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PHOTO BY BRUD GILES

Ronald Scott and Chantal DeGroat star in the Portland Playhouse's rendition of *The Piano Lesson*. The August Wilson play, now playing at The Church, 602 N.E. Prescott St., reflects the African-American experience, covering questions of legacy and reminders of painful family pasts.

August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson*

Portland Playhouse at The Church presents

BY OLIVIA OLIVIA
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

August Wilson's award-winning cycle of plays, each set in a different decade of the 20th Century, left him one of the great playwrights of the 20th Century and the indisputable father of Black American theatre.

His third play, *The Piano Lesson*, won the 1990 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and is set in 1936. Portlanders have the chance to catch the show starting this week, when it opens at the Portland Playhouse

at The Church at 602 N.E. Prescott St.

The Piano Lesson covers questions of legacy and reminders of painful family pasts, forcing characters to choose between what they must leave behind for the next generation of black Americans in post-Depression era Pittsburgh.

The play shares many cross-over artists, actors, and teachers from Portland's August Wilson Red Door Project, which serves local high school students in an effort to introduce them to Wilson's work and theatre in general. (See re-

lated story, front page.)

Chantal DeGroat, lead teaching artist, stars in the Playhouse production, while co-founder of the Red Door Project, African-American playwright Kevin Jones, is the director.

Two young girls from northeast Portland schools switch off the role of Maretha.

Sinai La'ryn Jones, a student at King School is making her Portland theatre scene debut. Jones took part in the Turn-around Arts program at King this past year and was one of the few students chosen to perform in front of President

Barack Obama with actress Sarah Jessica Parker at the White House.

Seraiah Hardy, a student at St. Andrew Nativity School, also makes her professional debut with this show. The students of St. Andrew's supported the Playhouse two years ago when they applied for a land use permit to keep their performance venue in the King Neighborhood.

Bella Freeman-Moule, also a familiar Portland Playhouse face, and a daughter of board member Angela Freeman, will

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