



Metro/ The Focus

Society and art converge in *A Raisin in the Sun*

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Artists Repertory Theatre continues its exploration of great artists of the century with Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, directed by Allen Nause, producing artistic director at A.R.T. The play will run January 11-February 20.

"*A Raisin in the Sun* explores conflicts over heritage, race, personal values and dreams," Nause says "In a way that makes it both historic and timeless."

"Forty years after the play first premiered on Broadway, American society still struggles with conflicting aspirations and dreams deferred."

Hansberry was the youngest American playwright and the only

Black writer to win the New York Drama Critics Circle award for Best Play of the Year for *A Raisin in the Sun*.

"All art is social," Hansberry said shortly before the play opened in 1959. "The problem is not whether you write 'social dramas,' but what you say about society - and whether you say it with artistic integrity... Good theater can affect American life, reflecting and thereby encouraging its best elements, and American life, with all its problems, still has within it areas of vitality and persistence and search and dignity that are going to be the source of our survival."

A Raisin in the Sun is about the dreams of an impoverished Black family living in a sunless, cramped

tenement in Chicago's South side. The family matriarch receives a substantial sum of insurance money left by her late husband and pursues his dream of escaping their cramped quarters for a house of their own. Her children, however, have other priorities.

The play previews Tuesday - Thursday, January 11-13, opens Friday, January 14 and runs Wednesday-Sunday through February 20. Performances begin at 7 p.m. weekdays, 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2 p.m. Sundays, with an additional 7 p.m. performance on Sunday, February 20. Tickets are \$13.50 for previews, \$15 to \$25 for the regular run, and may be purchased through the A.R.T. box office, 503/241-IART.



PHOTO BY OWEN CAREY
Lennane Sylvester as Ruth Younger, Melany Bell as Beneatha Younger and Brenda Phillips as Lena Younger perform a scene from *A Raisin in the Sun*.

- Box Office**
1. Any Given Sunday WARNERS \$21,300,000
 2. The Talented Mr. Ripley PARAMOUNT \$13,800,000
 3. Stuart Little SONY \$40,200,000
 3. TIE Toy Story 2 BUENA VISTA \$179,700,000
 5. The Green Mile WARNERS \$52,800,000
 6. Man on the Moon UNIVERSAL \$13,800,000
 7. Bicentennial Man BUENA VISTA \$22,500,000
 8. Galaxy Quest DREAMWORKS \$8,100,000
 9. Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo BUENA VISTA \$35,400,000
 10. Anna and the King FOX \$13,500,000

- National Video Rentals**
1. "Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me" (New Line)
 2. "Notting Hill" (Universal)
 3. "Instinct" (Touchstone)
 4. "Arlington Road" (Columbia TriStar)
 4. "Election" (Paramount)
 6. "Big Daddy" (Columbia TriStar)
 7. "The Matrix" (Warners)
 8. "The Haunting" (DreamWorks)
 9. "Life Is Beautiful" (Miramax)
 10. "South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut" (Paramount)

- National Video Sales**
1. "Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me" (New Line)
 2. "Saving Private Ryan" (DreamWorks)
 3. "Big Daddy" (Columbia TriStar)
 4. "Yellow Submarine" (MGM)
 5. "The Blair Witch Project" (Artisan)
 6. How the Grinch Stole Christmas! (Warners)
 7. "Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery" (New Line)
 8. "Madonna: The Video Collection 93-99" (Warners)
 9. "A Christmas Story" (MGM)
 10. "The Iron Giant" (Warners)

In Print

Encyclopedia of Northwest Music

By James Bush

Sasquatch Books; 1999
Catapulted into the forefront of the music scene in the early 1990's by some guys from Aberdeen, Washington, Seattle suddenly became a music "boom town" - its place secured on the nation's map of regional music hot spots. Suddenly, there was a "Seattle sound" and a "Seattle scene" and people all across the nation were even sporting a "Seattle style." But for those who had been living in the Emerald City

before the birth of grunge, Seattle had already been on the music map for quite some time and together Seattle and Portland had long ago established their own Northwest music scene.

From jazz greats to rock legends, nationally acclaimed music festivals to symphonies of world-class status, the Northwest has been both the hometown and the launching pad for numerous artists in all genres of music. *The Encyclopedia of Northwest Music: From Classical Recordings to Classic Rock*

Performances, by James Bush is a comprehensive and entertaining trip across the whole spectrum.

This one-of-a-kind book identifies the unique sound and place in music history that artists in the Northwest have carved out for themselves and their region. From Portland's famous bluesman Robert Cray to Seattle's rock icon, Jimi Hendrix, the Northwest is full of musicians who have not only established a regional sound, but also have influenced the progress and direction of the ever-changing international world of music.

The book's editor, James Bush, is an award winning staff writer and political columnist for Seattle Weekly who has also written about the Seattle music scene for 20 years. His work has appeared in numerous publications including Backlash, Hype and The Rocket, often under the pseudonym, "J.R. Higgins."

The Encyclopedia of Northwest Music profiles more than 200 artists,

bands, groups and movements. It is packed with photographs of favorite musicians, including some photos never before published. Bush offers a critic's record pick with every artist profile, and takes readers on a tour of all the major artists, as well as many lesser known musicians who have created and re-defined music in the Northwest. He points out memorable moments in the region's distinguished music history from the 50's to the present, and gives a full list of annual music festivals in the region. There's also an entire section highlighting "not to miss" albums in all genres. The book also contains special essays written by contributing music critics and editors recruited by Bush from the heart of the Northwest music scene.

"Things have changed in the Northwest since my first concerts at the Paramount Theater and Seattle Center Arena back in the late 1970's," he says. "National bands would print

their tour itineraries in ads in Rolling Stone or Creem. The bands would start on the East Coast, swing through the Midwest, hit the south, travel up the west coast to San Francisco and stop. We Northwest kids would look sadly at the obvious gap.

"These past slights worked in our favor: our isolation helped Seattle and Portland develop distinct, talent-laden rock music scenes that could then be 'discovered' by national magazines and record companies. After Nirvana, Pearl Jam, and Soundgarden, nobody's ignoring this corner of the country anymore."



james bush

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