ was played out whenever we were in performance. It was a kind of indoor version of La Passeggiata. The actors who were working that evening on the mainstage or in the PONCHO Forum would process in and out of the dressing rooms and wig room.

The scene had a wonderful back lot quality. Mary Tyrone from the PONCHO would stop to talk with Richard the Third from the Bagley. In the green room, Dan Sullivan and Wendy Wasserstein might be talking through the day’s work on The Heidi Chronicles (1987-1988 Other Season) or The Sisters Rosensweig (1991-1992 workshop season) and Peggy Scales, Dan’s and my assistant, indispensable to and beloved of everyone who passed through the Rep back then, might be taking down Wendy’s first pass at a rewrite. At five minutes to curtain, Mary Hunter, the company’s Zen mistress of a stage manager, would turn on the monitor and the slightly frightening, slightly thrilling buzz of the audience would fill the hallway.

I stood in the middle of it all and was fortunate enough at the time to realize how lucky I was.”

His theatre peers agreed. As John Aylward shared: “Nothing ever drove anybody crazy. I think there was just such a genuine family feeling. I mean everyone got frustrated with what was perceived at the time as Dan Sullivan’s aloofness and not really caring. But then you found out that he had one of the wryest...
senses of humor ever and incredible loyalty. He understood the need for an acting company to create the kind of work that he was interested in doing.”

Fellow actor Denis Arndt recalled: “There are too many wonderful experiences at the Rep to recount here. There were those plays directed by Doug Hughes, whose open commitment to the stage and love for the Rep gave us all just enough rope to hang ourselves and hang ourselves we did! We were all bad boys when we were working with Doug. He was smarter than any ten of us and ever gracious in his toleration and charity. Working for Doug gave me credibility as an actor. If Doug liked what I was doing, then I was doing it right.”

Or as Barbara Dirickson so graciously put it: “I think my favorite memories of the Rep were sitting in the theatre during techs watching a show come together. Listening to the director talk to the lighting and sound and costume designers and to the booth, having the designers and crew come and go from the stage. Everyone working toward the same goal—a show that would take an audience on a trip that they wouldn’t forget.

I loved watching all that incredible, hard work done by really talented people come together to produce something that hopefully seemed quite simple. Everyone working together to produce a dream that would end approximately 2 1/2 hours after it started. It was really quite magical. I loved those times in the theatre.”

From the beginning, Seattle Rep has had a commitment to the next generation of theatre artists and administrators. After a number of years of informal internships, the Professional Arts Training Program (PATP) was established in 1984. Since its inception, Seattle Rep has trained more than 400 young theatre professionals, most of whom have gone on to careers in non-profit theatres throughout the country.

Chris Sumption, a member of Seattle Rep artistic staff from 1997 to 2006, was part of the 1984 class. “1984 was a great time to work at the Rep. Dan Sullivan had been the artistic director for a few years at that point, Doug Hughes had just come on board to spearhead the new plays program, Peter Donnelly was at the helm on the management side, and the theatre had just moved into its beautiful new facility on Mercer Street. Everybody was cooking with gas. I was reading 5 plays a day surrounded by a whirlwind of production activity. On the mainstage, Dan directed Our Town and The Mandrake and The Wedding, Doug directed Passion Play, and Amy Saltz directed Night, Mother, a nice little play about suicide, just in time for Christmas. In the PONCHO there were new plays by Anthony Giardina, Mark O’Donnell, and others, plus the inauguration of what was called the Dollar Theatre, a series of wacky and surprising performance works like Botho Strauss’ Big and Little and Alan Lande’s Bread, Buns, and Butter.

In the midst of this, Dan sent me off on a mission to research material for a play he was planning to write about relationships between youth and the elderly. When he suddenly had to step in and replace Ellis Rabb as director of Herb Gardner’s I’m Not Rappaport, he said, ‘Chris, you’ve already done the research. Why don’t you write and direct the play?’ I just gulped and said yes. Several drafts, much hand-wringing, and numerous notes sessions later, with the help of a great cast and Seattle Rep’s peerless staff, a play I wrote called Oldies went on tour in Washington, Idaho, and Alaska.

More than anything, that’s what characterizes my experience of Seattle Rep: bold artistic leaders who put their faith in artists, put them to work, and then support them at an extraordinary level of excellence.”
EMPHASIS ON NEW PLAYS

From Daniel Sullivan’s inaugural production in the PONCHO Forum of Shivaree, new play development flourished at the Rep, with the theatre gaining a remarkable reputation as a great incubator for new plays. When hired, Hughes was charged with, as he termed it, “wooing playwrights to the wilds of the Northwest.”

And they came. Again, to quote Hughes: “They came because Dan and I could promise and deliver a great place to work. They returned because they learned that Seattle was a wondrously hip city and that the Rep was very important to its life. Whitman told us that in order to have great poets, there must be great audiences. Great playwrights need great audiences too. And the Rep’s audience supplied that vital ingredient for new work from Herb Gardner, Wendy Wasserstein, August Wilson, Harry Kondoleon, Reynolds Price, Arthur Laurents, and Lanford Wilson to name seven departed geniuses. August liked Seattle so much he moved to town and did a fair amount of writing at a rear table on the greasy spoon side of The Mecca. John Patrick Shanley flew out, as did John Robin Baitz, Bill Irwin, Rich Greenberg, Neil Simon, William Mastrosimone, and Mark O’Donnell. Lynda Barry and Kevin Kling, Joe Sutton, Michael Weller, Anthony Giardina, and Charlayne Woodard made the pilgrimage. Peter Sagal, now the hilarious host of NPR’s ‘Wait Wait… Don’t Tell Me!’ passed through with a fascinating and very dark script. Tim Blake Nelson, just out of The Juilliard School at the time, transfixed audiences with two haunting plays, Eye of God and The Grey Zone.

We used to say that because the weather was so lousy so often, Seattle’s citizens were more than willing to come in from the rain, sit together in the dark and listen to a story. Good for us.”

Good indeed. We asked a few of the artists who premiered their work during this period to share their stories. Enjoy!

KEVIN KLING

Kevin Kling, Performer: “I was performing in the PONCHO, and there was a production of Six Characters in Search of an Author (1990-1991 season) on the mainstage, directed by Liviu Ciulei. One of my heroes, Ken Ruta, was in the play. Even better, his dressing room was next to mine. I was too shy to approach him but could hear him warming up through the wall. Every night he would chant ‘RRRRrivula…rrrivula’ rolling the R’s.

I adopted it as my warm up and used it for the next several years. Ten years later I saw Ken and asked him if he remembered our time at the Rep. He did and we had a wonderful conversation. Finally I told him, ‘I still use your warm up.’

He looked puzzled and said, ‘I have never warmed up in my life.’

I said, ‘Yes, you did, every night I heard you … Rrrrivula.’

‘Oh that,’ he said. ‘No, every year I go to Finland. I love it there but I always seem to get indigestion. I wanted to be able to order something for it at the pharmacy so I learned the word for stomachache in Finnish, rivula.’

So for years I had been warming up saying indigestion in Finnish. I still do. Works great.”

Pictured on this page: Kevin Kling in Home and Away, 1991; picture on opposite page: Bill Irwin and cast in Largely/New York, 1989; photo credit: Chris Bennion.

Pictured on page A-12: Lily Tomlin in the Broadway production of The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe; photo credit: Annie Leibovitz.

"I don’t really remember not knowing of the Rep and the building that houses it. I can, of course, recall life before 1986 (or 5... or 7...?) but somehow it feels like the Rep has nearly always been a part of my theatre life. My first trip there—sometime in the 80’s—and getting the building tour from Dan Sullivan—and then a different one from Ben Moore (with different emphases)—all of this I can remember—but it feels that knowing people at the Rep, knowing that within the green walls the building was humming, abuzz with the doing of shows, that’s a big part of theatre adulthood for me... it’s a feeling of real or imagined continuity, and it feels that it’s nearly always been with me.

Of all the shows and projects I was part of at the Rep, my favorite, I think, was Largely/New York; it came to life in a small workshop in the PONCHO, then months later became a big mainstage show with the guidance of Ben Moore, upstairs; of Terry Sateren, in the shop; of Nancy Harrington in the back of the house; and with hundreds of hours of gifted brilliance and perseverance from everyone else at the Rep—onstage, in the offices, in the booth, everywhere. For me, that experience stood for the way a show is an organism of the many; it reaches an audience of many and is the gift and sweat of many, whatever its size (and Largely was huge: big numbers of us onstage, big crew, and I was blithely kept under the impression that I was in charge. I’m older now, I see all this).

BUT...ironically, my very favorite memory from this favorite time is not of a show or a rehearsal but of the time we all—nearly the entire company—were guests at Peggy Scales’ house and watched it snow and did some sledding, ate and drank, and then belatedly realized that the roads were impassible, that Seattle was closed down.

No amount of telephoning could change this fact and—I think finally with Ben Moore’s blessing—we all gave in and slept around Peggy’s fireplace and throughout her house and listened to the voices on the radio announcing the cancellation of our shows for the next two nights. We put chains on Peggy’s car—though on the wrong tires, so they did no good; we sang and told stories; we played the ukulele.

Then in two days we came back to the show, pretty much oblivious of the chaos which the box office and admin offices had to deal with, and brought a new energy and a new fire. The show went to Broadway; there were many Tony nominations, but its roots were always—and I think the best version of it was always—at Seattle Rep.”
In 1984, at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Jane Wagner and I presented the very last performances of our Broadway show, Appearing Nitely. We loved being at the Rep so much—everyone working there was so generous and creative, the audiences so expansive, the environment so positive—that we felt confident to do the first reading of Jane’s new play, The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe. So, one night after the performance of Appearing Nitely in the Bagley Wright, we headed over to the PONCHO Forum, and I read Jane’s play to an invited audience who sat on bleachers for almost four hours. As I recall, even though this was a late night reading, no one left—although, I’m pretty sure a couple of this gallant crowd nodded off from time to time.

Jane was so encouraged by their reaction to The Search that we went on the road to refine and finish the script. Serendipitously, the Rep had been built on the exact same stage plan as the Plymouth Theatre in New York where we were headed for a September 1985 opening of The Search. So, in June of that year, we returned to the Rep to put up The Search set and lights for the first time.

Again, everyone pitched in and gave us all the support we needed. There’s a scene in the play in which two prostitutes are in a car driving through the rain. Who else but Bob Scales, the tech director then, would have put in the time and ingenuity to help us build a device that would carry car headlamps by remote control across the darkened stage to set the late night mood. Joe Smelser dived in as our assistant stage manager to work alongside our production stage manager, Janet Beroza.

Thanks to the Rep, we then went on to Broadway and had one of the most glorious theatrical experiences of our lives. But years later, we once again returned to the Rep where we revived The Search in 2000—Seattle and the Rep had become a kind of theatre home for Jane and me.

And, a bit of the Rep will echo in every performance of The Search for a long time: there’s a scene in the play in a public bathroom in which Agnus Angst, the punk performance artist, is dressing for a gig because her parents have locked her out of the house. The sound effects for that scene were all recorded in the Ladies Room at the Rep—Agnus’ chains, her zippers, the electric razor she uses to tidy up her shaved head, faucets on and off, toilets flushing, stall doors opening and swinging closed, paper towels pulled from their holders.

I have gained such great insight into our work with the Seattle Rep audiences and always felt loved and appreciated when I was there. There’s not much else an actor needs to be happy for a lifetime. The Rep lives forever in my heart. Thank you from Jane and me to all of you.”

After years of consistently high quality work—and many plays moving from Seattle Rep to Broadway—the Rep began to gain significant national attention. In 1990, we were awarded the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, an award given once in a theatre’s history.
One of America’s truly original playwrights, August Wilson, made his debut on the Seattle Rep stages during this time period. Four times, to be exact: *Fences* (1985-1986 season); *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* (1986-1987 season); *Two Trains Running* (1990-1991 season); and *The Piano Lesson* (1992-1993 season).

To quote a Seattle Rep Prologue article during *Fences*: “Wilson’s plan is to write a play for each decade of the 20th century, focusing on the major problems facing blacks during each period. Through his work, Wilson hoped blacks, as well as whites, will develop a historical perspective on black values and sensibilities. ‘My generation of blacks knew very little about the past of our parents.’”

Long-time Rep patrons know he accomplished that task, and that our theatre produced them all. (More on that in upcoming Decades inserts.) Artistic Administrator Peggy Scales shared this intimate story from the time period:

“A unique bond sometimes occurs when theatre people work together on a production. It is born of long hours, intractable deadlines, and a relentless bent to produce quality. I was extremely fortunate to get to work on several August Wilson plays at Seattle Repertory Theatre.

**Lloyd Richards**, who for years directed the original productions of August’s plays, was at the Rep directing *The Piano Lesson*, and I had assisted Lloyd in an earlier production of Wilson’s *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*. One night **Doug Hughes**, who was the Associate Artistic Director at the Rep, took Lloyd, August, **Constanza Romero** (engaged to August, soon to become his wife), and me to dinner at Il Bistro in the Pike Place Market.

I was telling tales about living in Stratford, Ontario, in 1976, and how the Canadian press was derisive of America’s bicentennial hoopla, especially making fun of our national anthem. One editorial stated that after some grade school children in Iowa sang it, the dogs howled for two weeks; that Francis Scott Key could not have seen the flag floating above Ft. McHenry that fateful night because it was raining, and the flag would have been stuck to the flagpole; and that Robert Goulet forgot the words when singing it before a football game. The editor had ended his rant by stating unequivocally that the musical score was impossible to sing and that nobody could remember the words, even if they could master the music.

When I finished, August said, ‘Well, Peggy, do you remember the words?’ I said I thought I did. In fact, we all thought we did. And so the five of us huddled our heads in close over the table, and together we sang, very softly, the American national anthem.

When we finished, we sat back, looked at each other, and smiled.”
MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION HISTORY

1983–1984 SEASON
The Ballad of Soapy Smith by Michael Weller
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn adapted
by James Hammerstein & Christopher Harbon
Make and Break by Michael Frayn
The Misanthrope by Molière; translated by Richard Wilbur
Master Harold ... and the boys by Athol Fugard
As You Like It by William Shakespeare

1984–1985 SEASON
Our Town by Thornton Wilder
Passion Play by Peter Nichols
I’m Not Rappaport by Herb Gardner
The Mandrake by Niccolo Machiavelli & The Wedding
by Bertolt Brecht (one acts)
‘night, Mother by Marsha Norman
Guys and Dolls—book by Jo Swerling & Abe Burrows,
music & lyrics by Frank Loesser

1985–1986 SEASON
The Merry Wives of Windsor by William Shakespeare
All My Sons by Arthur Miller
The Real Thing by Tom Stoppard
The Forest by Alexander Ostrovsky, adapted by Douglas Hughes
Fences by August Wilson
Girl Crazy—book by Guy Bolton & John McGowan,
music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin

1986–1987 SEASON
Richard III by William Shakespeare
You Can’t Take It with You by Moss Hart & George S. Kaufman
Joe Turner’s Come and Gone by August Wilson
Noises Off by Michael Frayn
A Moon for the Misbegotten by Eugene O’Neill
Red Square by Theodore Faro Gross

1987–1988 SEASON
The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertolt Brecht
Home by David Storey
The Garden of Earthly Delights—conceived and directed
by Martha Clarke, music by Richard Peaslee
Tartuffe by Molière, translated by Richard Wilbur
Hogan’s Goat by William Alfred
Eastern Standard by Richard Greenberg

1988–1989 SEASON
The Tempest by William Shakespeare
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams
Largely/NY by Bill Irwin
Nothing Sacred by George F. Walker
Les Liaisons Dangereuses by Christopher Hampton
Truffles in the Soup by Daniel Hampton and the SRT Resident
Acting Company, adapted from Carlo Goldoni’s
The Servant of Two Masters

1989–1990 SEASON
The Heidi Chronicles by Wendy Wasserstein
A Flea in Her Ear by Georges Feydeau, adaptation
by Frank Galati
Feast of Fools—written, conceived and performed
by Geoff Hoyle
The Playboy of the Western World by John Millington Synge
The Cherry Orchard by Anton Chekhov
Sunday in the Park with George—music and lyrics
by Stephen Sondheim, book by James Lapine

1990–1991 SEASON
Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare
The House of Blue Leaves by John Guare
Two Trains Running by August Wilson
Six Characters in Search of an Author by Luigi Pirandello
The Miser by Molière, translation by Douglas Hughes
Conversations with My Father by Herb Gardner

1991–1992 SEASON
Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare
M. Butterfly by David Henry Hwang
Redwood Curtain by Lanford Wilson
When We Are Married by J.B. Priestley
Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen, new English version
by Douglas Hughes from a translation by Csanad Z. Siklos
The Good Times Are Killing Me by Lynda Barry

1992–1993 SEASON
Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
Inspecting Carol by Daniel Sullivan and the SRT Resident
Acting Company
Lips Together, Teeth Apart by Terrence McNally
The Brothers Karamazov by the Flying Karamazov Brothers
Heartbreak House by George Bernard Shaw
The Piano Lesson by August Wilson
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Since 1963, community leaders have served as members of Seattle Rep’s Board of Trustees. By volunteering their time, energy, passion, wisdom and financial support, these dedicated men and women have strengthened the theatre artistically and financially. We are grateful for their remarkable contribution to Seattle Rep’s growth during the third decade, 1983–1993.

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