

February 20, 2018

**Lewis Center for the Arts presents**

**Ruben Santiago-Hudson in Residence**

***Tony and Obie Award-winning actor/director/playwright is a Visiting Belknap Fellow in the Humanities Council and the Program in Theater at Princeton***



Photo caption: Tony and Obie Award-winning director, playwright and actor Ruben Santiago-Hudson

Photo credit: Joseph Marzullo

Who: Tony and Obie Award-winning theater director, playwright, and stage and film actor Ruben Santiago-Hudson, a Visiting Belknap Fellow in the Humanities Council and the Lewis Center for the Arts Program in Theater at Princeton University

What: Directs a reading of August Wilson’s play *Seven Guitars* with actor Keith Randolph Smith and Princeton students and discusses diversity in American theater in a conversation with Assistant Professor of Theater Brian Herrera

When/Where: Conversation on February 27 at 1:30 p.m. in the Godfrey Kerr Studio and play reading on March 2 at 7:30 p.m. in the Donald G. Drapkin Studio, both located at the Lewis Arts complex on the Princeton University campus

**Free and open to the public**

(Princeton, NJ) Award-winning director, playwright, and stage and film actor Ruben Santiago-Hudson will direct a reading of August Wilson’s play *Seven Guitars* and discuss diversity in American theater in a conversation with Assistant Professor of Theater Brian Herrera as part of a week-long residency at Princeton University. The conversation will be held on February 27 at 1:30 p.m. in the Godfrey Kerr Studio and the play reading on March 2 at 7:30 p.m. in the Donald G. Drapkin Studio, both venues at the Lewis Arts complex on the Princeton University campus. These events are free and open to the public.

Santiago-Hudson is a Visiting Belknap Fellow in the Humanities Council and the Lewis Center for the Arts’ Program in Theater at Princeton and is in residence at the University from February 26 to March 2. The events are being presented by the Council and Lewis Center in partnership with the Department of African American Studies and the student organization Black Arts Company (BAC) Drama.

Santiago-Hudson recently directed the world premieres of Dominique Morriseau’s *Skeleton Crew* at the Atlantic Theater and *Paradise Blue* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival. He won a Tony Award when he starred in Wilson’s *Seven Guitars* on Broadway and later went on to direct the play himself to high praise. Other directing credits include *The Piano Lesson, The First Breeze of Summer, Cabin in the Sky*, among other plays. The multi-award-winning director and actor wrote, executive produced, and starred in the HBO film *Lackawanna Blues*, based on his award-winning play. It received several honors, including Emmy, Golden Globe, Humanitas, National Board of Review, and Christopher awards. He stars alongside Anika Noni Rose in BET’s drama, *The Quad*, which premiered in January 2017. Santiago-Hudson has a recurring rolle on Showtime’s *Billions* and recently starred in TNT’s *Public Morals*. The Lackawanna, New York, native opened the Ruben Santiago-Hudson Fine Arts Learning Center in 2014 in his hometown.

The February 27 conversation is being presented in conjunction with Herrera’s spring course “Movements for Diversity in American Theater.” The course, a collaboration among the Programs in Theater, American Studies, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and Latino Studies, undertakes a critical, creative, and historical overview of agitation and advocacy by theater artist-activists aiming to transform American theatre-making as both industry and creative practice, and connects those histories with the practices, structures, and events determining the ways diversity is (and is not) a guiding principle of contemporary American theater.

Santiago-Hudson directs professional actor Keith Randolph Smith and Princeton students in the March 2 reading of *Seven Guitars.* Santiago-Hudson received the 1996 Tony Award for his performance in the play on Broadway. *Seven Guitars* focuses on seven African-American characters in the year 1948. The play begins and ends after the funeral of one of the main characters, showing events leading to the funeral in flashbacks. *Seven Guitars* represents the 1940s entry in Wilson's *Pittsburgh Cycle*, a decade-by-decade anthology of African-American life in that city during the 20th century.

The residency was organized by Jane Cox, Director of the Program in Theater, who has designed lighting for Santiago-Hudson on several occasions, including for the Broadway production of August Wilson's *Jitney* that he directed, and which won the 2017 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play. “I couldn't be more excited to have the opportunity to share Ruben's brilliance as a creator, performer, theater director, and thinker with the Princeton community,” said Cox.

In addition to these public events, Santiago-Hudson will host an acting and directing master class on February 26 in which students in the Program in Theater will work alongside Santiago-Hudson as he critiques and comments on acting monologues and directing scenes. This event is open to Princeton students, faculty, and staff to observe. On February 27 Santiago-Hudson will be in conversation with Princeton students on “Building a Life in the Performing Arts as a Person of Color.”

To learn more about this event, the Program in Theater, and the more than 100 other performances, exhibitions, readings, screenings, concerts, and lectures presented by the Lewis Center, most of them free, visit [arts.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu/arts).

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