Shadowball®

A Baseball Opera in Nine Scenes

LIBRETTO

Music **Julian Joseph**
Libretto **Mike Phillips**

CAST LIST

Satchel Paige
Charlie
Cindy (Charlie's mother)
Women (Cindy's friends)
Boys (Charlie's friends)
Josh Gibson
Buck O'Neil
Jackie Robinson
Cab Calloway
Jazz Luminaries
Commentators
Judge Landis
The Owners
Black Players
Happy Chandler
His Assistants
Branch Rickey
His Assistants
The Crowd
Newsboys, Umpires,
Coaches, Programme Sellers,
Hot Dog Sellers, Diner Staff

The entire cast is either on the margins of the stage or seated around the auditorium in blocks – the primary role of cast members in the audience is to be baseball fans, using their voices and presence to encourage the rest of the audience to interact with the action.

Before the show begins the entire cast sings (a capella) 'Take me out to the ball game' – in its original straight version – followed by the orchestral overture.

CAST

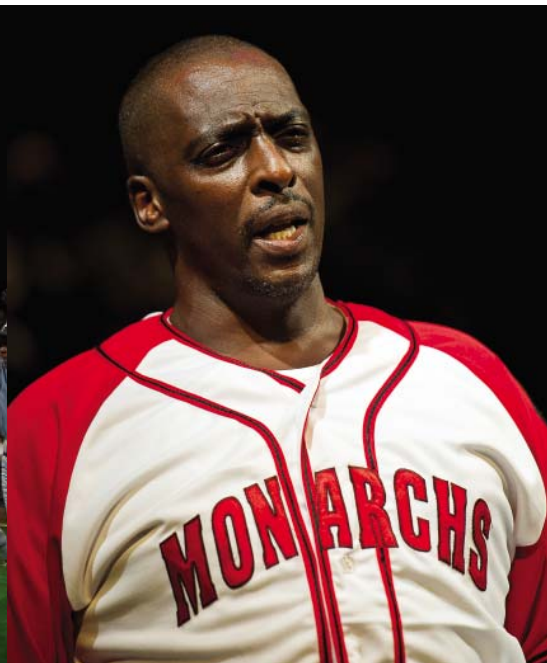
Take me out to the ball game.
Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack
I don't care if I never get back
Let me root, root, root for the home team
If they don't win it's a shame.
For it's one, two, three strikes you're out
At the old ball game.

Scene 1

Ball players process across the stage and it begins to fill up with players who start to pitch, bat and catch in silence. One of the players, Satchel Paige, detaches himself and addresses the audience. The crowd cheers.

SATCHEL
My name is Satchel Paige.
I'm a ballplayer – baseball, and I was the star of the Negro Leagues.
Negro Leagues? We had to have our own leagues
'cause they wouldn't let us play together with the whites,
but baseball was our game too and sometimes we'd call it Shadowball
because it was the dark shadow of ev'ry American boy's dream.
Look at this – (*he shapes up to pitch- as he does this a catcher squats down opposite him and mimes catching it*)
I'm pitching but there's no ball –
that's how we warmed up before the big games –
by playing without a ball –
but the ball was in our minds –
the shadow of our dreams –
and we pitched and we hit and we caught that shadow,
because there was no way anybody could stop us playing even if they took the ball away – and this Shadowball was our own dream –
the dream of a beautiful afternoon
when you hit the ball and it never came down
'till you had run all the bases – home run –
or sliding the ball so sweetly past the bat –
striking them out time after time after time–
and the crowds roaring delight into the sky –
that was Shadowball.

SATCHEL and CAST
Shadowball a dream
A beautiful dream

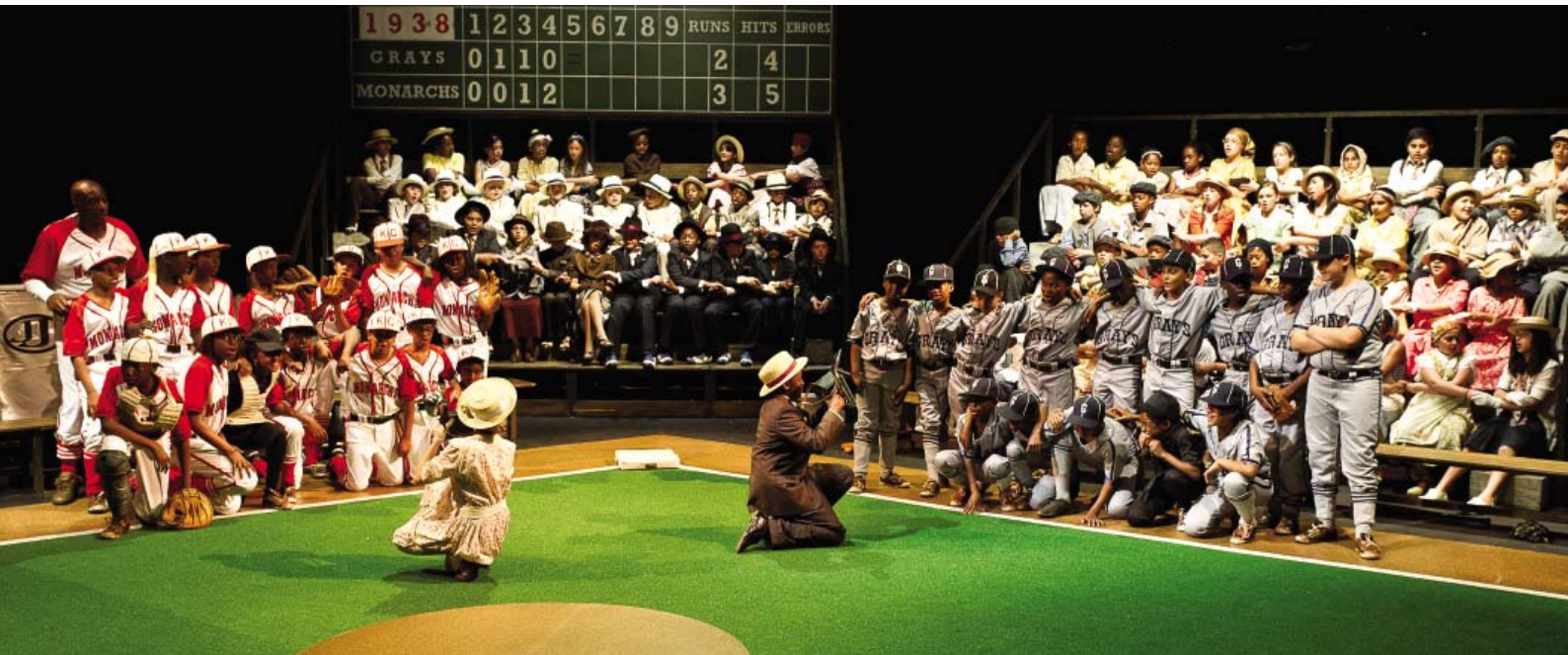


Shadowball pitchers are never hit
Shadowball batters never miss
Shadowball catchers never drop the ball
Shadowball afternoon never, never, never ends –
Never, never, never ends –
Never, never, never ends
Never ends...

SATCHEL
Shadowball, Shadowball
No stops no bars
Shadowball, Shadowball – Yes Lord
No segregation no legislation Shadowball
No black no white Shadowball
The call is always right
Shadowball, Shadowball.

SATCHEL and CAST
Shadowball a dream
A beautiful dream
Shadowball pitchers are never hit
Shadowball batters never miss
Shadowball catchers never drop the ball
Shadowball afternoon never, never, never ends –
Never, never, never ends –
Never, never, never ends –
Never ends.

CAST (*this time accompanied by the orchestra*)
Take me out to the ball game.
Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack
I don't care if I never get back
Let me root, root, root for the home team



If they don't win it's a shame.
For it's one, two, three strikes you're out
At the old ball game.

Scene 2

Kansas City, Missouri, 1938. As the song ends Charlie enters accompanied by a group of boys. He's putting on his hat and coat, making ready to go out – his mother Cindy, accompanied by a group of women, calls out from the side of the stage.

CINDY
Charlie, Charlie!

Charlie pretends not to hear and hastily begins to usher his boys out, but Cindy bursts into the centre of the stage and it's impossible to ignore her.

WOMEN
Charlie. Come on down.

The boys hesitate and look around as if they've only just heard some distant voices.

CINDY
Charlie. Come here! Now!
And where do you think you're going?

CHARLIE
Uh – I'm gonna work like I always do.

CINDY
No you ain't – I went by the store yesterday and there was no Charlie. Where were you?

CHARLIE
Uh –

CINDY
Answer me.

BOYS
Ball game.

WOMEN
Ball game? Ball game? Ball game?

BOY
We had to see Satchel Paige!

WOMEN
Satchel who?

CHARLIE
Satchel Paige. He's the pitcher.

CINDY
I know who Satchel Paige is – what I want to know is if Satchel Paige can pay for our groceries?

WOMEN
...And shoes, and schoolbooks, and medicine….and ice cream on Sundays.

CINDY
You tell me...

CHARLIE
I guess not.

WOMEN (*sarcastically*)
Guess not, huh?

CINDY
You guess not…I guess you're right – so you boys go home – Charlie you go to the store – do your work and come right on back.

CHARLIE
I can't.

WOMEN
Can't? – can't? He can't do it.

CINDY
What? What did you say?

CHARLIE
I gotta go to the game Mom – I just gotta go!

Scene 3

COMMENTATORS
Sunday afternoon here in KC – and winding up to the big game we welcome some of the most celebrated fans and owners –

A lineup of musicians crosses the centre of the stage – they are dressed to recall the great black musicians of the time, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, etc.

COMMENTATOR
Mister Louis Armstrong – Count Basie – Lady Day – Billie Holliday – Bill Bojangles Robinson – Ella Fitzgerald – Dinah Washington – Lena Horne – Sarah Vaughan – and the Duke himself – Duke Ellington – and

you gotta remember this guy – once he was great infielder – now he owns one of the sharpest teams in the Negro Leagues – and he's still a great entertainer – Cab Calloway!

Cab Calloway has been talking with a couple of players – wearing a baseball cap – he takes it off and appears centre stage dressed in his trademark white suit and porkpie hat – he grabs the microphone, motions the audience to silence.

CAB CALLOWAY
Now here's the story of the pitcher and the batter
The two main heroes of the battle on the diamond.
The pitcher throws a curveball or a sinker or a splitter
To try to fool that clever old hitter.
Hi-de-hi-de-hi-de-hi

CROWD
Hi-de-hi-de-hi-de-hi

CAB CALLOWAY
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

CROWD
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

CAB CALLOWAY
Beelya-beelya-beelya-be

CROWD
Beelya-beelya-beelya-be

CAB CALLOWAY
Beelya-beelya-beelya-ba

CROWD
Beelya-beelya-beelya-ba

CAB CALLOWAY
The batter's got his grip, his stride, his stance and his swing
And when it comes to swing then I know a few things
I'm a jazz singing baseball loving baseball team owner
From the rafters to the glove
It's the game that I love.
From the rafters to the glove...

CROWD
From the rafters to the glove

CAB CALLOWAY
Baseball is the game I love

CROWD
Baseball is the game I love

CAB CALLOWAY
Zoope-zootn-zoodo-zep

CROWD
Zoope-zootn-zoodo-zep

CAB CALLOWAY
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

CROWD
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

The Luminaries are gathered on one side of the stage Cab Calloway breaks off and gestures to the players –

3¢
Buy them here
WORK
PROGRAM
WPA
SEASON
1941 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
GRAYS 0 1 1 0
MONARCHS 0 0 1 2
MONARCHS

ompson Timber Co.
1616 East 18th Street
AUTO
8 9 RUNS HITS ERRORS
2 4
3 5

CAB CALLOWAY
Hey Satch –

Satchel moves towards him – prancing and jiving – Josh follows him slowly his shoulders drooping – Cab busts a move – jiving around Satchel.

CAB CALLOWAY
Tonight you're coming to the club – bring the guys with you – we're going to jump and jive and jaaaazz.

SATCHEL
Maybe I can take a raincheck. I been pitching these fools out all afternoon – I'm beat man – I'm beat. By the time you get back to your hotel I'll be in dreamland.

CAB CALLOWAY
Hey – you ain't beat – you ain't never beat – don't even think it – you got the greatest jazzers in the world come right here to see you and play with you and play for you, the Duke, the Count, Lady Day – and (*doing the gravelly voice*) Mr Louis Armstrong hisself – and tonight we're jamming together – you cannot be beat.

SATCHEL
We're ballplayers Cab – we already done jammed today – with a ball and a bat.

Cab takes the bat and pretends to play it like a saxophone – and as he mimes, the saxophone player plays a cadenza.

CAB CALLOWAY
Hey – you and all the guys – You jammed today – we're doing the same thing at night – jazz – baseball – we're all players moving to the same beat – and tonight there's something special – a new guy – Charlie Parker – they call him Bird and he loves baseball and

ballplayers just like we do – and his game has got a name – Be-bop (*he clicks his fingers and goes back into the Cab tune*) – bop-de-re-bop-hi-de-hi – (*he sings and dances through the whole routine as before and now everyone on stage joins in – scene ends with everyone applauding as Cab takes a bow and prances off*).

In the players' dugout – Charlie is walking about furtively, looking at and touching the equipment – he hears a noise and hides behind a hamper – Satchel Paige spies Charlie peeping at him in the corner of his eye, gets up and drags the boy out from his hiding place.

SATCHEL
Well look at this. Who are you boy? Did your daddy bring you? Where is he? He should have taught you better.

CHARLIE
I don't have no daddy.

SATCHEL
No daddy, huh? So what are you looking for in here?

CHARLIE
Looking for you Mister Paige.

SATCHEL
Looking for me? Oh I get it. You want my autograph?

CHARLIE
No. That's not it.

SATCHEL
So what? You try my patience boy. Speak up.

CHARLIE
I want to play.

SATCHEL
You want to? Ha ha ha ha!
He bursts out laughing unable to complete the sentence. In the meantime Josh Gibson has come in and stands leaning against the wall.

JOSH
Hey. What's this? You shouldn't be in here. Where's your daddy boy?

SATCHEL
Daddy, daddy, daddy. What's with the Daddy? Can't you see he ain't got no Daddy?

JOSH
I ain't got no Daddy either.

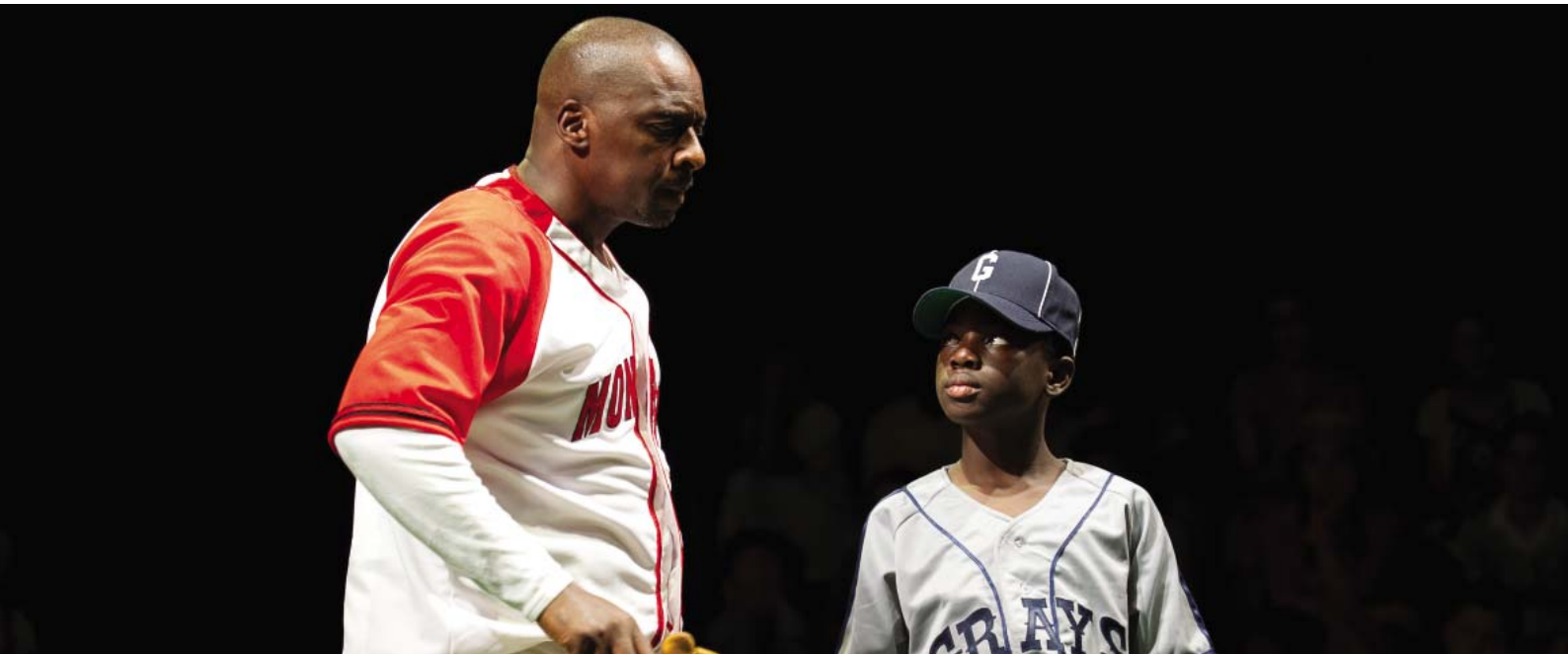
SATCHEL
But you got a momma. We all got mommas. Boy what's your momma say?

CHARLIE
She wants me to go to school. But she can't stop me.

SATCHEL
I see that. You a man already?

CHARLIE
Yes.

SATCHEL
Well man. I'm going tell you what your daddy would tell you.
If he was here.



This game is life
Ain't just an afternoon in the sun.
This game is life
Our run is never done.
This game is life
You got to give it all you got.
This game is life.
This game is life
This game is hard
This game is life
This game is cruel.
One day you're a hero
The next day you're a fool.
One day they love you
The next day you're a dope.
Either you win or you got no hope.
This game is love.
This game is pain.
This game is fame.
This game is shame.
Oh, this game is pride and joy and hope
This game!
This game!
This game!

Buck O'Neil comes into the locker room, sees Charlie and stops dead.

BUCK
Boy. What you doin' in here? Where's your Daddy?

SATCHEL
Daddy, Daddy, Daddy. What's with this Daddy? I'm the Daddy, and I got to tell you – this boy needs a job. Show him where the broom's at.
Buck throws his hands in despair – he can't say no to Satchel

BUCK
Okay. Okay. Boy, come with me.

SATCHEL
Hey Josh. I know your Daddy. You lied to that boy.

JOSH
I know that, and you know that, but he don't.

SATCHEL and CAST
This game is life
Ain't just an afternoon in the sun.
This game is life
Our run is never done.
This game is life.
You got to give it all you got
This game is life.
This game is life.
This game is hard.
This game is life.
This game is cruel.
One day you're a hero
The next day you're a fool.
One day they love you
The next day you're a dope.
Either you win or you got no hope.
This game is love.
This game is pain.
This game is fame.
This game is shame.
Oh, this game is pride and joy and hope.
This game!
This game!
This game!

Charlie comes out with a broom and begins to sweep the stage and pick up and pack away clothes etc.

Scene 4

Cindy comes in and interrupts Charlie as he sweeps up. She takes his broom away and throws it on the floor. He fetches it and begins sweeping again. Satchel standing by the side of the stage – shakes his head. He tries to talk to Cindy, but she brushes him aside and walks away.

Charlie puts the broom away and takes a baseball in hand – he winds up and throws it to Satchel, back and forth.

SATCHEL
Hey boy – time to learn something!
Man's got to do what he's got to do.
Pitchin is simple
Here's what you gotta do –
Keep the ball away from the bat
How on earth do I do that?
Call it windup.
Single windup.
Double double windup.
Hesitation windup.
No windup.

Make them miss it, like a misfit.
Man's got to do what he's got to do
Pitching is easy
Here's what you gotta do –
Make them think that they can read you
Then make them miss.
Miscall the ball.

Miscalculate where it's going.
Mistake your action.
Misestimate your speed.
Misdirect the swing –
And they miss-hit like a misfit.
Dig it, dig it, dig it get it.
Step-n-pitch it.
Submariner.
Sidearmer.
Bat dodger.
Make him miss-hit like a misfit!
Man's got to do what he's got to do.
That's pitching, and that's what I do.

Scene 5

1941 – followed by Cab Calloway and a panoply of black musicians and dancers on stage – cast walk across waving to the crowd.

COMMENTATORS
KC Radio on Sunday afternoon – and all the big names are here. They've come from Harlem, and Detroit, and New Jersey and Philly and right here in good old KC to see the greatest pitcher in the Negro Leagues Satchel Paige squaring up against the greatest batter we've ever seen in any league Josh Gibson – it's Sunday afternoon in KC.

CAB CALLOWAY
Hi-de-hi-de-hi-de-hi

CROWD
Hi-de-hi-de-hi-de-hi

CAB CALLOWAY
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

CROWD
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

CAB CALLOWAY
Hi-de-hi-de-hi-de-hi

CROWD
Hi-de-hi-de-hi-de-hi

CAB CALLOWAY
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

CROWD
Ho-de-ho-de-ho-de-ho

SATCHEL and CAST
Sunday afternoon!
Bright and light, bright and light.
Right between this morning and tonight
Yesterday's troubles have gone away
Tomorrow's waiting
But that's another day.
The diamond's ready.
Today, today will always stay.
Yesterday's troubles have gone away.
It's Sunday afternoon.
Right and tight
Bright and light
It's Sunday afternoon.

COMMENTATORS
Josh Gibson is at the plate – here comes Satchel – walking SLOW – and he sets the catcher's signalling, but who knows what Satch will do? Fast ball – steerike one!

CROWD *roars and applauds*

COMMENTATORS
Here we go again – Satch windsup – oh no – he hesitates – hesitation windup – curve ball – steerike two!

CROWD *shouting, applauding*

COMMENTATORS
Satchel Paige sets again – slider – and Gibson hits it – deeeep flyball – Gibson's... IN ... home safe.

CROWD *jumps up screaming and clapping*

SATCHEL, PLAYERS and CROWD
Nine innings is the number of a dream
One strike, two strikes, three strikes and out
Nine heroes is the story of the team
One strike, two strikes, three strikes and out.
The pitcher opens up the show
His hands are quick, his walk is slow
The batter swings, but it's no hit
The ball goes straight to the catcher's mitt.
Next ball flies upwards like a dove
And ends up in an outfield glove
Shortstop tries to make the tag
But he slides right in and on the bag.
Loaded bases
Exultant faces

Home run, home run
The game is done.
Nine innings is the number of a dream
One strike, two strikes, three strikes and out
Nine heroes is the story of the team
One strike, two strikes, three strikes and out.

CROWD
Sunday afternoon!
Bright and light, bright and light
Right between this morning and tonight.
Yesterday's troubles have gone away.
Tomorrow's waiting, but that's another day
The diamond's ready
Today, today will always stay
Yesterday's troubles have gone away.
It's Sunday afternoon
Right and tight, bright and light
It's Sunday afternoon!

Scene 6

1945. A long line of the black players are queueing impatiently on one side of the stage – on the other side one white person is being served – Charlie is in uniform now – he's a player – he is standing in line with Jackie Robinson and Satchel – Jackie makes an impatient gesture and tries to go over to the other side followed by Charlie – but Satchel pulls him back.

SATCHEL
Hey Jackie! Jackie! Ain't you forgetting something – they still don't let us eat at the same counter – they still don't let us go the same restroom. You forget that it's a good way to get yourself killed.

JACKIE
I'm tired of it! Sick and tired! I never sit at the back of the bus, and when I run the team we'll never even stop at a segregated rest station like this.

SATCHEL
Oh, I know you don't sit at the back of no bus – you can do that – I can do that – sometimes – but what do you think happens to the rest of those black folks when we are gone? Yeah. Some black folks still have to pay the price.

Take it easy. One day soon they'll be begging us to play with the white boys in the majors. No one in the world can catch like Josh Gibson. No one in the world can hit 500 yards like he can and no one in the entire game has ever hit the ball clear out of Yankee Stadium. That's Josh Gibson.

JACKIE
Yeah. He'll be the one to join the big leagues.

SATCHEL
Well – he'll be the first, and if he's not it will break his heart. But it will happen. You'll see. Even Judge Landis can't stop the game changing.

Judge Landis stalks on to boos from the audience.

JUDGE LANDIS (*and Owners*)
Black and white don't play together
Black and white don't play
Lions and tigers stick to their own
And cats and dogs don't share a bone.
Mix the colours and it turns out grey
Black and white they just don't play.

It's not a case of right or wrong
Two opposites can't get along
Separation now makes perfect sense
To be apart is self defence.

Black and white don't play together
Black and white don't play.

You – play by night
We – play by day

Mix the colours and it turns out grey
Black and white they just don't play.

BLACK PLAYERS (*in counterpoint*)
This game ain't yours
To dictate who can play
This game is ours whether night or day.
Out on the diamond we stand up tall
And black or white we rise and fall.
In the game, in the game
It's a case of rights and wrongs
We know just where the game belongs.
This game ain't yours to dictate who can play
This game is ours whether night or day.
Out on the diamond we stand up tall
And black or white we rise and fall.

Scene 7

The players centre stage one by one, playing catch, throwing the ball back and forth to each other – this is a reflective moment – not noisy – the band plays the theme 'this game…' and the players sing along quietly. Cindy comes in and gestures to Charlie – he joins her stage right – Satchel stands by listening.

PLAYERS
This game is life
Ain't just an afternoon in the sun.
This game is life
Our run is never done.
This game is life.
You got to give it all you got
This game is life.

This game is life
This game is hard
This game is life
This game is cruel.
One day you're a hero
The next day you're a fool
One day they love you
The next day you're a dope
Either you win or you got no hope.
This game is love.
This game is pain.
This game is fame.
This game is shame.
Oh, this game is pride and joy and hope
This game!
This game!
This game!

CINDY
You're so far away now
When I see you now you're so far away.
On the diamond
On the bus
You're so far away.
I need you Charlie
Life is tough
You've been gone so long
It's long enough.
Leave the diamond and come on home
Just for a while to make me smile
Leave the diamond, come on home.

CHARLIE
Don't worry mom
I'll make you proud
One day you'll hear them
Call my name out loud.

SATCHEL
One day soon he will make you proud
You'll hear them call his name out loud
He'll pitch in the big leagues
In front a white crowd
The sky's the limit
The sun, the moon
He'll make you proud
And one day soon.

CINDY
Big leagues, big leagues
You all talk about the big leagues
And a bunch of fools shouting his name

It's only a dream
For us the big leagues have no time
Your dreams aren't worth a nickel or a dime
Leave the diamond and come on home
Just for a while to make me smile
Leave the diamond come on home.

Charlie hesitates – he is torn between his mother and the game – but then one of the players calls out his name – 'Charlie' – and throws him the ball – he looks around and throws it back – catches it again – the players begin to sing 'this game. this game' – Cindy and her friends hesitate, then walk away sadly.

Satchel gestures to Josh and Charlie and they huddle together.

CHARLIE
Maybe I should go – my mom needs me – I can't stand to see her like this.

SATCHEL
No. I've got a plan. Next big game you pitch against Josh. When your Mom sees that she'll know that you're special.

CHARLIE
I'll never strike him out.

SATCHEL
Don't matter. She'll hear them call your name – Charlie Collins – Josh Gibson – that's big – she'll know then that you're something special – am I right Josh?

JOSH
Yeah. Always right Satch. Always right. But I don't feel so good now.

Okay man, just tired. Take a rest – you'll be fine soon.

They separate but Josh staggers a little – and Charlie puts his arm round him supporting him to the side of the stage.

Happy Chandler walks on supported by several assistants. He's signing papers, etc.

HAPPY CHANDLER (*and Assistants*)
I'm (He's) Happy Chandler the new baseball Commissioner
And I'm (he's) going to change some things
Because change is in the air
Old times are dead
We're in a new year.
Change is coming
It's in the air
Change is coming
It's everywhere.
We all love the game
That's true enough
And all our heroes
Have all the right stuff.
But that is true of both black or white.

Change is coming
It's in the air.
Change is coming
There's no going back
We'll make some changes
It's in the air
Old times are dead
We're in a new year.

Scene 8

Branch Rickey bounds on to the stage and razzes up the audience.

BRANCH RICKEY
What's my name?

VOICE
Branch Rickey!

BRANCH RICKEY
I can't hear you. What's my name?

CROWD
Branch Rickey!

BRANCH RICKEY
C'mon now, what's my name?

CROWD
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey – Rah – rah rah!

BRANCH RICKEY and CROWD
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey, rah rah rah!

BRANCH RICKEY
I'm the top manager I'm the one who'll change baseball.
When I came the game was a racial dance
Segregation, discrimination, crazy legislation
A black man didn't have a chance.
In ten years time we'll change the stage
Colours will change in the batter's cage
Robinson, Gibson and Satchel Paige
Black players too will be all the rage.

CROWD
Who's the man who's gonna change baseball?
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey.
What's the name we're all gonna know?
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey.

BRANCH RICKEY AND CROWD
Satchel Paige and Joshua Gibson...

CROWD
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey!

BRANCH RICKEY AND CROWD
...Jackie Robinson pioneer of the show.

CROWD
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey
rah – rah – rah!

BRANCH RICKEY AND CROWD
Robinson, Gibson and Satchel Paige
Black Players will be all the rage.

CROWD
Who's the man who's gonna change baseball?
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey.
Who's the man who's gonna change baseball?
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey.
Who's the man who's gonna change baseball?
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey.
Who's the man who's gonna change baseball?
Branch Rickey, Branch Rickey.

Branch Rickey and his entourage back off slowly. News boys run on stage waving papers

NEWSBOYS
Extra, extra, read all about it!
Extra, extra, read all about it!
Big leagues sign Negro players
Jackie Robinson first in the big leagues...
Satchel Paige and more Negroes to follow
Extra, extra, read all about it.

CAST (*whispering under newsboys*)
Extra, extra read all about it!
Extra, extra read all about it!
Extra, extra read all about it!
Etc...

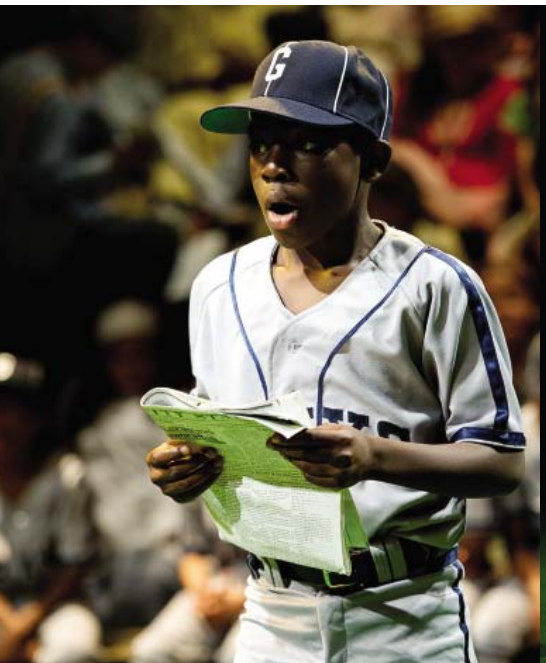
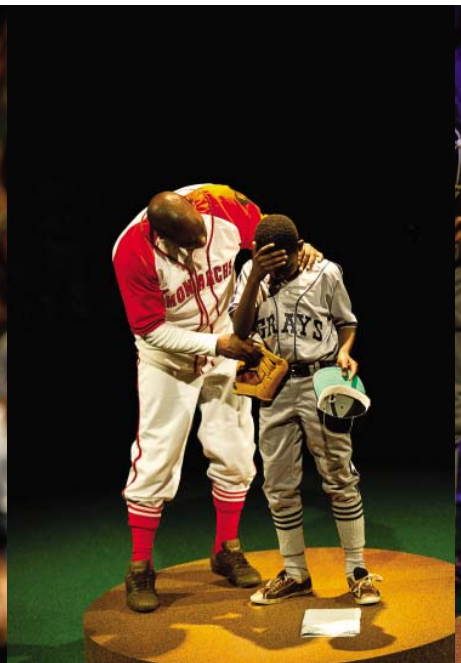
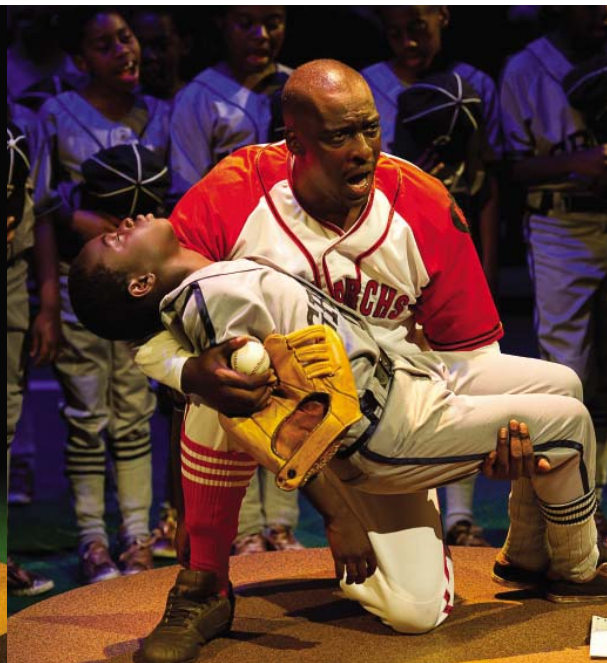
Josh Gibson jumps in and grabs a paper from one of the boys.

JOSH
Jackie Robinson? Jackie Robinson? What about Josh Gibson? What about the greatest hitter in the entire world? What about Josh Gibson... ?

He breaks off and collapses to the floor. The players crowd round Josh who supported by Satchel.

CAST (*humming*)
mmm mmm mmm mmm

SATCHEL – Hey – hold on – we need you – you still have to bat against Charlie. Show his mom – you still have to bat in the big leagues – show them all – Josh – Josh? Josh...!

SATCHEL (*sings, leading a chorus of the players*)
The water's deep, the river's wide,
But we'll play again on the other side.
There is no end to the great divide,
But we'll play again on the other side.
We played the game with love and pain
We played the game with no thought of fame
Our days and nights were always bright
Our hearts were always full of light.
Now there's no end to this great divide,
But we'll play again on the other side.
The water's deep, the river's wide,
But we'll play again on the other side.
Now there's no end to this great divide.
But we'll play again on the other side.

Scene 9

Players file off and Newsboys run onstage waving newspapers.

NEWSBOYS
Extra, extra, read all about it!
Josh Gibson dies!
Jackie Robinson's first game in the big leagues
Extra, extra, read all about it
Extra, extra, read all about it
Satchel Paige and more Negroes to follow
Baseball bosses cut their losses
Jackie home run
There's no Josh Gibson
But we still got Satchel Paige and Jackie Robinson
Extra, extra, read all about it

Segregation's done.
Times are changin' on the diamond
Times are changin'
The game's done changed.

CAST *whispering*
Extra, extra read all about it
Extra, extra read all about it
Extra, extra read all about it
Etc . . .

Charlie comes on stage carrying a suitcase. Satchel is coming in the other way and looks at Charlie in surprise.

CAST (*humming the water's wide*)
Ooo ooo ooo ooo

SATCHEL
Where are you going?

CHARLIE
Going home. I promised my mom. I'm signed up for the Dodgers next season. I'm going home till then.

SATCHEL
What about the big game? East versus West. It's the last game of the Negro Leagues this year. Now that we're playing in the big leagues with the white players it may be the last East West Negro Leagues game.

CHARLIE
I don't know. It's all over now.

SATCHEL
It may be over for us, but there's still a Negro League, and even if there wasn't we should remember it, just for one last time, because without it we wouldn't be ball players, and without it, we couldn't have made all those beautiful afternoons for so many folks.

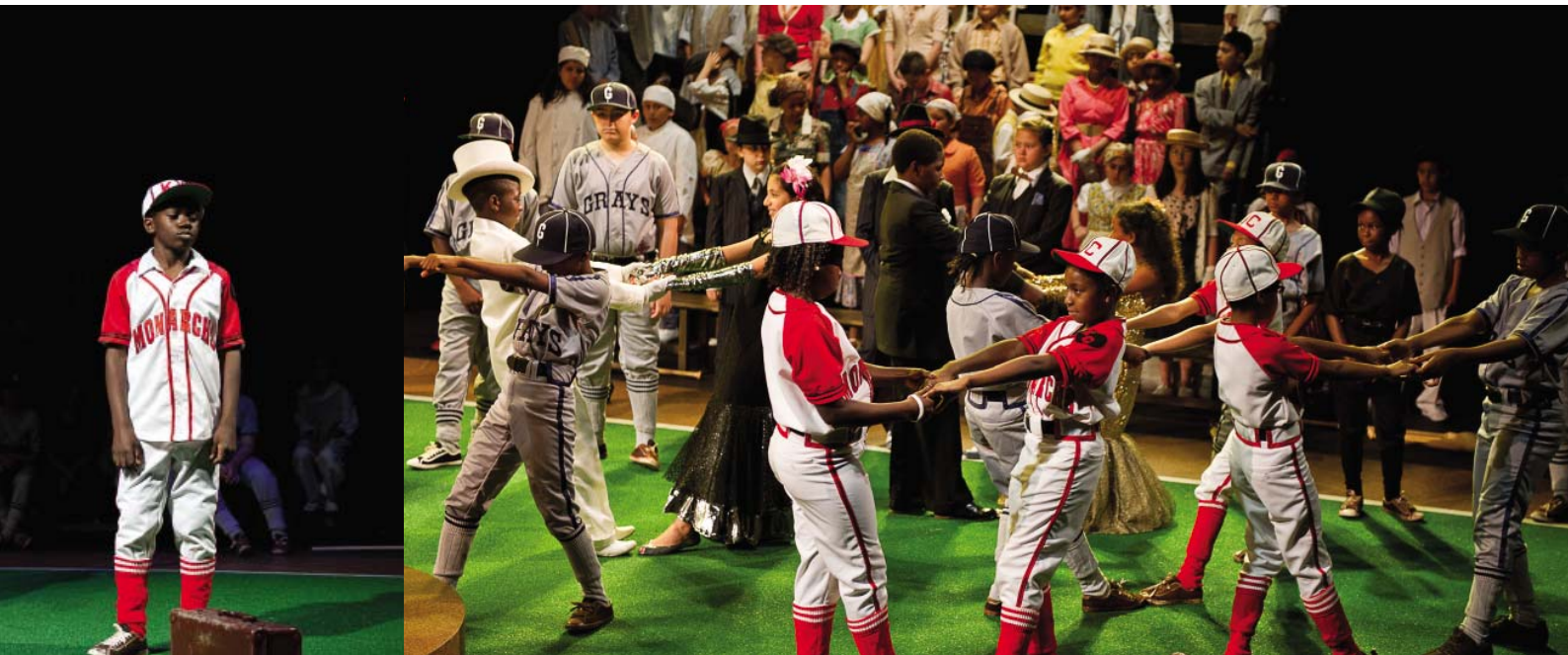
CHARLIE
It's gone now. It won't ever be the same again.

SATCHEL
That's why we have to play again in the Negro Leagues – maybe just one more time, for the fans, for Josh and all our friends – for us – you and me – so we should never forget what we once were and what we will be – and everyone who ever hears about us and hears our story will remember the Negro Leagues and what we did on Sunday afternoons in our time – and this game, this game…

Players run on engaged in games of catch.

SATCHEL and CAST
Sunday afternoon!
Bright and light, bright and light.
Right between this morning and tonight
Yesterday's troubles have gone away
Tomorrow's waiting, but that's another day.

The diamond's ready
Today today will always stay.
Yesterday's troubles have gone away.
It's Sunday afternoon!
Right and tight, bright and light.
It's Sunday afternoon!



Shadowball a dream
A beautiful dream
Shadowball pitchers are never hit
Shadowball batters never miss.
Shadowball catchers never drop the ball
Shadowball afternoon never, never, never ends.
Never, never, never ends.
Never, never, never ends.
Never ends.
Shadowball, Shadowball
No stops no bars
Shadowball, Shadowball – yes Lord.
No segregation no legislation
Shadowball no black no white
Shadowball the call is always right.
Shadowball, Shadowball
Shadowball a dream –
A beautiful dream –
Shadowball pitchers are never hit
Shadowball batters never miss
Shadowball catchers never drop the ball
Shadowball afternoon never, never, never ends.
Never, never, never ends.
Never, never, never ends.
Never ends.

CAST 2 (*in canon*)
Sunday afternoon
Bright and light, bright and light.
Right between this morning and tonight
Yesterday's troubles have gone away
Right between this morning and tonight.
Yesterday's troubles have gone away...

THE END

Photography by Clive Barda.
From the premiere performances of Shadowball at The Mermaid, 29 and 30 June 2010, featuring Cleveland Watkiss as Satchel Paige and the original cast from Kingsmead Community School and Jubilee Primary School, Hackney.

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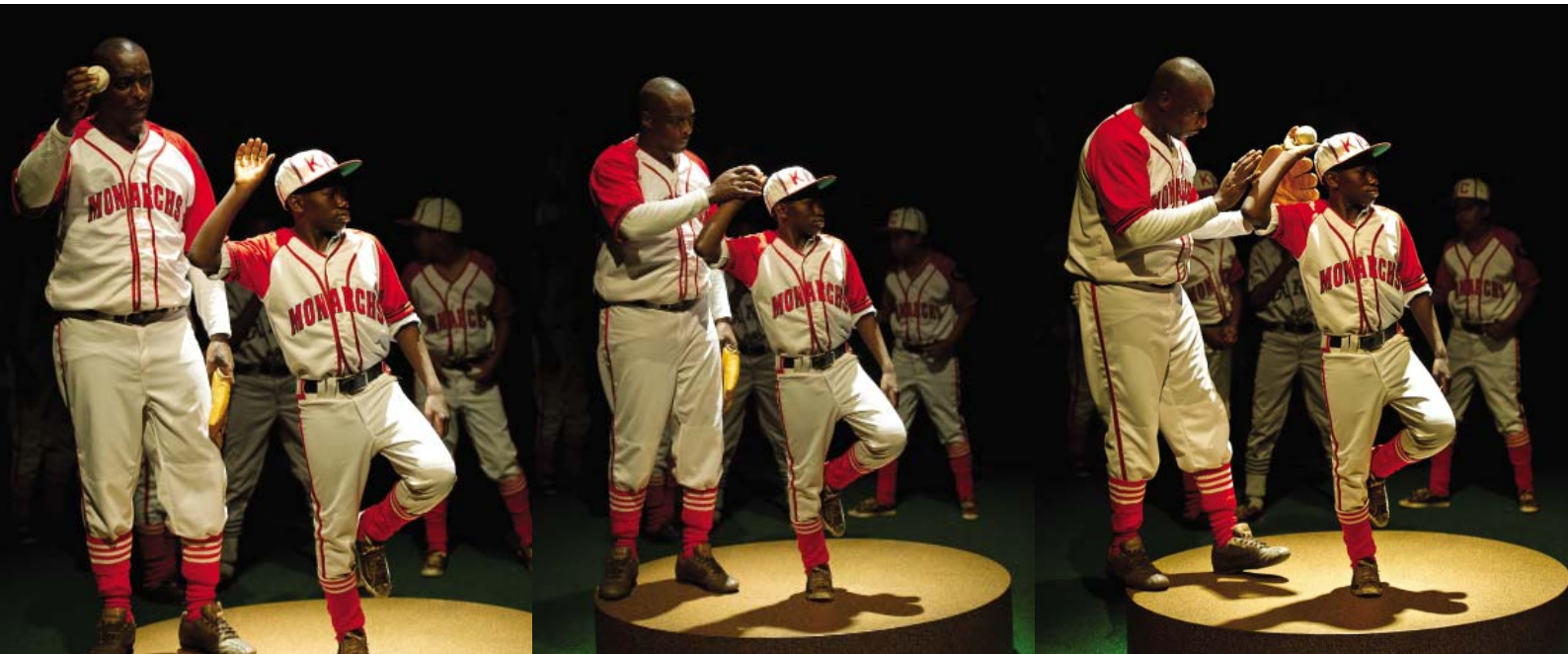

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Kansas City Dugout, by Kadir Nelson. Used with the kind permission of the artist. Front cover: John "Buck" O'Neil, standing, third from right, player and manager for the Kansas City Monarchs, surveys the field during a home game in 1949.

Shadowball®

A Baseball Opera in Nine Scenes

LIBRETTO

Music **Julian Joseph**
Libretto **Mike Phillips**