

## **RICHARD WESLEY**

Richard Wesley was born in Newark, New Jersey and graduated from Howard University. He studied Playwriting under the tutelage of Owen Dodson and Ted Shine. A member of the New Lafayette Theater from 1970 through 1973, he served as Managing Editor of its Black Theater magazine.

He was presented with a Drama Desk Award for his 1971 stage play, THE BLACK TERROR. His 1978 play, THE MIGHTY GENTS, appeared on Broadway. His 1989 play, THE TALENTED TENTH, brought him his fourth AUDELCO Award for outstanding play. In 2013, he wrote the libretto for an opera, PAPA DOC, for the Trilogy Opera Company, with music composed by Dorothy Rudd Moore, and adapted from an essay by Edwidge Danticat. He has recently completed a second libretto for Trilogy Opera, this one entitled, FIVE, with music composed by Anthony Davis. A new play, AUTUMN, premiered at the Crossroads Theater in New Brunswick in April of 2015, and in New York at the Billie Holiday Theater one year later. That production received six AUDELCO Awards, including Best Dramatic Production of the Year.

Mr. Wesley has shared two NAACP Image “Best Picture” Awards for the motion pictures, UPTOWN SATURDAY NIGHT and LET’S DO IT AGAIN, both of which starred Sidney Poitier and Bill Cosby. Among his other motion pictures: NATIVE SON (1984) and FAST FORWARD (1985).

In television, he has authored the scripts for the movies, THE HOUSE OF DIES DREAR (PBS, 1984), MURDER WITHOUT MOTIVE (NBC, 1992), MANDELA and DE KLERK (Showtime, 1997), and co-wrote the scripts for BOJANGLES (Showtime, 2002) and DEACONS FOR DEFENSE (Showtime, 2003). He has also written episodes for the series FALLEN ANGELS (Showtime, 1996), ONE HUNDRED CENTER STREET (A&E Cable Networks, 2000 and 2001) and MIRACLE’S BOYS (2005).

Mr. Wesley is currently an Associate Professor in the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. He is a former Vice President of the Writers Guild of America, East, Inc., and currently sits on the National Film Preservation Board of the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, the Selection Committee for the Black Film Festival of the Newark Museum, the Board of Directors, Newark Performing Arts Corporation at Symphony Hall and is an Advisor to the Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, NY.

He is married to the novelist, Valerie Wilson Wesley.