

Written by Thom White
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Fences might more aptly be titled *Porches*, as author August Wilson's characters spend much of the play sitting on a porch, swapping stories. Yet the script is so well written - with its raw, realistic dialogue and slice-of-life style - that it's not surprising that Wilson's drama won both the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1987 and the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play just last month.

And while Monday night's preview performance of th

e Playcrafters Barn Theatre's

Fences

was

n't quite at the award-worthy level

, the production

s

houldn't be overlooked when planning a night at the theatre.

The sixth in Wilson's 10-part Pittsburgh Cycle - which focuses on the African-American experience in 20th-Century America - *Fences* is set primarily in the late 1950's. Garbage collector Troy Maxson (Fred Harris Jr.) is the patriarch of his family, which includes his wife of 18 years, Rose (Shanna Cramer), their son, Cory (Tylin Roberts), and Troy's son from a previous relationship, Lyons (Reggie Jarrell), who seems to only stop by to borrow money. Taking place in a time of great change, the play finds Troy adamant that his experiences - both racial and vocational - won't be experiences shared by Cory, even if preventing his son from following in his footsteps calls for tough love and violent arguments.

Like Father, Love Son: "Fences," at the Playcrafters Barn Theatre through July 18

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