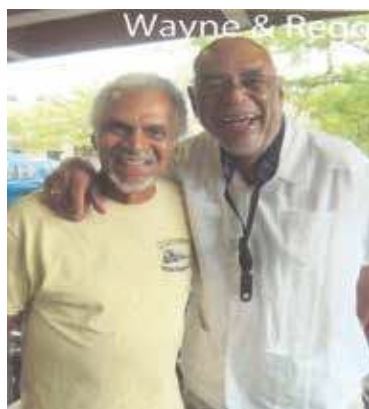


Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



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Cannon's, tasty food and friendly neighborhood atmosphere.



The documentary "The Jazz Ambassadors" is a fascinating story about how mixed-race bands and African American jazz musicians like Louis Armstrong (center, pictured in Africa) were recruited during the Cold War to help win a propaganda war against the Soviet Union and curb the spread of communism.

New Documentaries Worth Watching

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Although I did not experience this as a particularly critical examination, it does convey a sense of his significance; Jackson is royalty in the black community, and the film makes a case for why that makes sense. His first wife and the mother of three of his children speaks of him with notable appreciation, despite having experienced the challenges of being somewhat left behind in Jackson's push to make Atlanta great; his second wife and his children similarly speak of him with genuine admiration, even while conveying a sense of loss over his absences. The film grounds Jackson's achievements as mayor in the time periods when he served, conveying a sense of how hard he had to fight to lead in a context where leadership from a black man was neither wanted nor trusted. One cannot help admire Jackson's single-minded and affable determination. This feels like essential history, and you can follow the film here: <https://www.facebook.com/maynardmovie/>.

"America to Me" is a documentary series that will air this fall on the Starz network. Director Steve James ("Hoop Dreams" and "Abacus: Too Small to Jail") embedded in an Oak Park, Ill. high school that is recognized for its racial diversity but which reflects an achievement gap between white students and students of color. The film seeks to interrogate the forces that can lead students of color to lag behind even in a resource-rich school; I thought,

after watching the first two of 10 hours of the series, that so much time and access (and good editing) did yield some suggestions of systemic racism, but wondered if James is the right person to tell that story. In questioning the filmmaker after, his answer did not suggest that he and his crew undertook anti-racism training that would have helped them ask the right questions of what they were seeing. Still, James knows how to tell a story, and here he has collected an interesting window into the current state of race relations in America.

"America" focuses on a family in Mexico providing care to an elderly grandmother, América. Her three adult grandsons end

up serving as her caretakers after their father (her son) is jailed for elder abuse; the film takes the time to observe the family over many months, as the young men struggle with how to care for América, who is frail and exhibits signs of dementia. There is love, and frustration, and some windows into Mexican life, along with a carefully observed family portrait that earned the film's directors an emerging artist award.

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*. Find her movie blog at opinionatedjudge.blogspot.com.



Troops on Linwood Avenue in Detroit, during a July 1967 uprising. The new documentary "12th and Clairmont" examines the history of the civil rights turmoil through the lives of those who lived through it.



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