



Harry Elam

Senior Vice Provost for Education, Vice President for the Arts, Freeman-Thornton Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and the Olive H. Palmer Professor in Humanities, Emeritus
Theater and Performance Studies

 Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education; Olive H. Palmer Professor in the Humanities; Robert and Ruth Halperin University Fellow for Undergraduate Education; Director of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts. Harry J. Elam, Jr. is the Olive H. Palmer Professor in the Humanities and the Freeman-Thornton Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at Stanford University.

He is author of and editor of seven books, *Taking It to the Streets: The Social Protest Theater of Luis Valdez and Amiri Baraka*; *The Past as Present in the Drama of August Wilson* (Winner of the 2005 Errol Hill Award from the American Society of Theatre Research); and co#editor of four books, *African American Performance and Theater History: A Critical Reader*; *Colored Contradictions: An Anthology of Contemporary African American Drama*; *The Fire This Time: African American Plays for the New Millennium*; and *Black Cultural Traffic: Crossroads in Performance and Popular Culture*. His articles have appeared in *American Drama*, *Modern Drama*, *Theatre Journal*, *Text and Performance Quarterly* as well as journals in Israel, Taiwan and Poland and several critical anthologies. Professor Elam is also the former editor of *Theatre Journal* and on the editorial boards of *Atlantic Studies*, *Journal of American Drama and Theatre*, and *Modern Drama*. He was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Theatre in April 2006. In August 2006 he won the Betty Jean Jones Outstanding Teaching Award from the American Theatre and Drama Society and in November 2006 he won the Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Society of Theatre Research. In July 2014, Elam received the Association of Theatre in Higher Education's highest award for theatre scholars, the Career Achievement Award.

In addition to his scholarly work, he has directed professionally for over twenty years: most notably, he directed *Tod, the Boy* by Talvin Wilks for the Oakland Ensemble Company, and for TheatreWorks in Palo Alto California, he directed *Jar the Floor* by Cheryl West and *Blues for an Alabama Sky* by Pearl Cleague, which was nominated for nine Bay Area Circle Critics Awards and was the winner of DramaLogue Awards for Best Production, Best Design, Best Ensemble Cast and Best Direction. He has directed several of August Wilson's plays, including *Radio Golf*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Two Trains Running*, and *Fences*, the latter of which won eight Bay Area "Choice" Awards.

At Stanford he has been awarded five different teaching awards: The ASSU Award for Undergraduate Teaching, Small Classes (1992); the Humanities and Sciences Deans Distinguished Teaching Award (1993); the Black Community Service Center Outstanding Teacher Award (1994), The Bing Teaching Fellowship for Undergraduate Teaching (1994-1997); The Rhodes Prize for Undergraduate Teaching (1998).

He received his AB from Harvard College in 1978 and his Ph.D. in Dramatic Arts from the University of California Berkeley in 1984.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor Emeritus, Theater and Performance Studies

PROGRAM AFFILIATIONS

- Modern Thought and Literature

Teaching

COURSES

2025-26

- Black Theater and its Relevance: The Plays of August Wilson and Lorraine Hansberry: AFRICAAM 158C, AMSTUD 158C, TAPS 158W, TAPS 358W (Spr)
- Performing Leadership and Leadership as Performance: TAPS 154P, TAPS 354P (Win)

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Blood Debt: Reparations in Langston Hughes's *Mulatto*** *THEATRE JOURNAL*
Elam, H. J., Elam, M.
2009; 61 (1): 85-?
- **Teaching 'Joe Turner's Come and Gone' (August Wilson)** *MODERN DRAMA*
Elam, H. J.
2007; 50 (4): 582-600
- **Making history (Theatre history)** *THEATRE SURVEY*
Elam, H. J.
2004; 45 (2): 219-225
- **The dialectics of August Wilson's *The 'Piano Lesson'*** *THEATRE JOURNAL*
Elam, H.
2000; 52 (3): 361-379
- **August Wilson, doubling, madness, and modern African-American drama** *MODERN DRAMA*
Elam, H. J.
2000; 43 (4): 611-632
- **UNFINISHED BUSINESS, RECONFIGURING HISTORY IN PARKS,SUZAN,LORI THE 'DEATH OF THE LAST BLACK MAN IN THE WHOLE ENTIRE WORLD'** *THEATRE JOURNAL*
Rayner, A., Elam, H. J.
1994; 46 (4): 447-461
- **SIGNIFYIN(G) ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN THEATER, THE 'COLORED MUSEUM' BY WOLFE,GEORGE** *THEATRE JOURNAL*
Elam, H. J.
1992; 44 (3): 291-303