



PHOTO BY JENNY GRAHAM/OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Kimberly Monks (Riley) and Christiana Clark (Tami) star in "How to Catch Creation" at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, a play featuring an excellent cast of six African American characters and projecting voices that ring with a clarity borne of struggle.

## Black Voices Ring with Clarity, Integrity

### OPINIONATED JUDGE

BY DARLEEN ORTEGA



Every once in a while, I stumble on the opportunity to see a play that I didn't realize I was longing for. The richly realized production of Christine Anderson's marvelous play, "How to Catch Creation," at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland through October, was such an experience for me--an opportunity to spend an evening with six African American characters who I

wish I knew in real life, not one of which I've seen in a play before. Griffin (especially well played by Chris Butler) is newly out of prison where he served 25 years for a crime he did not commit. Tami (an equally remarkable Christiana Clark), an artist and professor, has been Griffin's friend since they were both young adults. Their friendship is deep,

familiar, lived in, but not romantic; each talks truth to the other as Griffin searches for a way to become a parent and Tami befriends Riley, a young woman who awakens her artistic and romantic passions. Riley, too, is inspired by Tami, but also entangled with and committed to her boyfriend Stokes, a frustrated painter who is inspired to write after being introduced to the works of black feminist writer G. K. Marche.

These intersecting relationships unfold in overlapping scenes and overlapping conversa-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

## The Week in Review

### Desperate for Answers

A local black family was desperate for answers after their loved one was found dead at the Oregon Zoo. Carl Ross Sr., 62, went missing while attending a Saturday night concert Aug. 10 with a friend and reported missing. His body was found the following Monday morning in an area under construction at the zoo. Police are investigating.



ple's yards in southeast Portland. Police said the victim in one of the incidents received intimidating text messages from the suspect and may have been targeted due to their sexual orientation, according to law enforcement.

### Mental Health Crisis

Mental health crisis negotiators spent five hours trying to calm a man throwing furniture from his third story apartment window on North Interstate Avenue on Saturday before spraying a chemical agent into his home and arresting him. The man was identified as Joseph J. Lee, 40.



### Rule Ends Family Planning

Planned Parenthood said Monday it was pulling out of the federal family planning program rather than abide by a new Trump administration rule prohibiting clinics from referring women for abortions. "Our patients deserve to make their own health care decisions, not to be forced to have Donald Trump or Mike Pence make those decisions for them," said the group's president and CEO.

### Officer Fired for Choke Hold

After five years of investigations and protests, New York City's police commissioner on Monday fired the officer involved in the 2014 chokehold death of an unarmed black man whose dying cries of "I can't breathe" fueled a national debate over race and police use of force.

### Discrimination Claim

A former employee at the Oregon Department of Corrections is suing the state for almost \$1 million accusing the department of retaliating against him for aiding employees with discrimination complaints. Gary Sims, who is black, says he stopped working with the department after a superior reprimanded him in 2017 and his office was closed over reported budget concerns.



### Cremated Remains Found

The Portland Police Bureau asked for the community's help Tuesday in locating the loved ones of Floyd "Frank" Leslie Hill who passed away on Oct. 17, 2000. A box labeled as his cremated remains were found outside, near the intersection of North Chase Avenue and North Chautauqua Boulevard on Monday. The bureau has exhausted all resources to try and find any family or friends.

### Fire Bomb Intimidation

Police arrested a Portland man last week for allegedly throwing Molotov cocktails in two peo-



The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of the newspaper and cannot be used in other publications or personal usage without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. © 2008 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED, REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED. The Portland Observer--Oregon's Oldest Multicultural Publication--is a member of the National Newspaper Association--Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc, New York, NY, and The West Coast Black Publishers Association

PUBLISHER: Mark Washington, Sr.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Neufeldt

EDITOR: Michael Leighton

REPORTER/WEB EDITOR: Danny Peterson

ADVERTISING MANAGER: Leonard Latin

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Mark Washington Jr.

Office Manager/Classifieds: Lucinda Baldwin

OFFICE ASSISTANT/SALES: Shawntell Washington

CALL 503-288-0033 FAX 503-288-0015

news@portlandobserver.com • ads@portlandobserver.com • subscription@portlandobserver.com

Postmaster: Send address changes to Portland Observer, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208



PO QR code

