



## Smithsonian Institution

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

### Playbill for Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

Extracted on Feb-05-2023 09:22:23

**The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.**

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website ([transcription.si.edu](https://transcription.si.edu)), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the National Museum of African American History and Culture as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the National Museum of African American History and Culture website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact National Museum of African American History and Culture or [transcribe@si.edu](mailto:transcribe@si.edu)

For more information on this project and related material, contact the National Museum of African American History and Culture. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

[[double line]]

Derek Jacobi is best known here for television's I Claudius

at the Royal Shakespeare Company has in a sense been 20 years overdue. A golden boy of Britain's National Youth Theatre and then of Cambridge undergraduate acting circles, he progressed straight from college to the Birmingham Repertory Company at a time when it was traditional that the leading man there was invited at the end of the season to audition for Stratford:

"Lined up on the stage there were all the 1963 directors -- Peter Hall, Peter Brook, John Barton, Michel St. Denis--they asked me if I'd like to give them something so I gave them 'To Be or Not To Be,' and a few days later there came an embarrassed note from Peter Hall saying that it was Not To Be."

Instead Jacobi went to the founding season at Chichester where Laurence Olivier was building up the first British National Theatre company, and with that company he stayed for the next eight years, working his way through the ranks from spears to leading classical roles at the Old Vic in everything from Noel Coward's Hay Fever to Laertes in O'Toole's Hamlet. Then followed a period in films and television (most notably, of course, the stammering title role in I Claudius) and a return to the classical stage when the RSC at last rang with a sizeable offer and "the telephone went red hot in my hands." Though he still has hopes of one day making "the really big film, just to see what it feels like," there's no doubt that Jacobi is most at home on the classical stage, whether barnstorming the world with the RSC or working in the most intimate surroundings of one of their London or Stratford studio stages. Not that this will be his Broadway debut: He was last here with the short-lived Suicide in 1980.

This time things are looking a good deal more promising for him, as indeed they are for Sinead Cusack: The current Roxane-Beatrice double rounds off a memorable seven year stint with the RSC during which time she has managed to shake off all the labels she first acquired as "Cyril Cusack's daughter" and "Jeremy Iron's wife" and establish herself as one of the best classical actresses of her mid-30's generation. Though she could probably have stayed forever in work at the Abbey Theatre Dublin as a member of Ireland's leading theatrical family, she came to England at 21 and achieved early if soon-abandoned stardom in a forgettable Peter Sellers movie called Hoffman. She also achieved considerable gossip-column fame as a girlfriend of the footballer George Best, none of which made it exactly easy for her to persuade the RSC that they should be taking her seriously as a classical actress.

But by the mid-1970's she was starring with Irons (they now have a son called Sam) in the second cast of Wild Oats at the RSC's London base, and since then, while he was off to Brideshead and The French Lieutenant's Woman, she stayed with the company, working her way up to a fiery Kate in Taming of the Shrew and the current Broadway double as well as a Portia in Merchant of Venice and Lady Anne in Richard III.

"For years I was dreadfully typecast in films and television because I have this round face, blue eyes and blonde hair: It was the RSC who taught me that there was a lot more to being an actress. Imagine: They give you eight weeks rehearsal in Stratford, then another eight weeks in London and another eight before you go off on tour. If you can't get it right by then, there must be something very wrong with you."

**Derek Jacobi is best known here for television's I Claudius**

at the Royal Shakespeare Company has in a sense been 20 years overdue. A golden boy of Britain's National Youth Theatre and then of Cambridge undergraduate acting circles, he progressed straight from college to the Birmingham Repertory Company at a time when it was traditional that the leading man there was invited at the end of the season to audition for Stratford:

"Lined up on the stage there were all the 1963 directors -- Peter Hall, Peter Brook, John Barton, Michel St. Denis--they asked me if I'd like to give them something so I gave them 'To Be or Not To Be,' and a few days later there came an embarrassed note from Peter Hall saying that it was Not To Be."

Instead Jacobi went to the founding season at Chichester where Laurence Olivier was building up the first British National Theatre company, and with that company he stayed for the next eight years, working his way through the ranks from spears to leading classical roles at the Old Vic in everything from Noel Coward's Hay Fever to Laertes in O'Toole's Hamlet. Then followed a period in films and television (most notably, of course, the stammering title role in I Claudius) and a return to the classical stage when the RSC at last rang with a sizeable offer and "the telephone went red hot in my hands." Though he still has hopes of one day making "the really big film, just to see what it feels like," there's no doubt that Jacobi is most at home on the classical stage, whether barnstorming the world with the RSC or working in the most intimate surroundings of one of their London or Stratford studio stages. Not that this will be his Broadway debut: He was last here with the short-lived Suicide in 1980.

This time things are looking a good deal more promising for him, as indeed they are for Sinead Cusack: The current Roxane-Beatrice double rounds off a memorable seven year stint with the RSC during which time she has managed to shake off all the labels she first acquired as "Cyril Cusack's daughter" and "Jeremy Iron's wife" and establish herself as one of the best classical actresses of her mid-30's generation. Though she could probably have stayed forever in work at the Abbey Theatre Dublin as a member of Ireland's leading theatrical family, she came to England at 21 and achieved early if soon-abandoned stardom in a forgettable Peter Sellers movie called Hoffman. She also achieved considerable gossip-column fame as a girlfriend of the footballer George Best, none of which made it exactly easy for her to persuade the RSC that they should be taking her seriously as a classical actress.

But by the mid-1970's she was starring with Irons (they now have a son called Sam) in the second cast of Wild Oats at the RSC's London base, and since then, while he was off to Brideshead and The French Lieutenant's Woman, she stayed with the company, working her way up to a fiery Kate in Taming of the Shrew and the current Broadway double as well as a Portia in Merchant of Venice and Lady Anne in Richard III.

"For years I was dreadfully typecast in films and television because I have this round face, blue eyes and blonde hair: It was the RSC who taught me that there was a lot more to being an actress. Imagine: They give you eight weeks rehearsal in Stratford, then another eight weeks in London and another eight before you go off on tour. If you can't get it right by then, there must be something very wrong with you."

**No, it's not. It's a \$60 Fortron.**

**Fortunoff, the source.**

It's not diamond, not even close. But it's a watch which looks as expensive as one, which has a guarantee as good as any, which keeps an accurate time as fine, and as light as that.

The answer is right on its brass dial, which simply reads the correct time of the trademark Fortron Quartz.

Being a Fortron Quartz, as with all Fortron watches, it's not an ordinary, cheaply made watch. It's a precision instrument, a masterpiece of modern watchmaking, right on the premises.

Now, there's nothing just for it. It's a superb watch with a Swiss electric quartz movement made same to same.

The Fortron Quartz is available exclusively at:

**Fortunoff, the source.**

1000 BROADWAY, 22nd Floor, New York, N.Y. 10002-1212  
PH: 212-675-1100  
FORSOURCE, N.Y. Product No. 121212  
FORSOURCE, N.Y. Product No. 121212

It's not diamond, not even close. But it's a watch which looks as expensive as one, which has a guarantee as good as any, which keeps an accurate time as fine, and as light as that.

The answer is right on its brass dial, which simply reads the correct time of the trademark Fortron Quartz.

Being a Fortron Quartz, as with all Fortron watches, it's not an ordinary, cheaply made watch. It's a precision instrument, a masterpiece of modern watchmaking, right on the premises.

Now, there's nothing just for it. It's a superb watch with a Swiss electric quartz movement made same to same.

The Fortron Quartz is available exclusively at:

**Fortunoff, the source.**

1000 BROADWAY, 22nd Floor, New York, N.Y. 10002-1212  
PH: 212-675-1100  
FORSOURCE, N.Y. Product No. 121212  
FORSOURCE, N.Y. Product No. 121212

But despite her recent arrival at classical status, Miss Cusack remains a fiery and very funny lady. When she was first living with Irons during the run of Wild Oats and discovered that she was pregnant, she waited until he was about to go on for his big scene at the matinee. Then, backstage, she whispered the news to him: "wickedly unprofessional," as she says, "but very enjoyable."

10

[[end page]]  
[[start page]]

[[advertisement]]

No, it's not. It's a \$60 Fortron™.

[[image - color photograph of a Fortron watch]]

It just doesn't make sense. How could a watch which looks as expensive as this, which has a guarantee as good as this, which keeps as accurate time as this, cost as little as this?

The answer is right on its beautiful face, which displays - besides the exact time- the trademark Fortron™ Quartz.

Being a Fortron Quartz, as with all Fortron watches, it has the inspired, elegant look of watches costing hundreds of times more. Being a Fortron Quartz, it has the full backing of Fortunoff. Which means its performance, reliability and battery are guaranteed for two full years. And because it has an authentic Swiss electronic quartz movement, it's about as accurate as a watch can be.

And you can have your Fortron Quartz watch professionally serviced at any Fortunoff, by our own watchmakers, right on the premises.

Now does spending just \$60 for a superb watch with a Swiss electronic quartz movement make sense to you?

The Fortron Quartz is available exclusively at Fortunoff, the source.

NEW YORK, N.Y. Fifth Ave. at 54th.  
WESTBURY, L.I. 1300 Old Country Rd. at Roosevelt Raceway.  
WAYNE N.J. Westbelt Rte. 23 next to Willowbrook Mall.  
PARAMUS, N.J. Paramus Park Mall, Rte. 17.

To order by phone: (212) 343-8787 or (516) 294-3300. Toll free Outside NY  
State: (800) 223-2326.

Add \$3 handling charges. Add sales tax if applicable. New York, open 10 to 6. Mon. thru Sat; Thur. 10 to 8. Westbury & Wayne, open 10 to 9:30, Mon. thru Sat; Sun. 12-5.  
Paramus, open 10 to 9:30, Mon. thru Sat.

Shown here "Wall Street" model, available in both men's & women's styles.

[[/advertisement]]

Playbill for Ma Rainey's Black Bottom  
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers  
Extracted Feb-05-2023 09:22:23



## Smithsonian Institution

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: [www.si.edu](http://www.si.edu)

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)