

Socializing at the Guthrie Theater

Written by Marcia Humphrey
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While checking my phone messages a few weeks ago, a familiar voice began to speak. It was my girl Nicole, inviting me to join her and about 15 of her favorite friends for a Sunday matinee play at the Guthrie Theater www.guthrietheater.org. The play, "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," (A Production of Penumbra Theatre Company) written by the late August Wilson, explores art, race, religion, and exploitation of African American recording artists in the 1920s. I quickly called Nicole back to accept the invitation for three main reasons: 1. I always welcome an opportunity to socialize with dynamic, inspiring women. 2. It's always a treat being at the beautiful Guthrie Theater—one of my favorite places in Minneapolis, and 3. Because of the size of our group, we got discounted tickets and I just seem to have more fun if I know I'm getting a good deal. If you have never been to the Guthrie, promise yourself—and promise me—that you'll go before summer's end. Here are a few tips that will help you make the most of your experience.

Discounted Tickets

Because there were at least 15 women in our group, we were able to buy discounted tickets to the play. In addition, there are senior and student discounted rates available. If you are not rolling with a large party, you can still save big by purchasing rush tickets. Any tickets not sold about an hour before the start of production go on sale at deep discounts. Call ahead for additional details.

A Bite To Eat Before (or after) The Play

There are three different options for eating at the Guthrie; The Sea Change Restaurant, Level Five Café, and the Target Lounge. Hours vary, so go online for more details. The day of our outing, some of us grabbed brunch together before arriving at the Guthrie, which provided more time to share our recent experiences, encourage one another, and laugh together. We all need those types of healthy exchanges on a regular basis.

Dress Code and Etiquette

Although you are free to "come as you are" at the Guthrie, certain guidelines should be followed. First, arrive before the start of the show, so that other patrons aren't interrupted while you hunt for your seat in the dark and step on toes. Next, make sure you turn off all your

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electronics, alarms, beepers and buzzers. Please don't wear large/bulky hats to the performance-respect those sitting behind you (I'm still mad at the man who wore twin raccoons on his head at a recent event!). Finally, sssshhhh! Please do not talk during the performance or add your own special commentary-it's impolite.

The best part of my Guthrie experience was being able to interact with this beautiful array of African American women-talented, strong, confident and wise enough to realize that we truly need one another for gleaning wisdom, giving and receiving emotional support, and providing genuine care. (Thanks, Nicki-Love, for putting this together. You gave us all an opportunity to be blessed and to be a blessing in small, yet significant way.) Maybe we will catch Penumbra's upcoming play based on the life of Nat king Cole, entitled "*I Wish You Love*" www.penumbratheatre.org
Enjoy!

Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at low costs. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.