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**"Art for August" Exhibit Opens, and  
August Wilson Essay Contest Winners Announced, May 17  
As Part of Month-Long Birthday Celebration for August Wilson**

\*\*\*Dollar Bank and August Wilson Center Honor the Playwright Throughout May\*\*\*

PITTSBURGH, PA – May 16, 2007 – The August Wilson Center for African American Culture and the August Wilson Birthday Celebration Committee, with the generous support of Dollar Bank and the Pittsburgh Chapter of The Links, Inc., present the remounting of the acclaimed visual arts exhibition, **"Art for August,"** a project of The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. **"Art for August"** is part of the month-long celebration in recognition of what would have been August Wilson's 62nd birthday.

Curated by Janera Solomon, the exhibition will open on Thursday, May 17 and run through August 31 at the August Wilson Center's Gallery 209/9, 209 Ninth Street, between Penn and Liberty avenues in the Cultural District. The exhibition is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, noon to 5 pm, and Thursday, noon to 7 pm. For more information, visit [www.augustwilsoncenter.org](http://www.augustwilsoncenter.org) or call 412-258-2700.

An opening night reception from 6 to 8 pm on May 17, hosted by members of the Pittsburgh Chapter of The Links, Inc., will feature the announcement of five winners of the first annual August Wilson Essay Contest. The winning high school students – one each from Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington and Westmoreland counties – will receive \$1,000 scholarships for their participation in the essay contest that encouraged students to read Mr. Wilson's plays and "write their own stories of triumph".

Eleven Pittsburgh-based artists will exhibit works of art using a variety of media; each work inspired by the plays, poetry and life of August Wilson. Participating artists included in this exhibition are: Leslie Ansley, Norman Brown, Curtis Cureton, Elizabeth Asche Douglas, Vanessa German, Kyle Holbrook, Chris Ivey, Monique Kollman Luck, Mary Martin, Saihou Njie and Sarah Williams. Pieces by Tina Williams Brewer and Kenneth Neely, featured in the 2006 **"Art for August,"** are traveling.

Accompanying the exhibition is a fully illustrated, four-color catalogue, available to visitors through the generosity of the Pittsburgh Chapter of The Links, Inc., a not-for-profit organization of more than 12,000 women of color committed to enhancing the quality of life in their communities.

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Janis Burley Wilson, Vice President of Education and Community Engagement for The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and August Wilson Birthday Celebration Committee member, says, "It is fitting to have this show on display in the August Wilson Center's Gallery 209/9 as part of the month-long series of events celebrating August Wilson's birthday. These local visual artists created work that was inspired by his writings in the same vein as Mr. Wilson himself was inspired by the artwork of Romare Bearden. We are pleased to see the beauty of **"Art for August"** once again."

Previously shown in Pittsburgh in early 2006, **"Art for August"** is a project of The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust's Education and Community Engagement Department, with the generous support of Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and the Multicultural Arts Initiative.

Other events planned for the month-long August Wilson Birthday Celebration include:

- Emmy Award-winning actor and director Charles S. Dutton paying tribute to his friend by performing the one-man show he developed entitled "Goodnight Mr. Wilson" at the Byham Theater on Wednesday, May 23 at 8 pm; and
- The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in association with the Senator John Heinz History Center and the August Wilson Center, unveiling an official state historical marker noting the location of Mr. Wilson's boyhood home at 1727 Bedford Avenue in the Hill District on Wednesday, May 30 at 10 am.

The kickoff celebration on April 27, Mr. Wilson's birthday, featured the unveiling of a multimedia remembrance of the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright entitled "August Wilson's Pittsburgh: The Ground On Which He Stood." Funded by Dollar Bank, the video contains original interviews from Mr. Wilson's Hill District peers and footage of the man himself accepting the 2003 Heinz Award for Arts and Humanities.

The August Wilson Center for African American Culture and Dollar Bank collaborated on the celebration. Chaired by Mona N. Generett, Vice President for Community Development at Dollar Bank, the August Wilson Birthday Celebration Committee includes: Demeatria Gibson Boccella, Multicultural Arts Initiative, James F. Carroll, Jr., Dollar Bank, Gerald Lopes, Kingsley Association and American Urban Radio Networks, Beth Mellor, Allegheny County Library Association, Pam Quatchak and Cecile Shellman, August Wilson Center, Joseph B. Smith, Dollar Bank, and Janis Burley Wilson, The Links, Inc. and The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.

Sponsors of the August Wilson Essay Contest are the Alcoa Foundation, the Kingsley Association, the Allegheny County Library Association and Dollar Bank. Members of the Pittsburgh Chapter of The Links, Inc. served as final judges for the essay competition.

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