

Viewer's Guide

Reel Conversations: The Piano Lesson

Friday, October 03 (6:30 – 8:30)

@ Arts Collaborative Medford



Family legacy, haunting memories, and the price of inheritance.

August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson* is not just a play adapted for screen—it's a spiritual reckoning. It's about what we carry, what we pass on, and what it costs to forget or to remember. This is a conversation about memory, music, and the ghosts we live with.

And the ones we live for.

Watch for These Themes

1. *Legacy & Inheritance*

The piano is more than an heirloom—it holds the story of a family, etched into its wood.

Consider:

- What do we inherit that is too heavy to carry, but too sacred to leave behind? - How do we honor the past without being bound by it?

2. *History That Haunts*

Ghosts walk freely in this house—some literal, some emotional.

Consider: -

What unfinished business lingers in your own story? - How does trauma pass from generation to generation?

3. *Art as Ancestry*

The piano is a vessel of memory, music, resistance, and survival.

Consider: -

Can art preserve history better than books? - What stories live inside the art that has shaped your life?

4. Power, Possession, and Letting Go

One sibling wants to sell the piano. One wants to keep it. Both are right. Both are wrong.

 **Consider:** -

What does “ownership” mean when it comes to shared family stories? - When is it time to let go, and when is it time to hold on?

5. Spiritual Reckoning

There is grief, there is gospel, and there is a ghost. Healing only comes when the living speak to the dead.

 **Consider:** -

How do we wrestle with the spirits of our past? - What must be named before it can be released?

Before You Come

- Watch *The Piano Lesson* ahead of time (available on Netflix or streaming platforms).
- Reflect on the themes above. Take notes if you like, or just bring your spirit ready to engage.
- Come open to witness, to grieve, and to celebrate what remains carved in the soul.

Join us onsite or online for a conversation about memory, music, and the ghosts we live with.

And the ones we live for.