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# Notebook

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## Emory professor's music to be heard on national television

Emory University assistant professor of Music Dwight D. Andrews has achieved national prominence in the world of jazz music and scholarship, but nothing like the notoriety he may get from the televised adaptation of "The Piano Lesson," to be aired Sunday evening, Feb. 5, as a "Hallmark Hall of Fame" special on CBS (locally on WGNX, Channel 46). The highly successful play by August Wilson won a Pulitzer Prize in 1990.

Directed by Lloyd Richards, "The Piano Lesson" opened at the Walter Kerr Theater on Broadway in April 1990 and went on to numerous venues throughout the country including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and, in 1992, to Atlanta's Alliance Theater.

As has been his custom for many years, playwright Wilson depended on Andrews to arrange and set the music for "The Piano Lesson." Andrews and Wilson have collaborated on such works as "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," "Fences" and "Joe Turner's Come and Gone." Andrews has just returned from the premiere of Wilson's "Seven Guitars" at Chicago's Goodman Theater, in which he once again directed the music.

In 1987 Andrews wrote the score for "The Piano Lesson". The story features a spirit who plays an elaborately carved, slavery-era piano, over which a brother and sister are feuding. The brother wants to sell the piano to buy land where their ancestors were slaves, but the sister wants to keep the piano as a reminder of their forebears who were sold and died for the instrument.

During many of the earlier productions of the play in Washington, D.C.,

Chicago and Boston, a prerecorded tape played offstage during the ghost's appearances. Later, in New York and Los Angeles, audiences heard a better version of the music and even saw the keys to the piano move. Under Andrews' direction, Emory pianist and associate music professor William Ransom recorded the newer version on a disclavier, a computerized player piano. That's what audiences also heard and saw in the Atlanta production.

As musical supervisor, Andrews wrote and re-wrote the music and oversaw the musical direction. His name will be listed in the end credits of the show. Additional music and sound effects have been added to the televised special, according to Ransom, but viewers will still hear much of Andrews' original music as well as Ransom's playing. The cast of the television production includes Charles Dutton as Boy Willie, a role he played on Broadway for three-and-a-half years. Dutton was keynote speaker during the celebration of Black History Month at Emory in 1994. Alfre Woodward is featured in the role of Bernice Charles in the production.

Andrews has recorded and performed with prominent jazz musicians throughout the world. A frequently commissioned composer for special events such as the National Black Arts Festival, he was retained by Branford Marsalis to arrange music for his album, "I Heard You Twice the First Time" (Columbia, 1992). A multi-instrumentalist, Andrews teaches music theory and jazz history in the music department. He is a resident of DeKalb County.