

Jon Batiste tops Grammys



Jon Batiste poses with his Grammy awards for best American roots performance and best American roots song for "Cry," best music video for "Freedom," best score soundtrack for visual media for "Soul," and album of the year for "We Are." (AP photo)

(AP) — Olivia Rodrigo made an impressive Grammy debut, Silk Sonic claimed two major awards and Jon Batiste had the most stunning victory of the night winning the top prize at Sunday's Grammy Awards.

Batiste won five Grammys Sunday including album of the year for "We Are" pulling off an upset in a category filled with tough competition from Rodrigo, Billie Eilish, Taylor Swift and the combined talents of Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga. After his win, the multi-genre performer honored

the artists he beat, telling the audience that "the creative arts are subjective. Be you."

"I just put my head down and I work on the craft every day," said Batiste, who won for his song "Cry," the video for "Freedom" and his work with the Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross on the soundtrack for "Soul."

Silk Sonic — the all-star union of Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak — took home awards in all four categories it was nominated in, including record and song of the year.

Violence Inside Out

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work through how to perform with kindness toward each other.

Fight directors have been an essential part of stage work for quite some time, and intimacy directors, who work to help the cast observe appropriate boundaries for depicting intimacy with respect, care, and full consent, are likewise coming to be seen as essential to responsible theater work. Portland Playhouse engaged a fight director, an intimacy director, and a cultural competency consultant, with an eye toward surfacing deeper consciousness around the care needed to present violence and intimacy responsibly. Directors Tina Packer and Brian Weaver sought to approach the work in a humanizing way, evincing recognition that presenting violence involves a

sort of intimacy that deserves awareness and care.

The results can feel a bit meta, breaking the fourth wall between audience and performers. But I was not wishing for more of what we would term "realism" in the presentation of this material, particularly in Portland Playhouse's intimate space in the King neighborhood in what was once a Black church. Why do we think it is more realistic to present violence as though it is real, while not acknowledging significant parts of its toll on those who experience violence in life, on those who portray it, and on audience members watching it? Maybe that is the wrong kind of real; many, perhaps most actual experiences of violence similarly tend to come with minimization of its impacts, and it could be argued that artistic depictions facilitate that by hiding

or minimizing impacts as well. Might it actually be more realistic (and certainly responsible) to depict violence in a way that acknowledges and accounts for some of its impacts? This production, aided by the excellent work of its committed cast and crew, made me hold that question in a new way—and made me think differently about films like "The Power of the Dog" too. In my book, that's a good reason to see this production of this violent play. You can see it at Portland Playhouse through April 10.

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

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