



City of Pittsburgh

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Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Text File

Introduced: 9/4/2018

Bill No: 2018-0836, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, Wali Jamal Abdullah has reached a milestone in his career and in the American theater as one of the very few actors to perform in all ten plays of August Wilson's **AMERICAN CENTURY CYCLE** (aka The Pittsburgh Cycle) and as the only one of those to have also performed August Wilson's 11th play, the one-man, autobiographical *How I Learned What I Learned*. His performances include: *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Toledo w/ August Wilson in attendance), *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Seth Holly), *Piano Lesson* (twice, as Avery/Boy Willie), *Two Trains Running* (Wolf), *Jitney* (Doub), *Seven Guitars* (once as Canewell/ twice as Hedley), *Fences* (twice as Bono), *Gem of the Ocean* (Caesar), *Radio Golf* (Sterling), and *King Hedley II* (Elmore); and,

WHEREAS, Wali Jamal will again appear as August Wilson in *How I Learned What I Learned*, this Aug. 30-Sept. 1 at Pittsburgh's New Hazlett Theatre, and will again play Toledo in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, Sept. 14-Oct. 1 at Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre; and,

WHEREAS, Wali Jamal is a Pittsburgh native and a stalwart in Pittsburgh's vibrant theatre community. Wali Jamal has been acting on Pittsburgh stages for over two decades; and,

WHEREAS, Wali Jamal is an award-winning playwright; he is the Founder and Creator of History's Flipside, the history-based theatrical company that has produced the plays spotlighting Pittsburgh's black history, including *Robert Smalls: Legend of the Black Mariner*, performed at Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater Company; *Martin Delany Lives*, performed at the August Wilson Center (Martin Delany was the first black doctor in Pittsburgh, owned the very first black run newspaper west of the Alleghenies called The Mystery. Delany was the highest -ranking black man to serve in the UNION ARMY during the Civil War); and *The Gleam in Teenie's Eye*;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby commend Wali Jamal Abdullah for the work he does on behalf of Pittsburgh's theater community as well as his performances in greater Pittsburgh schools;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare Aug. 30-Sept 1, 2018 to be "**Wali Jamal Abdullah Weekend**" in the City of Pittsburgh.