

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Provocation^{on} Transit

continued ▲ from page

Yes, not all of his choices are good ones. But too often real risk seems terribly close, never more so than in the confrontation with transit police that quickly turns ugly -- so ugly that it is hard to imagine that Grant could have prevented the outcome.

Watching Grant's last day is the more poignant because you know how it will end. It's a day filled with choices, most of them mundane -- he drops Sophina off at work, plays with his daughter, picks up items for his mother's birthday party, lets family members believe he is going to a job he has already lost, then comes clean with Sophina.

When we learn of a shooting like this -- as we do too often -- the person's life is already over; it feels fitting to accord this quality of attention to the life and possibilities that were lost.

The scene depicting events on the subway platform necessarily chooses a version of events that many dispute. But it is a story that will feel familiar to African-Americans and other minorities.

The police seem to stoke the conflict and the young men's resistance, though unwise, seems understandable, even inevitable. And because I had grown to care about Oscar long before he entered that train for the last time, I cried tears of fear and horror long before that final gunshot, as I watched officers order him from the train and as the situation with

transit police quickly escalates. The film convincingly demonstrates how quickly and horribly things can go wrong for a young black man in a confrontation with law enforcement.

Last Friday, President Obama made an attempt to describe to white Americans the experiences that shape black Americans' reading of the George Zimmerman verdict. His remarks are a fitting companion to Coogler's film, which invites us to sit for 85 minutes with a story that sinks deeper into everyday African-American experience than most of what the media gives us.

The film gently lures audiences into investing in the life of a young black man who they might well write off or shy away from if they met him on the street, and then to taste in some small way the little provocations that chip away at his dignity and demand of him more restraint and equanimity than his age and experience could possibly have taught him.

Though not a fun diversion, "Fruitvale Station" feels important; it rounds out the picture of American life. If this film leaves you devastated, as it did me, it is because that is an appropriate response.

Darleen Ortega is a judge on the Oregon Court of Appeals and the first woman of color to serve in that capacity. Her movie review column Opinionated Judge appears regularly in The Portland Observer. You can find her movie blog at opinionatedjudge.blogspot.com.

Student Images on Display

The North Portland Library, 512 N. Killingsworth St., has opened a public exhibit featuring stunning black-and-white images of first and second graders from northeast Portland's King Elementary School and their neighbors.

This display celebrates a partnership between Right Brain Initiative, a Portland non-profit arts-in-schools program, and King, one of eight public schools in the nation selected for the Turnaround Arts initiative, a public-private partnership of the President's Committee for the Arts and the Humanities to boost achievement at some of the lowest performing schools in the country.

The exhibit runs through Aug. 30.

Students at King Elementary produce stunning black-and-white images as part of an arts education program.



Hello my name is : Alahna
and I like to
Play with my friend
Brandon and it was fun.

Author Honored with Fellowship

The Regional Arts and Culture Council named local author Sallie Tisdale its 2013 Literature Fellow carrying a cash award of \$20,000.

"Sallie Tisdale is a pillar of the writing community," said Eloise Damrosch, the council's executive director. "Her work is honest, authentic and clear, and she doesn't waste a word. We are thrilled to

body of work which has appeared in the finest magazines in the country. She has published seven books, including *Stepping Westward* which was named to two best non-fiction book lists of the West. Her other books include *Women of the Way*, *The Best Thing I Ever Tasted*, and *Talk Dirty to Me*.

Tisdale has been working for

me the gift of time to pursue this long and complicated work," Tisdale says.



PHOTO BY ALFREDO LETTENMAIER

Sallie Tisdale joins a prestigious group of local artists who have been honored as masters of their craft by the Regional Arts and Culture Council.

recognize her as a master of her craft, and to honor her with this award."

Tisdale has written everything from short memoirs to books, from personal poems to complex essays. She has already compiled a mature

some time on a book about our reflex toward charity -- what it means to do good, how one knows what good is, how many ways it can go wrong -- in the context of a small clinic in Africa founded by Oregonians.

"RACC's Fellowship will give

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