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# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



Artists Repertory Theatre presents *Seven Guitars* through Nov. 11.

## Seven Guitars Hits Artist Rep Stage

Direction by  
Portland  
playwright  
Kevin Jones



Kevin Jones

The rhythm of 1948 Pittsburgh comes to life in Portland Artist Repertory Theatre's premiere of *Seven Guitars*, the 6th play by American playwright August Wilson in a set of 10 he wrote exploring the African-American experience in the 20th Century.

The backyard chords and Chicago dreams of Wilson's seven black characters play out in a yearning whisper and an indignant refrain.

Buried romance, resentments and aspirations are unearthed in their everyday lives much like epic lyrics to a moving song. The rooster crows for justice, the musicians weave like boxers as hope, pride and desperation partner to waltz away the American Dream.

"August Wilson wants to show

us the color, lushness and muscularity of life," said Portland African-American playwright Kevin Jones, the director of the local production. "Blues lyrics are written into the script and make the music of the play equal to the words — a separate character."

The play opens Tuesday, Oct. 9 and runs through Nov. 11 at the Morrison Stage, 1515 S.W. Morrison.

Jones, previous director of Romulus Linney's "A Lesson before

Dying" at Profile Theatre and August Wilson's "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" at Portland Playhouse, is also the co-creator of The August Wilson Red Door Project, an organization that uses arts as a catalyst to transform the racial ecology of Portland.

Jones is no novice to the stage. With 30 plus years in theater, he recently received a Drammy Award for Outstanding Performance in a supporting role for his heartwarming performance of "Old Joe" in Radio Golf by August Wilson at Portland Playhouse.

Artist Rep's *Seven Guitars* stars Victor Mack, Michael J. Asberry, Ramona Lisa Alexander, Gayle Samuels, Mujahid Abdul-Rashid, Lance McQueen, Ashley Williams, and Anya Pearson.

*Seven Guitars* is presented with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Standard and Individual Producers Kris Olson and Les Swanson.

For more information, visit [artistsrep.org](http://artistsrep.org) or call 503.241.1278.

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## Inducted into Gospel Hall

(AP) — Aretha Franklin is the Queen of Gospel — not just Soul.

Franklin was inducted into the GMA Gospel Music Hall of Fame this month along with country and bluegrass star Ricky Skaggs, singer-songwriter Dallas Holm, family group The Hoppers, the late televangelist Rex Humbard and Christian rockers Love Song.



Aretha Franklin

Franklin couldn't attend the induction at Trinity Music City in Hendersonville, Tenn., but sent a video message played during the ceremony.

Long before she became the queen of soul, Franklin learned to perform as a budding star in her father Rev. C.L. Franklin's New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit.