

TO BE
YOUNG
GREEN
AND
BLACK

by Lorraine Hansberry

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

To Be Young, Gifted and Black is less a portrait of a remarkable individual than it is - in her own words, experiences and the characters she created - a celebration of one writer's view of the human spirit. It is not a memorial; the very character of the work Lorraine Hansberry left should dictate the affirmative, almost "upbeat" tenor of its presentation.

This play is a representation of all of her plays in an autobiographical presentation of her life. The plays presented are *Raisin in the Sun*, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, *The Drinking Gourd*, *Le Blanc* and other dramatic essays.

A PORTRAIT OF LORRAINE HANSBERRY 1930-1965

Lorraine Hansberry was born in Chicago of prosperous upper middle class parents. Pride in family was one of Miss Hansberry's leading characteristics. Her father, a prominent real estate investor and banker, spent a private fortune, she tells us, in fighting restrictive covenants in Chicago. Several times the family withstood threats of violence and riot while their right to live in a hitherto all white neighborhood was carried to the courts. Ironically enough, in terms of this background and in terms of the theme of her most notable play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, a minor scandal broke out after the initial success of her play, when in the summer of 1959 it was revealed that the Hansberry Enterprises, of which Miss Hansberry was a corporate member, had invoked the wrath of the city fathers for innumerable infractions of the housing code and that the Hansberrys were, indeed, prominent slumlords on Chicago's Southside.

Educated first in the public schools of Chicago's Southside, Miss Hansberry sought initially to make a name for herself, not as a writer, but as a painter. She studied painting at the Chicago Art Institute, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Guadalajara, in Mexico. Deciding that art was not her metier, Miss Hansberry left Chicago in 1950 to become a New Yorker, where she studied at the new school, worked at odd jobs as a department store clerk, a producer's helper, and as a waitress in a Greenwich Village restaurant run by the family of Robert Nemiroff, a composer and writer, whom she later married.

Turning from painting to writing, Miss Hansberry in New York joined the staff of Paul Robeson's *Freedom*, a left-wing Harlem journal, in 1951. She wrote articles and reviews, and tried her hand at poetry and the writing of plays. Her first complete play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, opened in New York in 1959 after successful tryouts in Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia and won the Critics Circle Award for that year. Dealing with the aspirations, dreams and frustrations of the Younger family, *A Raisin in the Sun* was the first play on the American stage to portray a black family in a natural and human manner. Miss Hansberry's second play, *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* (1964) deals mainly with white characters. A posthumous compilation of unproduced works was presented in New York in 1969 under the title *To Be Young, Beautiful and Black*.

TO BE YOUNG, GIFTED AND BLACK

by Lorraine Hansberry

Directed by JIM SYMMONS
Set Designed by MARK MORRISON
Lighting Designed by ALLEN HAINES
DAVID POLSKY

BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY THEATRE

November 30, December 1, 2, 1979



A CAP AND DAGGER PRODUCTION



My name is Lorraine Hansberry. I am a writer. I suppose I think that the highest gift that man has is art, and I am audacious enough to think of myself as a artist—that there is both joy and beauty and illumination and communion between people to be achieved through the dissection of personality. That's what I want to do. I want to reach a little closer to the world, which is to say to people, and see if we can share some illuminations together about each other . . .

I happen to believe that most people—and this is where I differ from many of my contemporaries, or at least as they express themselves—I think that virtually every human being is dramatically interesting. Not only is he dramatically interesting, he is a creature of stature, whoever he is."

-Lorraine Hansberry

THE CAST

In Order of Appearance

JUDY HILL	KEMBERLY WALLACE
GREGORY JENNETT	AMY FORTGANG
TOM SHIELDS	MICHAEL JACKSON
CAROL CLAY	KEVON MAKELL
JULIA HOLDREN	T. C. MESEROLL
	MICHELLE BROWN

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 CONSTRUCTION BRUCE DELAPLANE
 Melissa Bodine, Gwyn English, Monica Lee, Will Walters
 LIGHTS ALLEN HAINES
 Melissa Bodine, Cynthia Davis, Mike Green
 COSTUMES KAILIN SHAIBLE
 PROPS JUANITA BARNES
 MAKE-UP DODIE RIPPON
 Jackie Krull, Lynn Sanborn
 PUBLICITY/HOUSE NOELLE GREENE
 Dave Blackman, Jackie Krull, Lynn Sanborn
 SOUND DON LAPHAM
 TICKETS & PATRONS MANAGER TERESA GORKA

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