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'Raisin in the Sun' Hilm Rights Sold

Columbia Pictures has pur chased the screen rights to "A Raisin in the Sun," the Lorraine Hansberry hit play at the Ethel Barrymore Theater. David Susskind and Philip Rose will produce the film script which will be written by Miss Hansberry. Columbia is also seeking the services of Sidney Poitier and Claudia McNeil, who are starred to the stage version for the

Claudia McNeil, who are starred in the stage version, for the creen reproduction.

The play deals with the ruggles of a Negro family in hicago to achieve middle-class respectability. All the leading covers are Negroes.

yers are Negroes.

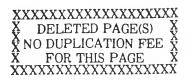
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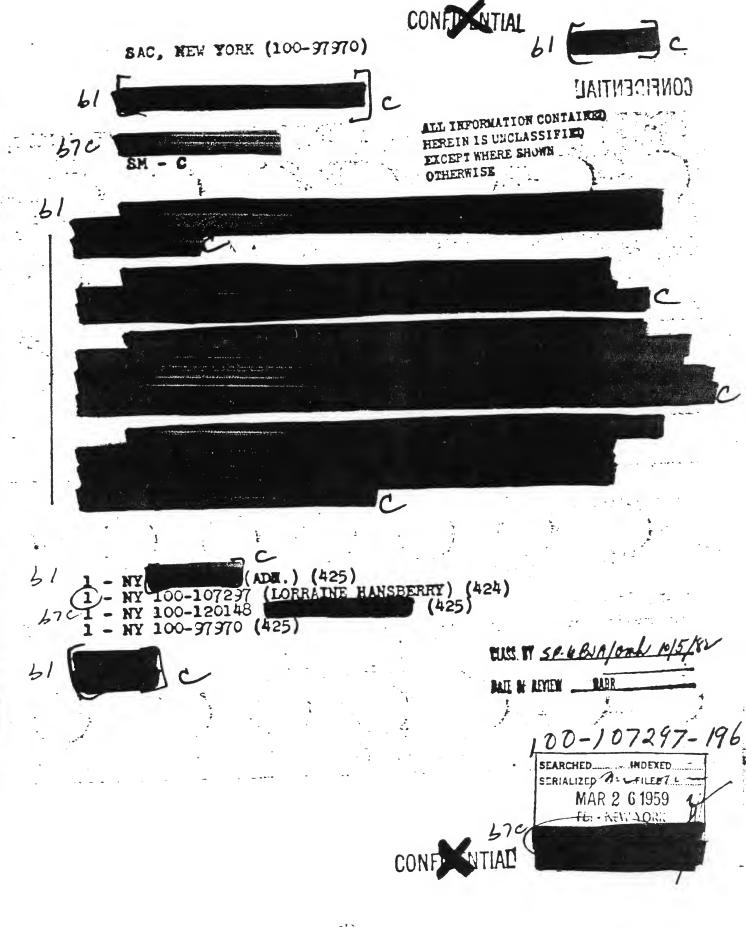


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#### The Arrival of Lorraine Hansberry

One thing should be made clear immediately about . Raisin in the Sun." Although only the most contemptible of radal higots could help being gratified by the success of an important drama written, directed and played by Negroes, the praise bestowed by the local reviewers on

Negroes, the praise bestowed by the socal reviewers and Lorraine Hansberry's play had most favorable reviews of Miss mothing to do with this gratification. The unanimously enthusing a still critical press arose, not around the second that we had seen a from any sentimental predisposition, but because we had seen a favorable work of dramatic art, smoving, compassionate but units sparingly honest, written with sparingly honest, written with intelligence and candor, and staged and acted with memorable points. It never grows sentimental about the reviews of Miss most favorable reviews of Miss Hansberry's play will do it an unitered disservice in one sentimental predisposition.

staged and acted with memorable stail and distinction.

As a matter of fact, the play about an impoverished Negro family in Chicago faced a first right handicap that later auditiences will not have to bring to the reviewers and many after the reviewers and many of the other spectators had seen fannessee Williams' "Sweet Bird of Youth," and, irrespective of any other critical comparisons, a characteristic Tennessee Williams good, sound foundation for what the solar plexus that tends to members of the Younger family,

is the solar plexus that tends to members of the Younger family, make even some reasonably dy but, instead, looking at them namic dramas seem remarkably frankly and candidly, with all placid. That the comparatively their frailties showing, Mass quiet "A Raisin in the Sun" still Hansberry pays them the commoved all of us so deeply must pliment of regarding them as trainly be a striking tribute warm-blooded, fallible human beings. And, because her delineation of character has such clear-cycle comparation, her men and must be some payed on the results of the Younger family, and candidly, with all placed to the results of the Younger family, but, instead, looking at them family, and candidly, with all placed to the results of the Younger family, the family, and candidly, with all placed to the results of the Younger family, and candidly, with all placed to the results of the Younger family, the family, and candidly, with all placed to the family family, and candidly, with all placed to the family family and candidly, with all placed to the family family

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ward her—and us—by emging as people of great innerlgnity and strength, with the apacity for rising to any crisis. They become both believable and appealing, and their drama takes on power and significance.

The versaility of Miss Hansberry's gift for character drawing is indicated by her two central igures, the family matriarch and her wayward son. Without great kill in the writing, the old woman might have seemed a cliche of sentimentality and the young man a conventional stage weaking. The fact that the roles are so beautifully played by Claudia McNell and Sidney Poitier counts, of course, heavily, but the 28-year-old playwright's ability to see into the human heart with humor and understanding is evident in both portraits, just as it is, for example, in the delightful characterizations of the scatterbrained daughter and her Nigerian suitor.

There isn't a more enchanting portrayer of humorous and warm-hearted grandeur than Miss McNeil, who has all of Ethel Waters' richness of spirit in addition to a quality of her own, and no finer young actor than Mr. Poitier. But, then, every role is splendidly played. Everyone in the cast deserves praise, but I was particularly pleased by the fresh comic charm of Diana Sands as the daughter, the quiet humor of Ivan Lee as the young Nigerian, and the sympathetic directness of Ruby Dee as the troubled wife. And Lloyd Richards' staging places him at on'z among the important director. A Raisin in the Sun" is a victor for dramatic Integrity.

#### RAISIN IN THE SUN

Vivid Drama About A Poor Negro Family

ALTHOUGH the acting in Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun" is we-hement, it never seems excessive. Under the direction of Lloyd Richards, the scenes of crisis in the script touch off explosions in the performance. But the explosions never give an impression of being arbitrary.

For Miss Hansberry has written a homely play about the day-to-day anxieties of a Negro family on the South Side of Chicago. Some of the troubles are uproariously funny; some of them are harrowing. Since the characters have great capacity for feeling, the emotional range is wide. The nervous, tensely paced performance of Sidney Poitier as the wayward son and the highly wrought performance of Claudia McNeil as the unyielding matriarch have solid footing in the script. Every-thing is of a piece writing. staging and acting.

72

The title comes from a poem by Langston Hughes—"What happens to a dream deferred/ Does it dry up/Like a raisin in the sun?" Literally, the plot of Miss Hansberry's drama revolves around \$10,000 that the mother receives from the life insurance of her dead husband. The son, who is tired of working as a chauffeur, wants to invest it in a liquor store and become a big shot in the community. The mother wants to buy a house for herself and her fam-By. Ever since she was married she has dreamed of escaping from their grubby tenement.

What happens to the \$10,000 supplies the dynamic of the drama. Since "A Raisin in the sun" has the gift of emetionally involving the audience in the crises of the play, the audience cannot be indifferent to solution. But Miss Hanstry has not written a melonians or a thesis-play or a orality. She has renowed a ctical accounting of the life less commonplace, "I have been commonplace," I have been commonplace, "I have been commonplace," I have been commonplace, "I have been commonplace, "I have been commonplace," "I have been commonplace, "I have been common commo

Pungent Notes For Miss Hansberry has man aged to express a persons opinion about many engrossing topics. The belligerent racism of the daughter who is attending college, her provincial ignorance of Africa, her confusion of Liberia and Nigeria, the amused maturity of a college student who comes from Africa, the sophumoric sophistication if an American college student-these are pungent notes by the way set down by Miss Hansberry out of experience, observation, and a sense of comedy.

When the mother tuys a house in a white neighborhood, "A Raisin In the Sun" touches on the inflammatory topic of race relations. Miss Hansberry faces the issue frankly, giving the spokesman for the white people as much dignity as his humiliating situation affords. But she argues no causes. Note: that she resolves the situation not in terms of social justice but in terms of the pride of a zamily that has ethical standards. Not the least remarkable aspect of "A Raisin in the Sun" is the unvarying humanity of the author's point of view. Although Miss Hansberry is aware of the big social and political issues, she has sufficient independence of mind to concen-, trate on the everyday problems of a family. She has succeeded in confining herself to what she Wants to say.

If she is lucky in her actors, they are lucky in their author. Her play gives them the opportunity to stage a rousing performance that is supported by the simple truths of the story. Apart from Mr. Poitier's searching performance and Miss Mc-Neil's characterization of a worn woman with a noble spirit. the cast includes other excellent actors-notably Diana Sands as the acrimonious daughter who knows all the slogans but very little about life. Altogether, "A Raisin in the Sun" is a lively and illuminating drama about ople of great emotions vitality. CLIPPING FROM THE

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# RAISIN IN THE SUN'S

Susskind to Be Co-Producer of Hit Play for Columbia— Patricia Crest Gets Role

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., March.
21—Columbia Pictures announced today the purchase of
screen rights to the hit Broadway play, "A Raisin in the
Bun," by Lorraine Hansberry,
According to sources in New,
York, the purchase price for
the story of a Negro family in
the South Side of Chicago

the South Side of Chicago

\$300,000.

David Susskind, who has an
expreement with Columbia to
hake one picture a year for
lour years, will supervise the
liming in association with
Philip Rose, co-producer of the
Broadway version. Filming is
lated to begin in June, 1960.

Miss Hansberry will adapt

Miss Hansberry will adapt
Miss Hansberry will adapt
her play for the screen. The
release date depends on
release for the run of the play
on Broadway.

Negotiations are under vay Negotiations are under vay for Bidney Potter and Claudia McNeil to re-create their stage roles in the film. Mr. Potter roles in the film. Mr. Potter vortrays a restless young man who dreams of success and viss McNeil enacts the roll of viss McNeil enacts the roll of the mother who wants her chilten to maintain the other process.

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Raisin in the Sun," a play and "Seven Deadly Sins" one member abstained.

Favored foreign play plurality of Drama Critics

Friedrich Duerrenmatt's best of the season, so far as a plurality of Drama Critics Visit" with 10 votes. "Epitiph Circle members is concerned in received six of 19 votes in the annual award balloting at the Algonquin Hotel late Tues day, Supporting it were representatives of Case United Place. day. Supporting it were repre-entatives of Cae, United Pleas International, New Yorker, Saturday Review, New Leader and Morning Telegram, This approval was not shared by exities of the seven daily news

Five votes each went for Sweet Bird of Youth," by Tennessee Williams, and "J. B." by Archibald MacLeish, or the former: World-Telegram and Sun, Herald Tribune, Journal-American, Women's Wear Dally and Newhouse Newspapers. For the latter: Journal of Commerce, Times, Wall Street Journal, Newsweek and Daily News, Sup-corting Eugene O'Neill's Touch of the Poet" were the et, Associated Press find Best musical was "La Prime Ma Tante," favored by 12. lower Drum Song" received

W. Y. Wald Lilegram
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#### Her Dream Came True Lorraine Hansberry

L ORRAINE HANSBERRY began by wanting to be a painter. She was a "lousy painter," in her own words. She then turned to writing. That she is not a "lousy" writer is attested to by the fact that Tuesday she won the New York Drama Critics Circle award for the best American play of the sea-Woman son. There are a number of "not

number of 'not onlys' involved in her triumph. Not in the News years old; not only is she a Negro; not only is she a Negro; not only is she the first Negro woman ever to

have a play on Broadway, let alone to win an award; but also "A Raisin in the Sun" was her first produced play.

Miss Hansberry, who in her Miss Hansberry, who in her domestic life is Mrs. Robert Nemiroff, wife of a music publisher and song writer, is voluble, energetic, pretty and small. She does not lack for ideas; before "A Raisin in the Sun" she had written them. Sun" she had written three other plays, all unfinished and unproduced, short stories and fragments of stories and; plays. A kind of literary imbering up.



Not a "Negro play," but one about people who happen to be Negroes.

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She did have an audience for her work-her husband and their friends. One evening, after seeing a play, she told her husband that she was going to "write a social drama about Negroes that will be good art." She did, after writing a four-hour effort that was really two plays. Revision, excision and concision resulted in "A Raisin in the Sun."

Mias Hansberry was born in Chicago, the daughter of a well-to-do real-estate man. She studied painting at the Chicago Art Institute and the University of Wisconsin, and there was a painting period

in Guadalajara, Mexico.

She came to New York in 1950 and was married in 1953. For a few years after her marriage she worked at various jobs - salesgirl, cashier,

producer's helper—and, mean-time, kept writing. In 1954 she turned to plays.

Her literary god is Bean O'Casey, the Irish playwright, whom, she says, "establishes the poblitty of man by showthe nobility of man by showing him in all his marvelous complexity."

"Or Does It Explode?"

Miss Hansberry, whose play Miss Hansberry, whose play is about Negroes, is exasperated by producers who think of plays with Negro characters as "Negro plays." Her play, she says, is about believable, many-sided people who happen to be Negroes. It was produced by two men, who had never produced a play before—Philip Rose and play before—Philip Rose and David J. Cogan.

Her play, she says, is con-cerned with dreams, the dreams that all persons have, the dreams that are problems. But she believes that "science

our generation than mysticism." will bring more rewards for

The title of her play comes from a poem by Langston Hughes called "Harlem." The poem asks: "What happens to a dream deferred:/ Does to a dream deferred. Loss it dry up like a raisin in the sun/ Does it fester like a sore and then run • • • Or does it explode?"

Miss Hansberry, whose dreams have neither dried up nor festered nor exploded, lives in Bleecker Street, Greenwich Village, with her husband and a dog named Spice.
They live in a walk-up apartment, lined with books. Miss
Hansberry likes to ski, to go to the theatre, to see movies. She likes to play table tennis and would like, and is planning, to write more plays and perhaps some opera libretti.

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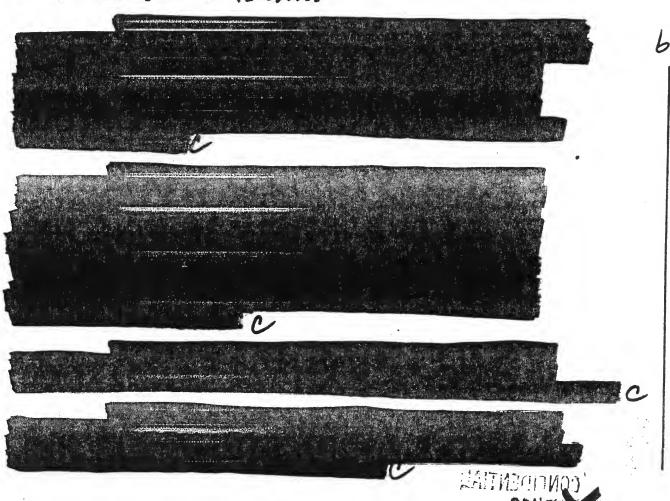
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"The New York Times", late city edition for 4/1/99, contains an article entitled "fanish In The Sun' Bodgit For Film". This article states Columbia Pictures amounced the purchase of acroen rights to the hit Broadway play "A Raisin In The Sum" by LORHALIE HANSBERRY. The article states sources in New York (not identified) massed the purchase price as \$300,000.



- 2 -

CONFIDE TIAL

# Eest-Play Prize Won By a Negro Girl, 28

#### Drama Critics Pick 'Raisin in Sun' By Lorraine Hansberry for Award

By Stuart W. Little Lorraine Hansberry, a tweny-eight-year-old Negro playright, won the drama critics author and the French revue ward for best American play the season yesterday with best musical. er first play, "A Raisin in the un." She won out against yesterday gene O'Neill.

Liss Hansberry's play about cago's South Side is the Nemiroff, to give him the news. life of a Negro family on & by a Negro to win a Drama tics Circle award. The voting a close. "A Raisin in the m" gained six votes. Tied for Sweet Bird of Youth" by Wilsms and "JB" by MacLeish. eceived three votes.

The critics, at their annual warts meeting at the Hotel

Algonquin, also voted the Visit," by Friedrich Duerrenmatt, best play by a foreign "La Plume de Ma Tante" as

When she heard the news afternoon, sch top American playwriting Hansberry was alone with her impetition as Tennessee Wil- dog Spice in her small thirdams, Archibald MacLeish and floor walk-up apartment at 337 Bleecker St. Until late in the afternoon she was unable to locate her husband, Robert

"It's Beautiful"

"It's a little hard to digest," Miss Hansberry said of her triumph. "We felt we were doing cond at five votes each were something good and we felt we were doing something important for the theater. Whether we Neill's "A Touch of the Poet" would have any recognition was another question. Now that it's happened, it's beautiful."

Miss Hansberry said her success, while perhaps increasing the demands upon her time, would not interfere with her schedule of work. That, she said, was laid out even before "A Raisin in the Sun" opened March 11 at the Barrymore Thilater. She judged that it woild be "a long time" before her next play is ready—p rhaps E FURI OF tWO.

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A Raisin in the sun was archived by Philip Rose and him cted by Lloyd Richards with the leading roles of son and incider played by Sidney Poitier and Claudia McNeil.

The critics voting in favor of "A Raisin in the Sun" were: Jack Gaver of United Press International; Whitney Bolpon of "The Morning Telegraph" Kenneth Tynan of "The New Yorker"; Henry Hewes of "The Saturday Review"; Emory Lewis of "Cuel" and Joseph T. Shipley of "The New Leader."

Voting for "Sweet Bird of Youth" were Walter Kerr of the New York Hereld Tribung: John

Voting for "Sweet Bird of Youth" were Walter Kerr of the, New York Herald Tribune; John McClain of "The Journal-! American"; Frank Aston of "The World - Telegram and Sun"; Thomas R. Dash of "Women's Wear Daily," and Ward Morehouse of the S. I. Newhouse newspapers.

Newhouse newspapers.
Voting for "J.B." were Brooks Atkinson of "The New York Times"; John Chapman of "The Daily News"; Richard Cooke of "The Wall Street Journal"; Ethel Colby of "The Journal of Commerce" and T. H. Wenning of "Newsweek".

T. H. Wenning of "Newsweek."
Voting for "A Touch of the
Poet" were Robert Coleman of
"The Daily Mirror"; Richard
Watts jr. of "The New York,
Post," and Mark Barron of The
Associated Press.

On Foreign Play

The voting for best foreign play was as follows: ten votes for "The Visit," which opened with the Lunts last May and closed in November; six votes for "Epitaph for George Dillon," the British play by John Osborne and Anthony Creighton which had two openings on Broadway this season; one vote for The Power and the Glory," one vote for "Rashomon" and one abstention.

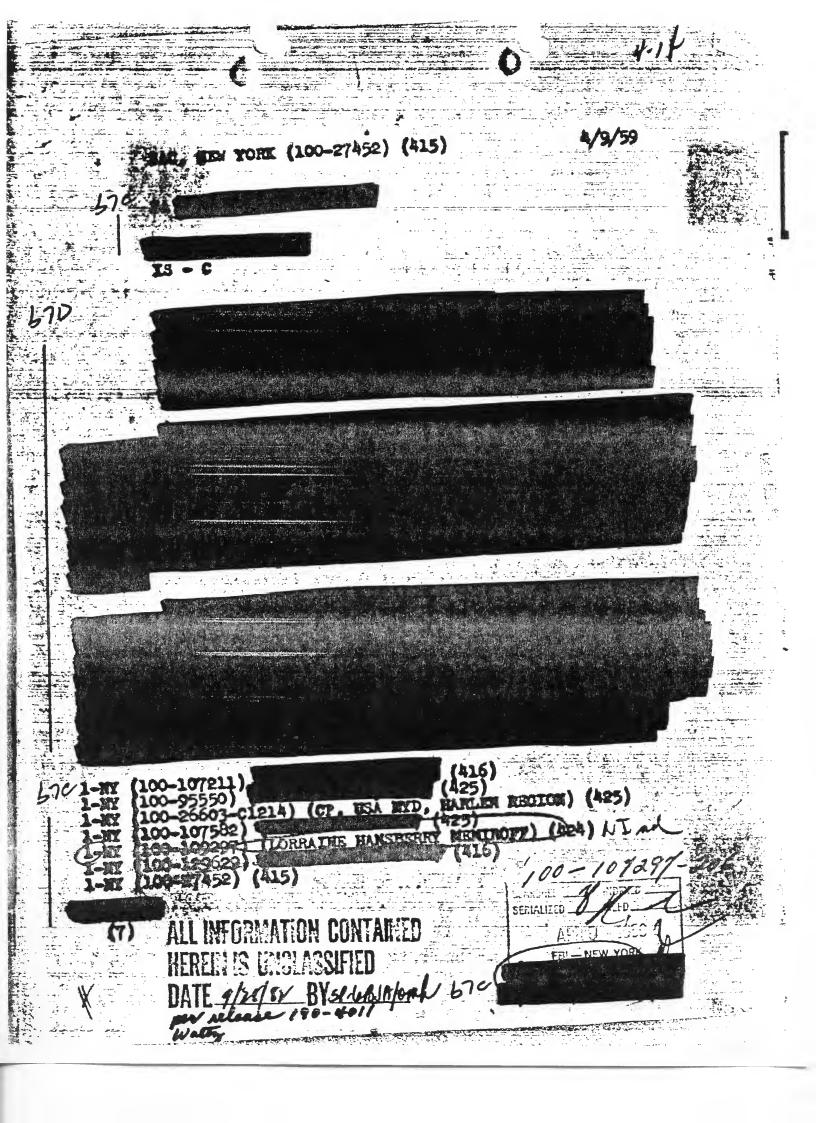
The voting for best musical was as follows: twelve votes for "La Plume de Ma Tante," the all-French musical revue by Robert Dhery; three votes for "Redhead," two votes for "Flower Drum Song," one vote for "The Seven Deadly Sins" and one abstention.

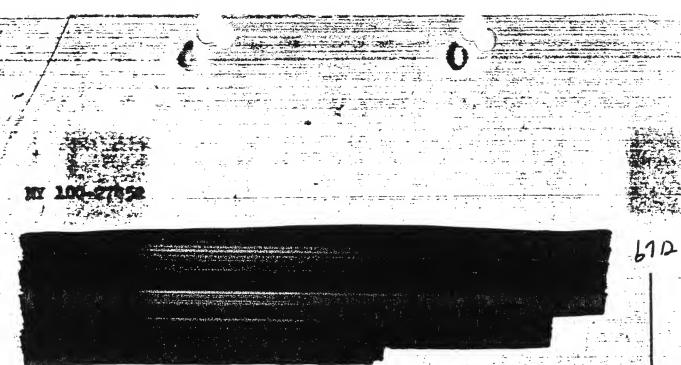
Presiding at the awards meeting was Mr. McClain, president of the Drama Critics Circle.

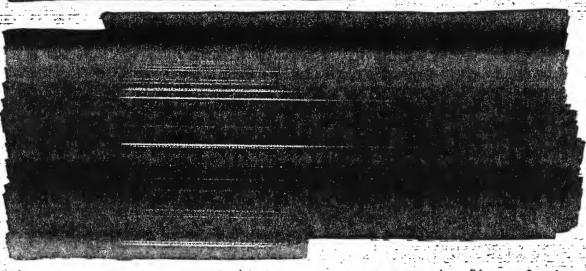


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#### THEATRE SPOTLIGHT

# Raisin' Makes A Capital Mark

By JIM O'CONNOR

N ONLY FIVE AND A HALF WEEKS after its Broadway opening, "A Raisin in the Sun"—a first pixy by an unknown author, sponsored by a new producer, staged by an unheralded director, starring motion picture actor in his first stage role—his recouped its entire capitalisation of \$100,000, it was reported today.

Financial statement of the Philip Rose-David J. Cogan production shows the count investment was indemnified as of last Saturday night.

This is an amazingly brief period—even for a New York Drama Critics Circle Award winner. No wonder the 147 invelors in the "Raisin" are happy today.

Bajis for the quick recouping, arm advised, was the seven

Balls for the quick recouping, tim advised, was the seven feel ware Broadway tour. If though the play opened to assectically no advance sale in New Haven, Philadelphia and Chicago, business punt to supecity in each instance giving the show a healthy profit for its road engagements.

This, too, is a rare occurrence or a play these days.

Here are the credits for "A Raisin in the Sun":

Author, Lorraine Hansberry. Producers, Phil Rose and Dave Cogan. Director, Lloyd Richards. Star, Sidney Poiser. Rose, who launched his prolucing career with this play. idds that \$120,000 more will scerue to the production from its 40 per cent of the \$300,000 ale of the play to Columbia sctures. Additional revenue fill come from the foreign ductions for which there eady is a great demand. and, oh, yes!—"A Raisin in Bun" continue to play to ndees at the Barrymore

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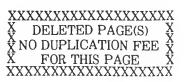
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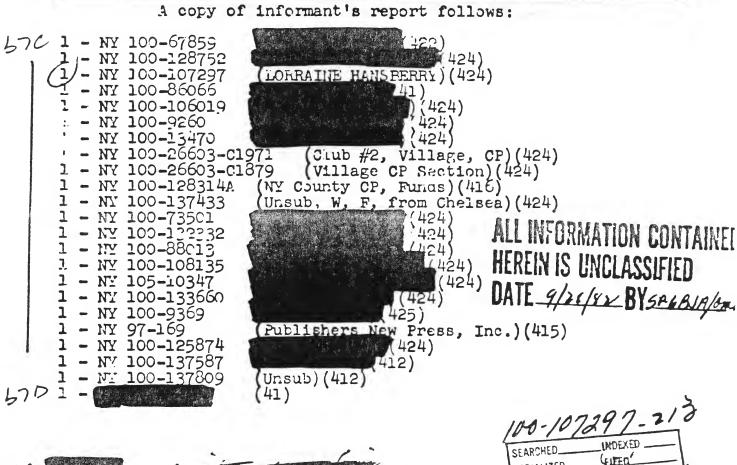


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OFFICE MEMORANDUM UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT (41) SAC, NEW YORK DATE 5/21/59 **ム**フーFROM SA (41) **占つ** SUBJECT: INFORMATION FROM 67C 670 157C 67P A copy of informant's report follows: 570 - NY 100-67859 - NY 100-128752 NY 100-107297 LORRAINE HANS BERRY) (424) 100-86066 NY (424) - NY 100-106019



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By KAT CARDELLA

Dore Schary has signed Lorraine Hansberry, whose Raisin in the Sun is a current Broadway hit, to pen an original script for his NBC Civil War appleials. Schary's committed to produte five actipts for teeveeing in '61. ABC-Radio veepee Edward De-Gray due to be promoted soon. DATE ESDS

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ON The Air?

Lorraine Hansberry, author of Broadway's prize winning "Raigin in the Sun," has been assigned to write the first of NBC's series of Civil War centennial dramas to be presented of home acres in 1961. Dore Schary, the Hollywood and Broadway product, arranged the assignment for Miss Hansberry before leaving for Hollywood where he is undergoing a minor operation...

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CONFUENTIAL 7/31/59 BAC, NEW YORK (100-23825) ALL INFORMATION FOR HEREIN IS UNCHASE? EXCENT FILTIE CHOWN OTHERWISE . . . CLAUDIA McNEIL is presently staring in the play, "A Rasin In The Sun", now showing on Broadway. This play was written by LORRAINE HANSBERRY. BUS 17 59-66-18 Jones BATE OF REVIEW . JUL 3 1 1959

Eighteen representatives the performing arts from the So-viet Union attended last night's performance of "A Raisin in the Sun" at the Ethel Barrymere Theatre. The group included directors of various Moscow theatres. theatres.

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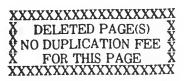
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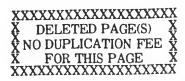
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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OFFICE MEMORANDUM

AUG 1 4 1955

SAC, NEW YORK

SUPERVISOR, #42

SUBJECT:

SECURITY INDEX TABULATION

In accordance with Bureau instructions, a review has been made of Security Index cases to tabulate the occupation of the subject and the product produced by the employer. The information obtained on stapled Photostat below was furnished to the Bureau by letter dated 8/3/59.



This Photostat is being placed in the file for ready reference.

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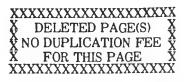
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OFFICE MEMORANDUM UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT : SAC, Omaha (100-6306) TO Date: February 15, 1960 SAC, Milwaukee (100-12874) PROM ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HERETN /3 U LL USIFIED EXCEPT .... SHOWN LIC SUBJECT: **OTHERWISE** CLUSS BY 306 BJR/oma 00 - Omaha On January 13, 1950, an anonymous source, who has access to material in the possession of furnished copies of correspondence during the summer and fall of 1959 to from at Camp Wingdale during the summer of 1959 and at the University of Iowa during the fall of 1959. These photostats are described as follows and will be identified by the items number on the fact of this letter designating enclosures for appropriate Item 1: 3-page letter dated June 24th to from 2-page letter undated on Wingdale Camp stationery to Item 2: from 2-page typed message to undated and uncaptioned Item 3: from with handwritten addendum by which may have been a supplement to item 2. Item 4: 2-page typewritten letter datelined "Monday" to from Item 5: 3-page undated letter to handwriting addendum from 4 - Omaha (Encls. - 5, items 1,2,3,4,5)(RM) (1 - University of Iowa Socialist Club) (Eng. (with supplement described on this copy) 100-new)(Encls. - 2, items 1,3 New York (RM) 100-127489)(Encls - 5, items 1,2,3,45) LORGATNE HANS (Encls - 5, 2, 1 tems 1,4) 1 - (Encl. - 1, item 2) 1 - Veterans of Abraham Lincoln Brigade)(Encl. - 1, item 4) 2 - Milwaukee (100-12874) (Encls. - 5, items 1-5) (1 - 100-12960,