

On The Purple Circuit

With Bill Kaiser

Volume 11, Number 4

THE JEFFREY SOLOMON / MARJORIE CONN ISSUE

Welcome to On the Purple Circuit!

Our informal network exists to encourage, promote, and celebrate GLBQT Theatre and Performance throughout the world!

This is The Jeffrey Solomon/Marjorie Conn Issue. They were two of the many stars that performed at The Columbus National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival that I was able to attend part of in September. The entire Festival was run with a great degree of organization, professionalism, and community support. Kudos to Frank Barnhart and Act Out Productions, publicist Dale Gregory, and their entire staff! Truly this can be a model of how to run a festival successfully. Audiences numbered more than 4,000 during the ten-day festival with 24 productions to see. It was a feast of talent for the theatre patron!

It was a thrill to meet old and new friends of The Purple Circuit including: the fabulous Sky Gilbert and his Cabaret Company from Toronto; Chris Burnside from Richmond; Naughty Austin Company; Dee Shepard from Reality Theatre in Columbus; Danielle Dresden and Donna Peckett and TAP-IT from Madison; Marjorie Conn, Jeffrey Solomon; among many others.

After seeing Marjorie and Jeffrey's solo shows and the other fine productions I realized this is what theatre should be all about! Marjorie has a number of great shows of her own in addition to the show she performed in Columbus: Pat Bond's LORENA HICKOK & ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: A LOVE STORY. This immensely talented woman is a mainstay in Provincetown with her Conn Artists organization and performs in NYC and elsewhere during the off season. I urge everyone to see her if ever you are within traveling distance of where she is performing. Three of her plays are available in LOST LESBIAN LIVES, which you can get for \$10 plus \$1.50 per book by mail to Marjorie Conn, 476 Commercial St, Provincetown, MA 02657. For booking information: contact Conn Artists at marjconn@gis.net or 508-487-2666.

Jeffrey Solomon was also a revelation at The Festival with his talent and energy. Both his hilarious and heartfelt SANTA CLAUS IS COMING OUT and the equally poignant MOTHER/SON were well received in Columbus. SANTA CLAUS won the coveted Purple Circuit Award for best show of the Festival, which I'm sure was a hard choice, but a popular one for the judges among so much talent and diversity of productions. Jeffrey is touring SANTA CLAUS to San Diego, LA, Philadelphia, and Washington DC in 2002. He is available to tour to your city. Contact his producer Gary Shaffer at 732-286-3948 or shafferpromo@yahoo.com

I was sorry to miss Jade Esteban Estrada's ICONS, the dynamic comedian Karen Williams (who is on the Advisory Board for The Performing Arts Collection at ONE Institute), the people from DRAMA! in New Orleans, Jerry Rabushka

and Ragged Blade and Chris Jackson from St. Louis and the rest of the shows preceding my arrival. Again, I want to congratulate Frank Barnhart for his achievement and for letting me become a part of it. The Festival will be back in 2004, so contact fabact1@aol.com Meanwhile, Frank is NYC directing MEMBERS OF THE TRIBE and Dale Gregory is directing THE EIGHT- THE REINDEER MONOLOGUES for Act Out Productions in Columbus.

Sadly, I have some tragic losses to report. Pioneer playwright Sidney Morris has died in NYC. He was the author of more than 50 plays including IF THIS ISN'T LOVE, and many other wonderful plays some of which remain to be produced. Arrangements for a memorial service are still pending at this time. To honor Sidney, contributions can be sent to Zappalorti Society, 14 E 28 St., #1014, New York, NY 10016-7464, or to The Actor's Fund or Broadway Cares, Equity Fights AIDS. However, more significantly, if you are a producer, you can contact agent Francine L. Trevens at tntclassics@aol.com for brochures on his plays that are available for production. TnT Classics also has other books including work of Jane Chambers, Robert Chesley, Arch Brown, Doric Wilson, and more. Sidney was a great supporter of The Purple Circuit and I will miss my visits with him greatly.

Other losses include the passing of the great actor and humanitarian Michael Greer of FORTUNE AND MEN'S EYES and THE GAY DECEIVERS as well as stage, comedy and cabaret. Michael was also a good friend of The Purple Circuit and ONE Institute & Archives in LA. ONE is tentatively planning a memorial service for him in early 2003. We are trying to contact people close to him for assistance and information. If anyone can help in that endeavor to remember this fine man, contact me at 818-953-5096 or purplecir@aol.com

Also passing was our founding father Harry Hay. Harry was involved in the arts among his important political work in creating our community movement. Memorials were held in SF in November, and at ONE Institute in December.

I also want to mention that it was the 5th anniversary on November 15 of Jim Kepner, the founder of the International Gay & Lesbian Archives. He was a storyteller and historian of the gay and lesbian movement.

I will miss all of these dear men, as well as the men and women who have died from HIV/AIDS, robbing our creative community of kindred spirits. We must do what we can to cherish and remember them and their achievements. Kudos to David Reid who handles AIDS Watch, a cable TV project remembering the names on World AIDS Day, Dec 1 each year. www.aidswatch.org

Michael Kearns new play **COMPLICATIONS** is a drama with a backdrop of AIDS. He and Highways are to be commended for presenting this edgy piece that reminds us so many years into this dreadful pandemic that it is still with us and the people around the world.

On a happier note, I want to welcome a new theatre company to The Purple Circuit. The OUT Theatre in Long Beach, Calif. has produced its first production on November 3, 2002. Lesbian one-acts under the collective title **TRUTH, TONI & ZENITH**, an evening of art echoing life. Kudos and "break legs" to Caitlin Crest and the rest of the company. Check them out at caitlin@theouttheatre.org or www.theouttheatre.org

Another positive development is the growth of Teatro Berdache of Calgary, Alberta. They are doing great work since they formed a gay/lesbian theatre company in June 2000. I am impressed with that and kudos to creative directors Steve Gin and Larry Smith. You can reach them at burkegin@aol.com or 403-245-0127.

There is so much information that sometimes I am overwhelmed and apologize for any omissions. I urge people to send me information - especially for theatres and shows - you haven't read about here. I also need volunteer correspondents in many parts of the country, especially in SF, Boston and New England, Atlanta, and other parts of the south. If you are interested, contact me. With all that has been happening, The Directory of Venues has not been updated. I hope to work on that project soon.

Also, to our subscribers and friends, I thank you for all your support. However, we will need more financial support to continue the printed edition of OTPC in 2003. So please subscribe, renew, or contribute now with a check payable to "Bill Kaiser", 921 N. Naomi St., Burbank CA 91505. I am seriously considering having only the Web site edition [www.buddybuddy.com/pc.html] if I cannot receive more financial support. Thank you!

Thanks to our valued columnists: Nathaniel Grey, Steven LaVigne, Tom O'Neil, Michael Van Kerckhove. Thanks as well as the publicists, theatres, producers and individuals who sent material including (but not limited to), Linda Eisenstein, Frank Barnhart, Nina Gooch, Francine L. Trevens, Dale Gregory, David Reid, Jason Stuart, Jeffrey Solomon, Marjorie Conn, David King, Caitlin Crest, Steve Gin, and Arch Brown. Sincere thanks to associate editor Jim Russell, Web site programmer Demian, and Sally Barron for getting out yet one more issue!

I urge all to work for peace and our freedom of expression in 2003. And keep creating art.

Happy Holidays and Peace,
Bill Kaiser
Editor

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ON THE BOARDS

Note: Descriptions are based on press releases or personal knowledge. An "*" indicates a current or future show. The

information is subject to change, and shows may be extended. Remember to see a gay or lesbian show tonight.

***After Dark** by Steve Kluger. A warmhearted romantic comedy of two lost souls who find each other in a diner at 4 am five days before Xmas, Actors' Theatre, Washington DC, opened November 8, 2002. 800-494-8497

All That - solo show with lesbian actress Maria Richardson, Whitmore-Lindley Theatre, N. Hollywood, Calif., October-November 2002. Entertainment, London, October 2002

Almost Live from the Betty Ford Clinic with Michael West, the personification of comedy in this solo show of celebrity pretensions and addictions, Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, NYC, October-November 2002

Altered Ego with Will Clark. Stories of love, sex, the gay porn industry and secret identities, Bailiwick Repertory, Chicago and toured elsewhere, October 2002

***Amnesia** by John Fishera bitchy music critic suddenly loses his gay identity and embarks on a journey into the straight world to find it! Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, opens January 16, 2003. 415-861-5079

***Aurora Borealis** by Timm Holt. Facing old age in the gay community in New Orleans. DRAMA! New Orleans, opened November 22, 2002. drama@dramano.org

***Backyard Fruit** by Andy Corren. A new comedy set in North Carolina. Sacred Fools Theater, LA, October 2002

Befriending Beau by David Gaard. A play about the empty lives of three gay LA teens who have been abandoned by everyone but themselves. Chashama, NYC, September-October 2002

Below the Belt by L. A. Butler. A gender-bent farce when a dyke wakes up with a penis and has to deal with the new equipment. Split.Id at Flight Theater, Hollywood, Sept. 2002

Benedictions by Judy Simpson Cook. A play about faith, sexuality, family, loss and our common humanity. Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC, October 2002

Bent by Martin Sherman. Off-Tryon Theatre Company, Charlotte, NC, September 2002

Bet She's Not Your Girlfriend by Richard Francis. A new gay comedy about life, love and the dole. Oddball Entertainment, London, October 2002

The Big Voice: God or Merman? A new musical by Jim Brochu and Steve Schalchlin, creators of THE LAST SESSION. Big Voice is about their lives. Zephyr Theatre, Hollywood, ongoing. 323-852-9111

***Body Blows** with Tim Miller. A new solo show based on his book is on tour, recent appearances: Oglethorpe University, Atlanta; New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF; UC Riverside, Riverside Calif.; P.S. 122, NYC, November-December. hometown.aol.com/millertale/timmiller.html

***The Bombay Trunk** by Felice Picano. Mystery comedy. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opened October 30, 2002. 415-861-8972

Boy Beautiful by David Terry. An exploration of the archetypal heroic journey. HERE, NYC, September 2002.

***Boy Meets Boy** by Bill Solly and Donald Ward. Lambda Players, Sacramento, opens Jan. 10, 2003. 916-336-3904

Cheat by Julie Jensen. Love, war, and changes for American women at the end of WWII. Women's Project Theatre, NYC, October-November 2002

***Christmas Is Queer** - five one-acts by Laura Black, Larry Dean Harris, Amy Heidish, G. Bruce Smith and Monica Trasandes. Playwrights 6 at Celebration Theatre, LA, opened December 6, 2002. 323-860-6625

***Christmas with the Crawfords** by Richard Winchester, Mark Sargent and Wayne Buidens. Producers Club II, NYC, opened November 22, 2002. 212-315-4743

Cloud Nine by Caryl Churchill, Trinity Repertory, Providence, September-November 2002

Cock Tales - male monologues by Leon Katz, Lynn Manning, Jose Cruz Gonzalez, Jeremy Lawrence, Bryan Davidson, Felix Pire, and Eric Trules. "M", LA, October 2002

The Coming Out Party by John Michael Caffey. A gay PYGMALION. Theatre New West, Houston, October-November 2002

Complications by Michael Kearns. All-American Arias in Response to Life's War, this show puts the drama back in AIDS! Highways, Santa Monica, November-December 2002

Conversations at a Bathhouse Can be Tricky by Jim Chappelleaux. A scandalous solo romp through sex education. The Vortex, Austin, September 2002

Corpus Christi by Terrence McNally. Coleman and Smith Artistic Company, LA, October-November 2002

Cotillion by Jeanette Scherrer. In 1957, a young woman is caught between her stepmother, a boy, and a girl. The Village, Hollywood, Calif., October 2002

The Crumple Zone by Buddy Thomas. An hilarious comedy about dating and love. Hudson Ave later moved to Zephyr Theatre, LA, August-November 2002; Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, November 2002

***C*S*: A Love Story** by Ronnie Larsen. The "enfant terrible" is back with a story about one of man's favorite pastimes, set near a marine base no less! Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, opens May 8, 2003. 415-861-5079

Dementia by Evelina Fernandez. AIDS in the Latino community, drag, and disco. Latino Theatre Company, LA, October-November 2002

***Deporting the Divas** by Guillermo Reyes. An unlikely relationship between a Mexican-American INS officer and an illegal immigrant. Diversionary Theatre, San Diego, opens March 29, 2003. 619-220-0097

Detour: The Musical by Scott Alan. Nontraditional love triangle. Blank Slate Theater at the Complex, Hollywood, September 2002

Doing Judy by Dan Evans. A serial killer is doing in all the Judy impersonators. Alcazar Theatre, SF, October 2002

***Dooley** by Harry Cronin. Decorated Navy medico Tom Dooley is discredited by the Navy for his homosexuality. Jon Sims Center, SF, opens December 6, 2002. 415-554-0402

Dos Lesbos by Terry Baum, Carolyn Myers and Alice Thompson. Spontaneous Theater, Boise, August 2002; Thriving Theatre! Corvallis Oregon, September 2002; U. of Southern Maine, October 2002

Early Morning by Edward Bond. Parody of the British-now-American Empire with Queen Victoria and her lover Florence Nightingale, and much more. Vortex Repertory, Austin, October-November 2002

***Edward II** by Christopher Marlowe. Living End Theatre Company, Philadelphia, December 2002. chuckcan@hotmail.com

***The Eight: Reindeer Monologues** by Jeff Goode. An offbeat Christmas cult hit with some bisexual and transgender characters. Act Out Productions, Columbus, Ohio, opened November 29, 2002. 614-876-0223

***Embracing the Undertoad** by Robin Rice Lichtig. A one-act featuring a waitress in a diner, her tuned-into-the-aura-of-the-universe sister, and her lesbian lover in a struggle for love, life, and sanity. Bailiwick's Lesbian Theatre Initiative Playwriting Competition winner, Bailiwick Rep, Chicago, opened September 23, 2002. 773-883-1090

Endless Night, Sweet Delight by Howard Casner. A young man nearing the brink finds solace in the arms of a gentle stranger only he can see! Wings, NYC, Aug.-Sept. 2002

***Eugenia** by Lorae Parry. True story of a woman in the early 1900s who lived her life as a man later convicted of murder. Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, October-November 2002

Eula Mae's Beauty, Bait & Tackle by Frank Blocker and Chuck Richards. Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, September 2002

Fallen Guardian Angels by Edward D. Padilla. Six dancers are in turmoil when they learn their choreographer is HIV+. The Complex, Hollywood, August-October 2002

***The Food Chain** by Nicky Silver, New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opened Nov. 6, 2002. 415-861-8972

***Girl Meets Girl** by Craig Fox and Sally Stover. Six women searching for love in the new millennium. Lambda Players, Sacramento, opens April 4, 2003. 916-336-3904

Glory Box with Tim Miller. Retells his struggles to keep his Australian partner Alistair McCartney in the US, and the inequities of the marriage laws. Provincetown Repertory Theater, August 2002; Drill Hall, London, Exeter and Glasgow! Glasgow, October 2002

***Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde** by Moises Kaufman. Diversionary Theatre, San Diego, opens January 18, 2003. 619-220-0097

***Hairspray** by Marc Shaiman, Scott Wittman, Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan. Adapted from John Waters' hit film. Neil Simon Theatre, NYC, ongoing, 212-307-4100

Hairstory by Doug Holsclaw and Johari Jabir. A new musical review about people and their hair. Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, September-October 2002

Halsted Street, Chicago: A Few Tales from Boystown by Howard Casner. A very entertaining and literate evening of one-acts. Korbett Kompany at Masonic Hall, San Diego, October 2002

***Honey, I'm Home** by Paul Vanderoest and Bruce Hart. A gay screwball comedy about Hollywood. Knightsbridge Theatre, LA, August-October 2002

***Hotel Bethelhem** by Tom W Kelly and Tim Bryant. A fiercely funny Bible farce. EXIT on Taylor Theatre, SF, opened November 22, 2002. 415-863-7707

***Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly** by Howard Crabtree and Mark Waldrop, with music by Dick Gallagher. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opens May 7, 2003. 415-861-8972

Hungry Women: A Mexican Medea by Cherrie Moraga. A retelling of the classic. Celebration Theatre, LA, October-November 2002

Icons with Jade Esteban Estrada. The Latino singing sensation with his solo THE LESBIAN AND GAY HISTORY OF THE WORLD VOL 1, The Grand Theatre at The Producer's Club, NYC, November 2002; National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival, Columbus OH, September 2002

In a New York Minute...Anything Can Happen by Michele Palermo. Sanford Meisner Theatre, NYC, November 2002

***In The Garden** by Norman Allen. Erotic drama. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opens January 22, 2003. 415-861-8972

Inner Workings of a Man by Eva Minemar. A one-act exploring the relationship between Alex and Brian. Pulse Ensemble Theatre, NYC, September 2002

I.R.L. (In Real Life) by Rick Robinson. A group of online friends decide to meet I. R. L. The Village, Hollywood, October 2002

It Might be Some Humpin' with Levan D. Hawkins, Pat Payne and Peter J. Harris. Satiric looks at modern-day

mating and dating rituals. Beyond Baroque Literary Center, Venice, CA, November 2002

James Baldwin Down from the Mountaintop with Calvin Levels. The Elephant Theater, LA, August-September 2002

***Jon and Juan's Wedding** with Creative Arts Enterprises. An inter-ethnic same-sex commitment ceremony. Miami, opened September 20, 2002

The Ketchup Commercial by Jeff Stevens. An hilarious black comedy of making it with acting or drugs in NYC. Ravenna-West Productions, NYC, October-November 2002

The Killing Of Sister George by Frank Marcus. Diversionary Theatre, San Diego, August-October 2002

The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman and the members of Tectonic Theater Project. SNAP! Productions, Omaha, August-September 2002; LA City College, October 2002; Actor's Theatre of Charlotte, Charlotte NC, October 2002; SF University HS, SF, October 2002; and Newark Memorial HS, Newark Calif., November 2002

Lavender Lockerroom by F. Allen Sawyer. A comedy with balls! In the pulp novel style. Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, October 2002

***Legends and Bridge** by C. Stephen Foster. Fantasy play of Joan Crawford, Judy Garland, and Bette Davis living together in 1964 and working on a secret film project. Group Repertory Theatre, North Hollywood Calif., opened Oct 18, 2002, 818-769-7529

Lesbian Witches of Ojai by Brian Demboski. Four one-act kooky and warped plays. Glendale College, Glendale Calif., November 2002

***Love! Valour! Compassion!** by Terrence McNally. First Scene, Midsumma 2003, The Melbourne Gay and Lesbian Festival, Melbourne, January 22-February 8, 2003.

Lucky to be Me with Matt Young. Solo musical comedy. Kabarett Junction, Sydney, October 2002

Madness of Lady Bright by Lanford Wilson. A gay classic. MET Theatre, Hollywood, Calif., October-November 2002

The Mailman Always Comes Twice with Varla Jean Merman. A parody of the Lana Turner classic. Chelsea Playhouse, NYC, November 2002

Manlady with George Weiss Vando. The Village, LA. September 2002

Man on the Rocks by Brett Kristofferson. A new musical from the dawn of prehistoric man to cruising hard bodies at the gym. The Chashama Theatre, NYC, September-October 2002

Masters of the (Miss) Universe with Noel Alunit. Provocative statement about race, sexuality and art. Highways, Santa Monica Calif. September 2002; New Conservatory, SF, October 2002

Meet Me In St. Louie, Louie! with The Louie Project, an ensemble of gay men who have created a theatrical work about their lives. Alternate Currents/Direct Currents Series of That Uppity Theatre Company, St. Louis, November 2002

***Members of the Tribe** by Nancy S. Heiden. Producers Club, NYC, opened November 7, 2002. www.smartix.com

***The Men from the Boys** by Mart Crowley. The sequel. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opened October 16, 2002. 415-861-8972

Menopausal Gentleman with Peggy Shaw. An incredible solo show. Highways, Santa Monica, Calif., September 2002.

Miss Gulch Returns! by Fred Barton. Solo musical tour de force. Theatre on the Square, Indianapolis, October-November 2002

Miss Lizzie A. Borden Invites You to Tea with Marjorie Conn. An invitation to a party held annually on the

anniversary of the murders. Raw Space, NYC, October-November 2002

Miss Macinernie's Acquaintances by Mike Dempsey. A gay man down on his luck is besieged by his own neurosis and paranoia in this off beat comedy. 6@Penn, San Diego, October-November 2002

Mistress Ecstasy's Erotic Circus! with Marjorie Conn. A three-ring circus of the mind about love, sex and fantasy. Provincetown Fringe Festival, August 2002

Moscow by Nick Salamone and Maury R. McIntyre, the international award winning musical from Edinburgh Fringe, The Connelly Theater, NYC, November 2002

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told by Paul Rudnick. SNAP! Productions, Omaha, November 7-December 1, 2002

My Mother's Coming by Richard Devin. A comedy relating to the difficulties of coming out to one's mother. Jewel Box Theater Center, Hollywood, Calif., September-October 2002

***Mysterious Skin** by Prince Gomolvilas. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opens April 3, 2003, 415-861-8972

***The Mystery of Irma Vep** by Charles Ludlam. Knightsbridge Theatre, Pasadena, Calif., October-November 2002; Diversionary Theatre, San Diego, Calif., opened October 31, 2002. 619-220-0097

***Naked Boys Singing** created by Robert Schrock. The musical revue sensation. Ongoing at Bailiwick, Chicago, 773-883-1090; still running at Actors Playhouse in NYC; opened in London; and The Actors' Theatre of Washington at The Source Theatre, Wash. DC, opened November 21, 2002. 800-494-8497

***The Neo-Dandy Cabaret** instigated by Keith Hennessy. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opens December 5, 2002. 415-861-8972

***Overanalysis** by Gabriel Shanks. New York Gay Theatre Festival at the Bank Street Theatre, NYC, various dates in December 2002. 212-358-3557

***Paperclip Messiah** by Matthew Burlingame. A priest and a young hired man fall in love. Lambda Players, Sacramento, opened September 29, 2002. 916-336-3904

***Party** by David Dillon. The uplifting and affirming celebration of gay life hit with the playwright in the cast too! Central Stage Theatre, St. Petersburg, opened August 9, 2002. 727-327-PLAY

***The Perverse Tongue** by George Larkin. An America after plague, under absolute Bible rule enforced by the "Soldiers of God." MET Theatre, LA, opened November 12, 2002. 323-957-1152

Potty Mouth with Andy Horowitz. Storytelling of mostly queer sex and the city. Surf Reality, NYC, October 2002

Princess in Training by Cheryl Ann Costa. An evening of transgender plays. Outlanta, Atlanta, September-October 2002

***A Queer Carol** by Joe Godfrey, contemporary version of the classic with a gay Scrooge. Theatre OUTlanta, Atlanta, opens Dec. 13, 2002, 404-371-0212; SourceWorks, NYC, opened Dec. 2, 2002. 212-206-1515. www.smartix.com

Queer Soul with Monica Palacios. 20 years of fierce performance. Highways, Santa Monica, September 2002

***The Question** by Joseph Beck. MET Theatre, Hollywood, Calif., opens January 24, 2003. 323-957-1152

Quietly Overwhelmed by Corrina Hodgson. Cassandra, a young graffiti artist, grieving over death of her lover, deals with art and relationships. Teatro Berdache, Calgary, Alberta, October 2002

The Raft of the Medusa by Joe Pintauro. An explosive AIDS group session. Wings Theatre, NYC, Sept.-October 2002

Rainbow Zenith by Caitlin Crest. Investigation into the plethora of emotions and feelings. OUT Theatre, Long Beach Calif., November 2002

***Rent** by Jonathan Larsen. Wilshire Theatre, LA, November 2002, ongoing throughout the world

The Rocky Horror Picture Show - New Line Theatre at Art Loft Theatre, St. Louis, October-November 2002

***Roman Nights** by Franco D'Alessandro. Explores the relationship between Anna Magnini and Tennessee Williams. DR2 Theatre, NYC, opened Sept. 12, 2002. 212-239-6200

Sacrifice to Eros by Fred Timm. Retelling of the prodigal son story set in the depression with gay themes and a multiracial cast. The St. Marks Theater, NYC, September-October 2002

***Santa Claus is coming Out** with Jeffrey Solomon. A fantastic solo holiday show that can be staged all year long! 6th@Penn, San Diego, Nov. 2002; The Warehouse Theatre, Wash. D.C. Dec. 27, 2002-Jan. 7, 2003, 202-783-3933; Coast Playhouse, West Hollywood Calif., Dec. 2002, 877-238-5506. www.smarttix.com; Adrienne Theatre, Philadelphia, Dec. 18-22, 2002. 877-238-5506.

www.smarttix.com

***Scarlet Letter** by Phyllis Nagy. Adaptation of Hawthorne classic. Vortex Repertory, Austin, opening March 2003. 512-478-5282

***The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe** by Jane Wagner starring Lily Tomlin. Ahmanson Theatre, LA, May 17-July 6, 2003. 213-628-2772

***Shangai Moon** by Charles Busch. Parody of 1930s melodramas. The Drama dept, NYC, opens January 2003.

***Show Ho** with Sara Moore. Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, opened November 7, 2002. 415-861-5079

***Simply Barbra: A Christmas Show** with Steven Brinberg. A new evening of holidays songs and stories with La Barbra. Don't Tell Mama, NYC, opens Dec. 6, 2002. 212-757-0788

Single Wet Female with Carmelita Tropicana and Marga Gomez. A low rent thriller about perverted roommates. PS.122, NYC, October 2002

***Sleeping Around** by Mark Ravenhill. A new treatment of REIGEN or LA RONDE. Rude Guerilla, Santa Ana Calif., November-December 2002. 714-547-4688

Son of Drakula a new solo work by David Drake. Theatre Project, Baltimore, May 2002; Dance Theatre, NYC, October-November 2002

Sort of where I'm coming from with Dan Bacalzo. A queer journey through race, sex, family, and religion. Tufts University and Wellesley College, October 2002

Spanked! with Ian Mackinnon and Aaron Hartzler. Bibles, belts, and bikini briefs. Highways, Santa Monica, Nov. 2002

Spic for Export with Susana Cook. An overworked, overlooked immigrant whose blood, sweat, and tears are the backbone of our nation. Hallwalls A Ways in Being Gay Festival 2002, Buffalo, November 2002

Straight with David Schmader. A conversion comedy. Howie Baggadonutz Presents, Portland OR, November 2002

Strange Light by Cynthia L. Cooper. A powerful drama of portraits of mothers, daughters and girlfriends. HAG Theatre, Buffalo, November 2002

***Strangers in Paradise** by Kate Bronstein. The true story of Casey and The Kidd. Theatre Rhinoceros, SF, opens March 13, 2003. 415-861-5079

Strip/Tease by Neil Weaver. Bailiwick Repertory, Chicago, October-November 2002

***Take Me Out** by Richard Greenberg. A young baseball star's coming out sparks a national debate. Donmar

Warehouse, London, June-August; co-production at The Public Theatre, NYC, opened Sept. 5, 2002. 212-239-6200

***Talking Tennessee** with Jeremy Lawrence. Laurelgrove Theatre, Studio City CA, ongoing. 818-760-8368

***Tennessee in the Summer** by Joe Besecker. Inspired by the life of Tennessee Williams. Laurelgrove Theatre, Studio City Calif., ongoing. 818-760-8368

***Thief River** by Lee Blessing. New Conservatory Theatre Center, SF, opens January 8, 2003. 415-861-8972

3 O'Clock In Brooklyn by Israela Margalit. Fast-paced comedy of caffeine-ated New York characters searching for love. Access Theater, NYC, October-November 2002

The Truth Never Does by Linda Lewis. What happens when four long-time womyn friends decide to get real? OUT Theatre, Long Beach Calif., November 2002

***Twilight of the Golds** by Jonathan Tolins. Lambda Players, Sacramento, opens June 13, 2003, 916-336-3904

Two Queens, One Castle by Jevetta Steele. Her autobiographical tale starting in a musical family and after marrying finding out her husband was gay and had HIV. Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis, October-November 2002

Vagina Dialogues: A Queer Review by Hag Theatre directed by Margaret Smith. Defining lesbian sexuality in a liberated landscape of the body through 14 diverse voices. Toronto Fringe Festival, July 2002 & WOW Cafe, NYC, September 2002

***Varla Jean Merman Is Your Holiday Ham** with Jeffrey Roberson. The Village, Hollywood, Calif., opens December 5, 2002. 323-860-7300

Versatility - four one-acts including VIEW FROM THE TOP by Chris Mann. Two gay "players" share a tryst in Las Vegas; and PRETTY MOUTH by Bradley Spinelli, a late night cell phone conversation of gay love and deception. The Duplex, NYC, September 2002

Waiting for the Podiatrist by Terry Baum. Venue 9, SF, August 2002

***Walking the Dead** by Keith Curran. A lesbian performance artists calls together the family and friends of her recently murdered lover for a memorial service. Rude Guerilla Theater Company, Santa Ana, Calif., opens January 10, 2003. 714-547-4688

What the FK?** by David Bell. Two, camp short plays set in a Manhattan restaurant: F**K OFF! and STARF**ERS. TOSOS 2 at the Duplex, NYC, September 2002.

When I was called Toni by Dr.Thea Iberall. Letting go doesn't happen easily or quietly. The OUT Theatre, Long Beach Calif., November 2002

***White Boy** by Michael Patrick Spillers. A Missouri boy falls hard for a surly Chicano gang-banger from East LA. Wings Theatre, NYC, opened November 29, 2002. 212-627-2960

Why We have a Body? by Claire Chafee. Profiles four women and how they relate to each other including a private investigator, The Women's Shakespeare Company, NYC, October-November 2002

Will by Jeffrey Kagan-McCann. A new gay courtroom drama. Actor's Attic at Seattle Fringe Festival, October 2002.

***Worse than Chocolate** by Jaeson Post. A story of a female-to-male transsexual. Exit Theatre, SF, opens December 5, 2002. 415-339-8015

Zanna, Don't by Tim Acito. A musical about an androgynous teen with magic power who plays matchmaker in a world where gay relationships are the norm. ATA Theatre, NYC, June 2002; Amas Musical Theatre at The Rodney Kirk Theatre, NYC, October-November 2002

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THEATRE BITS
by Bill Kaiser

Austin: The Vortex presented MEDEA an adaptation by Scottish playwright Liz Lochhead in a contemporary feminist interpretation in November 2002. In October, the Vortex did Real Scary Stories for Halloween. 512-478-LAVA.
www.vortexrep.org

Brooklyn: BAX, Brooklyn Arts Exchange presented their BAXten awards in November 2002. Among the honorees was Dixon Place AD Ellie Covan for Arts Administration and Reno for Artist. Among the recipients of The Passing It On Fund are Carmelita Tropicana and Marga Gomez chosen by Reno; and Elizabeth Zimmer chosen by Ellie Covan. BAX is the home of Brooklyn's Center for Lesbian & Gay Arts & Artists. 718-832-0019 or info@bax.org

Chicago: Porn star Will Clark brought his show to Bailiwick for two weekends in Oct, 2002 and NAKED BOYS SINGING celebrated its one year anniversary. Recently their Larry Osburn Trailbrazer Awards honored Choreographer Joel Hall, journalist Bill Zweker and the publisher of Windy City Times Tracy Baim. 773-883-1090. bailiwick@aol.com

Cleveland: Red Hen Productions, Cleveland's Feminist Theatre presented WAVING GOODBYE, a young woman has to re-establish a relationship with the mother who abandoned her after her father's death in a mountain climbing accident in October 2002. 216-661-4301.
www.logan.com/redhen

Costa Mesa, Calif.: South Coast Repertory presented the world premiere of Richard Greenberg's new play THE VIOLET HOUR in November 2002. 714-708-5555.
www.scr.org

Durham: Manbites Dog Theater presented TOMORROWLAND by Jeffrey M Jones in August-September 2002. The past and future collide in this mind-bending play. 919-682-3343. www.manbitesdogtheater.org

Los Angeles: The African American AIDS Policy and Training Institute will present a photographic tribute to 9 African Americans who have made outstanding contributions to the fight against HIV/AIDS called Heroes in the Struggle including Danny Glover, Ronald Johnson and Jewel Thais-Williams. The Opening reception was on December 1, World AIDS Day, and the exhibit will travel to other venues around the country. 213-353-3610. www.blackaids.org

The Knightbridge Theatres (in LA and Pasadena Calif.) present many plays of interest to The Purple Circuit including SAILING TO BYZANTIUM by Sandra Deer and Oscar Wilde's THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. 626-440-0821. www.knightbridge theatre.com

Los Angeles County Arts Open House was held throughout the county October 5, 2002. Strangely the only GLBT-identified organization participating was ONE Institute & Archives which presented Transgressive Transactions with transgender performance artists co-hosted with FTM Alliance, and a panel of Latino/Latina gay/lesbian artists, including pioneer artist Cyclona. 213-741-0094.
www.oneiglausc.edu

Jeff Scott did his once-a-year performance as Mr. Del Arte, an 86 year old vaudeville magician on August 27, 2002 at The Hudson Avenue Theatre. 323-769-5858.
www.theatreneo.com

New Orleans: DRAMA! held two open houses in September 2002 for people interested in learning about their arts organization, volunteer and auditioning opportunities and workshop. 504-948-9924. drama@dramano.org

New York: Out Professionals presented a roundtable on the Life and Times of Charles Ludlam at the LGBT Community Center on November 13, 2002. 212-620-7310.
www.outprofessionals.org

In September 2002, Out Magazine conducted a panel at The Public Theater in connection with the production of Richard Greenberg's TAKE ME OUT. Entitled Not Inside the Locker Room, the panel discussed gay life in the sports world.

In November 2002, Classic Action: Performing Arts Against AIDS presented Deborah Voight on Broadway with a bevy of leading men: Malcolm Gets, Howard McGillin, Adam Pascal, Patrick Wilson, and Tom Wopat.

Dixon Place is on the move again after three years at The Vineyard Theatre. Their office and rehearsal space will again be 258 Bowery but programming will be in venues around the city. Their HOT! Festival will join forces with QUEER@HERE for events in June and July 2003. Contact Dixon Place for more details at 212-532-1546 ext 103.
www.dixonplace.org

Recent queer events at Dixon Place were Mahina Movement Performance Troupe, Brandon Olson & Jonathan Wooster; Aremen Ra; Homotext curated by Pamela S Booker on Harlem Renaissance: The Pink & Lavender Salon; ALL ALONE: Festival Of New Solo Works in October, 2002 by David Cale, Emmett Foster, Michelle Matlock, Greg Walloch, Bob Morris, Susan Burns, Nancy Giles, Simone Gad, Tim Kilpatrick, Keturah Kendrick, Imani Q'Ryn, Arthur Aviles Typical Theatre, Jill Sigman / Thinkdance, Karl Anderson, Uzi Parnes, and David Levine.

At P.S. 122, Carmelita Tropicana and Marga Gomez appeared in SINGLE WET FEMALE. In October Tim Miller performed BODY BLOWS. November 2002. 212-477-5288.
www.ps122.org

Portland: Howie Baggadonutz presented An Intimate Evening with Dina Martina in October 2002 at Theater! Theatre!

San Francisco: The Richmond / Ermet AIDS Foundation presents Help is on the Way for the Holidays IV benefiting women and children with HIV on December 9, 2002 at Herbst Theatre. Among the many celebrities appearing are Bonnie Franklin, Sharon McNight, Rod McKuen, the cast of STOMP, and Sally Struthers. Directed by David Galligan. Tickets: 415-273-1620. www.helpisontheway.com

Our talented pals at Kaliyuga Arts Steven Patterson and John Sowle are picking up stakes and leaving the Bay Area in the New Year. Their last SF show HYSTERICIS was a critical hit of two solo shows: Dan Carbone's UP FROM THE

GROUND and X: THE RISE & FALL OF AN ASYLUM STAR, the U.S. premiere of Canadian Jill Dowse. Kudos and thanks to Steven and John for "rendering oddities with Grace and Insight since 1986." www.kaliyuga.com

Marc Huestis is presenting A JOHN WATERS X-MAS at the Castro Theatre on December 13, 2002 with John Waters in person! Star Carol Lynley will recite, Heklina from Tranny Shack will host a Cha-Cha Heels contest, and there will be numerous surprises. Part of the proceeds will go to Positive Resources. 415-863-0611

Santa Monica: Fabulous Monsters presented the theatrical experience of the season with their extraordinary RAMAYANA 2K2, an electronica dance drama based on the ancient Hindu myth at Highways in October-November 2002. Written and directed by Robert Prior, this event was not to be missed! 323-857-7409. thefabmonsters@hotmail.com

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CHICAGO SCENE
by Michael Van Kerckhove

Autumnal winds are upon us and so is a new season! Here's a sampling of Chicago's fall offerings.

About a Boy: About Face Theatre kicks off its 8th season with Theatre District, a new play by Richard Kramer (whose television writing credits include Thirty-Something, My So-Called Life, and Once and Again.) The story deals with 16-year-old Wesley, who moves in with his father and his father's boyfriend, creating a new definition of family.

As reported last time, About Face has moved out of its Broadway & Belmont digs and is itinerant this season. Theater District runs at the Steppenwolf Studio Theatre. Later works this season will be presented at the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Goodman. www.aboutfacetheatre.com

Bailiwick for the Boys: Bailiwick presents Strip Tease by Northwestern University grad Neal Weaver. In an art-within-art scenario, an actor and his teacher/director (Chris Kossen and Dennis Murphy) work on writing a play. They strip away clothes to examine the role of nudity in artistic expression. They strip away metaphysical layers to reveal and discover. They tease each other with role reversals, power play, and sexual energy. www.bailiwick.org

Bailiwick for the Girls: The Bailiwick also presents the winner of their Lesbian Theatre Initiative's Playwriting Competition, Embracing the Undertoad by Robin Rice Lichtig. This one-act shares the moment when the lives of a diner waitress, her aura-driven sister, and her lesbian lover clash in a storm anger, beauty, humor, and ultimately love.

Congrats to Bailiwick for its Gay Chicago After Dark Award for Outstanding Direction (David Zak) for last season's Southern Baptist Sissies. www.bailiwick.org

Vampire Lesbians 3: Next door at Theatre Building, Chicago is being treated with a third helping of Charles' Busch's Off-Broadway hit, Vampire Lesbians of Sodom. The campy, B-Horror movie flavored show tells the tale of the rivalry between two seductive vampiresses. The first run in

1989 starred trans-diva, Alexandra Billings, as the virgin. Now she directs the show — and the equally divine Honey West (who also appeared in the 1994 revival).

In an interview in the Windy City Times, they laid out their approach for this new production: a combination of the fluff and cuteness of the first and the highly stylized slapstick of the second to achieve a not-as-broad-but edgy feel with a touch of feeling real. And then there's the Britney Spears influenced final number. www.theatrebuilding.org

Cryptic 6: For the Halloween season, Tiff & Mom, Berwyn's most notorious mother-daughter act, are scaring up more tail — er, tales — in Corn Productions' Tales From Mom's Crypt 666: MARK of the Tiffabeast. This year's show takes us to many places including the origins of the Bates Hotel, a freak show where the "little people" get revenge on their evil ringmaster, and an old house haunted by rats and a baby's cry. The scariest tale is Night, Night which puts a face on every new parent's fear.

This year also marks Corn's 10th anniversary and will feature original episodes of the classic Tiff and Mom Show. www.cornservatory.org

Orton in Chicago: This fall, Chicago audiences have two opportunities to see the work of Joe Orton, England's 1960's West End rebel. The Noble Fool Theatre presents What the Butler Saw, first produced in 1969, two years after his murder by partner Kenneth Halliwell. This sexual farce skewers family, sex, authority, and psychoanalysis. Mixed identities and a little skin are part of the fun. www.noblefool.com

Next Theatre Company kicks off its 22nd season with Entertaining Mr. Sloan, Orton's 1964 play centering on a sexual triangle created when a strange drifter pays a visit to a proper middle-class landlady and her brother. Next's new artistic director, Jason Loewith, guides the show. This also mark's his Chicago directorial debut. Footlights magazine quotes Loewith saying he wanted to start with a dark comedy: "Like the best of Oscar Wilde, Orton can eviscerate the middle class sense of morals." He also directs this spring's Measure for Measure.

Next won After Dark Awards for last season's The Laramie Project in both the Outstanding Direction (Kate Buckley) and Outstanding Ensemble categories. www.nexttheatre.org

Raven's Revival: After spending two years working on its new home in the Edgewater neighborhood, Raven Theatre Company is back this fall with the Chicago return of the late Scott McPherson's Marvin's Room. This well-known play about a family's reunion in the midst of dealing with a father's terminal illness was influenced by McPherson's own experiences with the medical establishment in his fight with AIDS. First produced at the Goodman in 1990, the new production has received rave reviews, has been extended through December 8, and as one critic expressed, it makes the new building feel like an old friend.

Rose's Revival: After almost going under, Nomenil Theatre Company returns with vigor with the revival of its original nerd punk love tale, Pushin' Up Roses by Allen Conkle and Courtney Evans. This comedy with music (featuring the queercore band Three Dollar Bill) explores the challenges

and joys of relationships between gay men and lesbians — and their relationships with their parents. Runs through November 8, 2002 at Frankie J's on Broadway.

Post Card NYC: For my birthday weekend (October 25), Ernie and I went to New York to see some shows and visit with friends. We saw the amazing *Metamorphoses*, Lookingglasses' Chicago-to-Broadway transfer. Andrea Martin was fabulous in the Broadway revival of *Oklahoma!*

We also saw Richard Greenberg's new play, *Take Me Out* at the Public. Daniel Sunjata plays a baseball player who comes out. Wonderful moments, a wonderful cast (especially Denis O'Hare as accountant Mason Marzac who has a huge crush on his new client), and the shower scenes were fun too. Let's hope this Off-Broadway hit gets a deserved transfer to Broadway and a Tony nod.

Well, as the winds get colder, stay warm, and stay loved. See you next time.

[Michael Van Kerckhove is a native of Detroit. Living now in Chicago, he is a current Network Playwright with Chicago Dramatists. He is a founding member of The Living Room Project, a new playwright's group. He was awarded a 2001 Finalist Award Grant from Illinois Arts Council and is a member of The Dramatists Guild]

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CAUSE FOR APPLAUSE

by Nathaniel Grey

Are you among the people devastated by the news that VH1 has cancelled its planned reality series focused on Liza Minelli? Take heart, new episodes of *The Osbournes* hit the air soon, and Kelly wears flash eyelashes too. But if that isn't enough, fans can catch *The Liza Minnelli: Christmas Spectacular* at New York's Town hall on December 5-7. Yep, the 7th. Who says there's nothing to do on Pearl Harbor day?

The work of Liza and her mother's close friend, author Kay Thompson comes to the small screen next year. ABC has begun production on two back-to-back films based on the *Eloise* children's books. Christine Baranski steps away from her Broadway world to play Helga, an event planner. Jeffrey Tambor is the hotel manager with Julie Andrews as the Nanny of a mischievous girl living at New York's Plaza Hotel. The first, called *Eloise at the Plaza*, should air early next year with the second, *Eloise at Christmastime*, in December 2003.

Jonathan Larson's modern take on Puccini's *La Bohème*, better known as *Rent*, will be returning to the London's Prince of Wales Theatre. Word has it that 2001 production cast mates, the delicious Adam Rickitt and Debbie Kurup will reprise their roles.

The ShowTime has picked up a series pilot titled *Dead Like Me*, starring Tony Award winner Mandy Patinkin. The plot centers on a deceased teen who returns to her family in a different form. For the month of December, Patinkin will be at New York's Henry Miller Theatre performing *Mandy Patinkin in Concert: Celebrating Sondheim*.

Another revival production will feature the return of crossing-dressing comic/actor Eddie Izzard to Peter Nichol's *Day in the Death of Joe Egg* at the Roundabout Theatre Company. Performances begin next March through May 25, 2003. The

black comedy centered on coping with a severely disabled boy will provide Izzard with his Broadway debut.

The mother of Broadway's latest hit musical *Hairspray*, John Waters, be at SF's Castro theatre on December 13. The Baltimore-based director will talk about his films, from *Pink Flamingos* to the original *Hairspray* film, and then host a screening of *Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer*. Is that the one starring former NY Mayor Gullianni? The event is a benefit for AIDS support service groups.

Plans are under way for a new and original musical based on the life of Josephine Baker, titled *Josephine*. Hoping to reach the Great White Way for the 2003-4 season, the show takes part of its story from Stephen Papich's bio "Remembering Josephine," and focuses on her life during World War II. Oh no, does that mean no scanty banana costumes?

Another Diva of Theatre, Carol Channing, is preparing a revue based on her autobiography *Just Lucky I Guess*. Plans are to produce, not a one-woman show, but a revue with other dancers and singers. Also in the works are a CD of songs and spoken material from the book.

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SODOM EAST: NEW YORK

On the Great Purple Way

by Tom O'Neil

Take Me Out is taking New York by storm, becoming that rare thing: a gay crossover hit Off-Broadway. It sure works theatergoers up into a real lather, too. The show includes lots of bimbos taking lots of showers on stage while portraying baseball players fumbling around the locker room for ways to cope with the news that their team hero is gay. *Take Me Out* opened in early September at the Public Theater and was an instant home run. Most curious: many cheering fans are str8s who obviously don't seem to mind the play's overt homo-erotica and in-your-face political message.

Take Me Out was the first of two plays that arrived recently after being huge hits in London. The other one, unfortunately, struck out. In fact, *Burning Blue* — starring Chad Lowe in a play about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" — got burnt by bad reviews and embarrassing press revelations about cast shenanigans that included actors refusing to stick to script and, even worse, refusing to wear the correct underwear on stage. When doing a nude scene, one generously endowed actor was even accused of "fluffing" himself, but he huffed to *The New York Post*: "I never fluffed! Given the comments the director made in rehearsal, maybe he has penis envy."

Burning Blue flamed out just two weeks after its mid-October opening; two months shy of its planned run at the Samuel Beckett Theater.

As usual, there were lots of lavender productions among the 180 included in the N.Y. International Fringe Festival in August. www.fringenyc.org

Standout Fringe shows included *Beat*, starring Dan Pintauro (star of "Who's the Boss") as that screaming, rhyming queen of the Beat Generation, poet Allen Ginsburg. Sure, cutie

Pintauro looks nothing like Ginsburg (no GQ model), but, as the N.Y. Times noted, he infused his performance with "the naive, teddy bear quality that Ginsberg used to disarm his critics." The Times called Beat "raucous, at times moving and consistently absorbing."

Also hot was Carl Andress' comedy *It's Not My Fault, It was on Fire When I Got There*, which spotlights a struggling writer who attends his sister's third wedding, this time to a woman. When the sister opens her closet door, lots of family skeletons come tumbling out.

OTHER NOTABLE RECENT PRODUCTIONS:

Blessings in Disguise. While fearing they might be fired from a Greenwich Village nightclub, five feisty drag queens hiss, snarl and snap while attacking each other with cans of Aqua Net hairspray. Times Square Theater. October 2002.

Endless Night ... Sweet Delight. Howard Casner's play about a frazzled musician, who reaps comfort from a stranger only he can see. Wings Theater. September 2002.

Games People Play. A gay hooker and his junkie boyfriend torture a john, physically and psychologically, then turn on each other, alternately with bloodlust and then sexual. Creative Place Theater. August-September 2002.

Icons: The Lesbian and Gay History of the World, Vol. I. Jade Esteban Estrada's one-man show addresses milestone events and people in gay lore, including Sappho, Michelangelo, Oscar Wilde, Gertrude Stein, Sylvia Rivera and Ellen Degeneres. The Producers Guild. November.

Looking4Sex. Six frisky vignettes about gay cyber sexual adventures. Grand Theater. September 2002.

Members of the Tribe. Two years after it debuted in Columbus, Ohio, this play came to Manhattan's Off-Broadway in November. A troubled young man fears that being gay is an obstacle to his conversion to Judaism. When he seeks counsel and comfort from a rabbi, they become intimately involved. The Producers Club. November 2002.

The Other Side of the Closet. Edward Roy's drama about the physical and psychological trauma suffered by a teen boy who is outed at high school. It's dark, honest and funny and doesn't opt for clichés. Chashama Theater. September 2002.

Raft of the Medusa. Revival of Joe Pintauro's play about members of an AIDS support group. Wings Theatre. September-October 2002.

We Were There. When a conservative actor and leftist hippie meet at the Stonewall riots, they establish a friendship that will span 30 years as they observe radical changes in themselves, and an increasingly more gay-friendly world. Bank Street Theater. September 2002.

Wolf Kisses. The Spanish play by Paloma Pedrero made its U.S. debut thanks to an adaptation written and directed by playwright David Gaard. It's the story of a young woman who returns to her rural village and confronts the secrets in her childhood home. Chashama Theater. September.

[Hey, gay theater folk in NYC — keep me posted on what you are doing. Email this columnist at goldderby@aol.com with your news.]

MINNEAPOLIS SCENE by Steven LaVigne

Boasting "135 shows in 10 days," if there's a problem with the Minnesota Fringe Festival, it's trying to fit everything you want to see into your schedule. Shows have to be missed, and others substituted, but in general, this was the best Fringe Festival thus far!

Philip Morton's play, *Sister*, produced at the Theatre Garage by the Fireside Theatre is a show that begins before you go inside. A woman is silently picketing on the sidewalk, although she never interferes with ticket sales. It's a good publicity stunt, of course, because a protesting fundamentalist is the best way to draw people in.

We're told to imagine ourselves in a Revival Tent, as *Sister*, believed to be the reborn Mary Magdalene, is about to preach. Or is she? Addressing her as one of the "Whores of the Bible," the protesting woman, whose name is Mary Margaret, tells the audience that this is a hypocritical gathering. Thus, we're drawn into a drama that reminds us of the nonbelievers who tried discrediting the work of Aimee Semple McPherson, and the trials that faced Joan of Arc.

We're given the history of *Sister's* life. As a little girl, she was told by her Nana that she was found, not birthed by an unwed mother. She's had visions of Mary Magdalene living with Jesus as husband and wife. While *Sister's* faith and spirit are debated by Mary Margaret, many of the issues of the modern church in crisis are raised. Morton's script, itself, if a fine piece of writing, well meaning, and with something to say. It questions women's place in the Christian church, and the troubles with child sexual abuse. It also covers similar ground as Brecht's play, *The Visions of Simone Machard*, and Nikos Kazantzakis' *Last Temptation of Christ*. (Remember when that movie pissed off the religious right?)

There's always a problem when Fundamentalist Christians are shown onstage, because they generally look and sound ridiculous. Due to both Morton's writing and Cynthia Uhrich's performance, it works here. The entire ensemble, including Sara K. Graham, Brian O'Neal, Naima Nicholson, Brian Beerman, Candace LaFontaine and Heather Winter make *Sister* one of the finest works in this year's Fringe Festival.

It was somehow appropriate the Ministry of Cultural Warfare's production of Matthew Foster's *Slaughter House Warming* should follow *Sister* at the Theatre Garage, because their themes are similar. Here a seemingly mismatched group of people have settled in the back yard during the housewarming party of mutual friends. They barely introduce themselves to one another before they proceed to rip apart one another and their hosts.

They've exhausted the topics of phone sex and the Internet, before we learn that they all have a dark side. Brenda, who doesn't appear very bright at first, is a fundamentalist Christian bigot. She was caught stealing from the bank where she worked with Karen, the host. Marc, who slept with the host when they roomed together in college, is on antidepressants because of suicidal tendencies; Evan, who

is Karen's best friend, is a slut and Craig, the "friend of a friend" is a drug dealer. The script for Slaughter House Warming, turns into an extended debate of good and evil, and our place within the realm of both. When Evan proposes that everyone in the world wants a makeover, Craig says this is why the Afghans were happy to get rid of the Taliban. Meanwhile, Marc just wants to get laid.

Solid writing and fine performances from the ensemble, including Ellie Jackson, Jonathan Peterson, Nathan Surprenant, Leigha Horrion and Levi Weinhagen make this one helluva good show. Only articulation and projection problems upset the smoothness of opening night. Try to see Sister and Slaughter House Warming back-to-back if you can. They're a dynamic pair of thoughtful theatre pieces!

In actor Les Kurkendaal's world, actors aren't cast, they book jobs. In his short solo piece, Color Me Naked, presented at the MCTC Whitney Studio, he tells us that, while he's changed things because of a negative review by a Florida critic, he's surprised that issues such as racism and homophobia still need to be addressed. For example, he lost a job because he wasn't "black enough." To him this means his skin color, which he describes as a "Hallie Berry Mocha" wasn't right for the role, but of course, the comment refers to the attitude he projected at the audition, not his skin tone.

Kurkendaal is a well-educated, well-traveled young man. He wanted to grow up to be Cher. (He even missed a Cher concert to play this Fringe Festival). When they get around to casting the African American version of Will and Grace (and they will) he should play Jack. While on tour in New Zealand, he encountered a neo-Nazi whom he ultimately pitied. Also, he got very excited, and then panicked at the prospect of being unclothed at a nude beach, until he realized that "we're all born naked."

What keeps Color Me Naked from being a complete success are its transitions and the desperate need for a director. Kurkendaal's feet are firmly planted left center and he's so busy listening to the music cues, that he's uncomfortable with the changes in the material. His pace is often off, he just stands and listens. This weakens any impact he's trying to make. Lighting cues would have fixed this problem. Still, he's charming and Color Me Naked is a very fine show.

Mic Weinblatt is a marvelous writer. He has a real ear for dialogue and a marvelous sense of humor. Rhino Productions staging of his new play, No Smoking, No Pets, No Loud Sex, directed by Weinblatt and presented at the Loring Playhouse is a collection of three short pieces. In the first, a landlord and his wife, voyeurs, listen as Bambi, a bit of a psychopath, seduces a man she's brought home from a bar. This first piece was slick, sexy, and quite funny. There was even a comment from someone in the audience, who, drawn into the humor, said, "Uh, oh," just like that woman did during every episode of I Love Lucy.

The second piece followed a cockroach couple as they moved into a seemingly abandoned apartment. It was delightful, if a tiny bit too long.

The third piece started as a Mafioso type pickup, wherein a man seemingly is about to be done in by a gay hit man. When Ms. Big shows up, the tables are turned. Weinblatt's writing here is clever, and the piece reminds one of the

movie, But I'm a Cheerleader. A talented cast, including Heidi Berg, Rebecca Zalon, Gary Geiken and Lawrence Hutera keep this solid entertainment moving. No Smoking, No Pets, No Loud Sex is a real treat!

It's rare that a solo performer can hold an audience spellbound. One easily thinks of Julie Harris as Emily Dickinson and Henry Fonda as Clarence Darrow, but they're playing characters in their solo pieces. It's vitally important that the script service the actor as well, otherwise it doesn't work. Jay Allen's script for the Robert Morse play, Tru, is an excellent example. Wavering (rather comfortably) between performing a solo character and telling a story is Charlie Bethel, whose adaptation of the epic Medieval monster poem, Beowulf, is a spellbinding piece of theatre indeed! Beowulf is one of those things we were supposed to read in school, but because it was difficult to understand, could not hold our attention. What we have missed!

Standing alone onstage in jeans and a shirt, Bethel slowly leads us into the poem of ancient kingdoms, back to Geatland, and its tale of the horrid monster Gendel and the hero who saves the land, Beowulf. We learn about the man's extraordinary bravery and see how his legend has inspired the writing of so many other literary heroes. Using only his voice to relate this tale, Bethel understands that, like the Bible, the legend of Beowulf comes from oral traditions. He trimmed the text and modernized the language, adding to the story's power and Bethel's extraordinary performance. Charlie Bethel's Beowulf is an outstanding, spellbinding production that's simply not to be missed!

When I first read about the Outward Spiral Theatre Company's production of the Five Lesbian Brothers' play, Brave Smiles, Another Lesbian Tragedy, I wasn't looking forward to it. Two decades ago, the Out and About Theatre assembled a review that served as an overview on the history of gay theatre. Their intentions were good, but the show lacked editing, pace, and focus, so Picture You, Picture Me was unsuccessful. Imagine my surprise when Brave Smiles proved itself a work of great merit, and every bit a worthy successor to their remarkably successful Spring production of Hedwig and the Angry Inch.

Brave Smiles is based on the idea that every pre-Stonewall play, book, and film with a lesbian theme ended in senseless tragedy, and that lesbians lack humor. With tongue gleefully in cheek, this is the story of five orphan girls, Millicent (Colleen C. Buckman, who bears a striking resemblance to Hayley Mills), Will (Gillian Martin), Damwell Maxwell, an heiress (Suzy Messerole), Babe (Renee Sugrue), and Thalia (Andrea Woonberg) who attend an academy somewhere in Europe in the 20s. They are alternately abused by Frau von Pussenheimer, the headmistress, or flirting with Miss Phillips.

The authors hold nothing back, as they satirize the writing of Muriel Spark, Lillian Hellman and Wendy Wasserstein while serving up huge doses of material swiped from the German film, Madchen in Uniform, the British classic, The Bells of St. Trinian's and the popular 60s comedy, The Trouble With Angels. Heavily filled with traditional, but exaggerated stereotypes (even their accents are exaggerated) these five versatile actresses understand that it's all in fun, and they're gloriously directed by Laurie Attea, (whom I hope continues working with Outward Spiral.)

The story takes place during the Second World War, and Will, disguising herself as a man, first becomes a war hero, and then, under an assumed name, runs a Paris nightclub, performing a song similar to Dietrich's in *Blond Venus*, but meets a tragic end. Babe becomes both a famous golf pro and an aviatrix, dying in mysterious circumstances similar to Amelia Earhart's (Sugrue's dog act is terrific, too). Millicent's guilt over her attraction to Miss Phillips leads her into addiction and finally into running a Mission. Thalia loses the love of her life several times, and as we're served up lampoons of *The Group*, *Valley of the Dolls* and *Beaches*, with dead-on portrayals of Audrey Hepburn, Shirley MacLaine, and Susan Hayward. Even through the story ages sixty years, the cast barely does at all, and *Brave Smiles* is brought to that ultimate conclusion, another lesbian tragedy. Enjoy this production, because it's a real treat.

Finding new material, a plot and characters that are rich in substance and can be creatively fashioned into the plot of a modern musical is difficult, but the Mixed Blood Theatre has found it in Jevetta Steele's *Two Queens, One Castle*. Based on Steele's own experiences, Steele wrote it with director Thomas W. Jones II, and it features an outstanding original score by J.D. Steele and William Hubbard.

The show examines, from an African American woman's point of view, a marriage that's doomed to fail. It may be theatre as therapy, but what sets *Two Queens, One Castle* apart is the beautifully flowing style of storytelling and the terrific blend of gospel and rhythm and blues music. Steele is, of course, the renowned singer and songwriter responsible for the Oscar-nominated song, "Calling You," from the film, *Bagdad Cafe*. For twelve years, she was married to a man (James Rich) with gay tendencies, but, because she was busy performing on tour, she chose to pretend things were perfect, and later tried hiding it. When, however, he became HIV+, she could bear it no longer, and after a mourning period, took charge of her own life.

The first act of *Two Queens, One Castle* is the best theatre I've seen this year. The integration of music and script is superb, and the seduction scene is itself, a standout sequence that uses words to reveal the passions of the characters. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is a vicious phrase, but Dennis Spears turns it into a remarkable blues song filled with rage against a closeted existence. Jevetta Steele, the performer, is a treasure to behold, and it's difficult to take one's eyes off her, she's so riveting. There's not an ounce of fat in the entire act and it moves along quickly. Mark Hauck's mirrored set, featuring three small raised pink platforms, is just right. It helps to reflect the feelings of the leading lady.

It would be nice to report that the second act lives up to the first, but it spends too much time wallowing in self-pity, as it leads to the obvious resolution, and the characters acceptance as her own person. This is not to say that the show itself should be dismissed. While this is still a work in progress the troubles can be fixed rather easily. To begin with, the male characters need further development. We need to see something in the husband that will make us like him less, and his lover, while brilliantly played by Dennis Spears, needs further development. As he's written now, he's a stereotype, and we don't see the attraction between these two.

Too much dramatic tension is covered by the music in Act 2, when dialogue is needed to further develop the resolution. With a little work, *Two Queens, One Castle* will become the extraordinary work it sets out to be. Through it all, the performers, Steele, Spears, James Rich, Thomasina Taylor, Austene Van Williams-Clark, and Regina Marie Williams take us on a magnificent journey into one woman's need for self-esteem. It's well worth the visit.

There were no protesters or picket lines to cross, at the People's Center for the area premiere of Terrence McNally's controversial revision of the passion play. An ensemble dedicated to engage people in human rights activism through artistic expression, *Corpus Christi* is performed by the Gray Space Performance Company. In this version, the story is moved from the Middle East to Texas. Beginning in the 1950s, Jesus, renamed Joshua, is born during a football convention. Revisiting familiar stereotypes, Joshua is picked on because he prefers drama to football. At a Pontius Pilate High School dance, a restroom queer bashing is thwarted when Joshua meets Judas. They become high school lovers.

After what is, essentially, a normal queer adolescence, when Joshua leaves town, things happen rather fast. Seeking relief for hearing voices and hammering, he hitchhikes to the big city. An encounter with a truck driver who is not only blind, but has leprosy, brings his first miracle. In the big city, Joshua falls into a comfortable gay existence. His fame builds, as Peter, the fishmonger witnesses a miracle with fish, (separate from the miracle at the Sermon on the Mount) and for the most part, there are sections from the gospels that are either forgotten or revised by McNally. The miracle of Lazarus is presented with humor, and Palm Sunday is performed with Disco Music.

Performed without intermission, this production of *Corpus Christi* is, for the most part, merely adequate, although it has moments of sheer brilliance. The problem lies not with the ensemble, headed by Stephen Fretham as Joshua, with fine work from Mitchell J. Thompson, John Trones, Brent Teclaw, Jim Pounds, Dan Averitt, Patrick Bailey, Topher Brattain, David Dubin, Joe Leary, Joshua Paul Olson, Steve Lewis and Jim Geckler. They give the production its chief merits.

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COMEDY

Jason Stuart and Michael Gallant won Best Picture at the Barcelona International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival in November 2002 for their film *10 Attitudes*. There are hopes for an end-of-the-year release. www.10attitudes.com

Jason's CD "Gay Comedy without a Dress" continues to be a bestseller, and his new comedy tour — *My Big Fat Gay/Jewish Comedy Tour* — begins December 12, 2002 at the Laugh Factory in Hollywood. www.jasonstuart.com

Laugh Out Loud produces comedy events in Washington DC. On November 23, 2002 Marga Gomez, Paul J. Williams and Julie Goodman appeared. www.laughoutloud

7 Sins: The Holiday Edition runs Sundays through December 15, 2002 in San Francisco. www.cellarfullofnoise.com

Other Bay Area comedy included Kate Clinton in You Look Like You Need a Laugh which kicked off Theatre Rhinoceros' 25th anniversary season in September 2002.

Q Comedy continues Monday nights at LGBT Center in San Francisco with Lisa Geduldig Bridget Schwartz, Dana Cory, Nick Leonard, Wesley Cannon, Chantal, Marilyn Pittman, Douglas Ronn Vigh, Tig Notaro, Bob Douglas, Maureen Brownsey, James Judd, David Miller, Guy Brannum, Jodi Maruska ,Pippi Lovestocking and probably many more. 415-865-5633. www.harveymilk.org

Also Bridget Schwartz performed her solo show Office Donkey at Venue 9 and Karen Williams headlined a show for International Solidarity with Women Political Prisoners in Oakland in November 2002.

FESTIVALS & SEASONS

TOSOS II held their Fall EATFest 2002 at Intar 53 Theatre in NYC in November 2002 presenting the following plays:

- KVETCHING WITH THE VIRGIN MARY by Vanda
 - NILS TORVALD by Jack Rushen
 - THE CONFESSIONAL by Joan Ross Sorkln
 - S&M4F by David Bell
 - FROM THE CHEAP SEATS by Mark Lambeck
 - FIRST COMMUNION by Bill McMahon
 - SPecial REAListic Drama Emporium by Bash Halow
 - TEA & BISCUITS by Lou McBrown
 - FAITHFULLY PRESENTED by Chris Weikel
 - ROQUEFORT by Ted LoRusso
 - TOTEMS OF THE FALL by Larry Harris
 - THE SWEATER by Cassie Angley
 - EIGHT TIMES AROUND by Gregory Fletcher
 - TWO MINUTES by Paul Adams
- 212-627-5792. tosos2@nyc.rr.com

Theatre OUTlanta in Atlanta announces their season to include:

- A QUEER CAROL by Joe Godfrey, December 13-January 5, 2003, at 7 Stages
 - YOU LOOK FOR ME by Paul Harris
 - MOTION AND LOCATION by Lornia Littlebury
 - A BOOK OF HOURS by Thomas Klocke
- 404-371-0212. www.mindspring.com/~outlanta

EdgeFest was held throughout LA in October 2002, sponsored by Theatre LA. Among the gay and lesbian entries were:

- BACKYARD FRUIT about queer North Carolina
- COCK TALES, male monologues
- COTILLION about a young lesbian coming of age
- IRL (In Real Life), online friends meet in real life at a convention

www.theatrela.org

Bailiwick's 15th Chicago Directors Festival will celebrate three Fests in 2003. First will be Chicago Plays featuring all new works by Chicago authors running January 27-February 18, 2003; second is In Translation featuring only works translated from another language or medium or adapted from non-theatrical work, running April 7-23. Thirdly, The Final Pride 2003, GL playwrights running June 23-July 9, 2003. For information or applications contact the festival

coordinator Jason Pamer, Bailiwick Arts Center, 1229 West Belmont, Chicago IL 60657. brwinterfest@aol.com

Wings Theatre Company in NYC announces its 2002-2003 season to include:

- WHITE BOY by Michael Patrick Spillers, November 29-December 28, 2002, a Missouri boy falls hard for a Chicano gang-banger from East LA
 - VINCENT by Robert Mitchell, a musical about Vincent Van Gogh. January 3-February 1, 2003
 - NILE BLUE by Clint Jeffries with music by Paul L. Johnson, in an Egyptian tomb two men are buried together with their images carved in the walls in the manner of husband and wife. March 14-April 12, 2003
 - UNCOVERING EDEN by George Barthel, in 1926 Iraq former lovers reunite, May 23-June 21, 2003
 - JANE EYRE- THE MUSICAL by Rebecca Thompson and Kari Skousenwith music by Bill Kilpatrick, June 27-July 26, 2003
- 212-627-2960. www.wingstheatre.com

Glasgay! 2002 was held November 1-16, 2002 in Glasgow Scotland. Billed as the UK's widest ranging and most diverse arts festival for GLBT people, this year's festival included Annie Sprinkle, the film 8 Women, Barb Jungr, Scott Capurro, Tina C, Ida Barr, Craig Hill, Julie Miller , Tim Miller in BODY BLOWS and Split Britches in DOUBLE AGENCY. info@glasgay.co.uk

Theatre on the Square in Indianapolis presents their 15th anniversary Season of Bests including:

- MISS GULCH RETURNS!
 - THE BAD SEED
 - EQUUS
 - LAST SUMMER AT BLUEFISH COVE
 - WHEN PIGS FLY!
- 317-637-8085. www.tots.org

Philadelphia Gay & Lesbian Theatre Festival seeks new, mostly un-produced, full-length plays, musicals, one-acts, and theatre for young audiences with g, l, bi, and trans themes for the June 2003 festival. One-person shows and cabaret artists are also encouraged to send promotional material. The Artistic Director is Matthew Cloran. Please send to Gay & Lesbian Theatre Festival, P.O. Box 1164, Philadelphia PA 19105. If you want manuscripts returned please include a SASE. gltfpa@aol.com

HERE in NYC's new season includes their Festival QUEER@HERE in June 2003. 212-647-0257. www.here.org

Hallwalls in Buffalo presented Ways in Being Gay Festival 2002 in November 2002. Among the works scheduled was Hag Theatre's production of SPIC FOR EXPORT with Susana Cook. www.mindspring.com/~susana.cook

Conn Artists Performance Event Inc. concluded Provincetown Fringe Festival 2002 during Women's Week in October with:

- LORENA HICKOK & ELEANOR ROOSEVELT: A LOVE STORY by Pat Bond performed by Marjorie Conn
- THE HONEYMOON YEARS OF ELEANOR ROOSEVELT & LORENA HICKOK written and performed by Marjorie Conn
- WILDE & DEVIANT WOMEN with Morgaine Huntress, Mary Chris Kenney, Karen Maloney, Annie Hart, Marjorie Conn

and Deanna Fraschilla portraying Calamity Jane, Louisa May Alcott, Mary Mallon and more
505-487-2666. www.ptownfringe.org

The Fall Festival began at The Furniture Factory, the only intimate state of the art venue in Detroit with DIRTY LITTLE STORIES 2 by Erika Block and Hilary Ramsden. There are workshops and events and much more art. 313-832-8890.
www.walksquawk.org

The CHIP DEFFAA Invitational Theatre Festival, NYC, September-October 2002, was presented by Chashama. 25 productions were picked by former critic Chip Deffaa, who created this festival to celebrate and recognize the work of worthy artists. Gay entrants included:
- MAD ABOUT THE BOY: GAY SONGS FROM THE 1920s TO THE PRESENT written by Chip Deffaa
- LOST IN FAIRYLAND by Andrew Bliss, US premiere of a British play about a rent boy relationship with his client that becomes something more
- BEFRIENDING BEAU by David Gaard, provocative drama about teens struggling with sexual identity by one of our pioneer playwrights
- THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CLOSET by Edward Roy about teens confronting homophobia
- DIVA DIARIES, a new musical in development about aging drag queens
- THE STRAIGHT MAN'S GUIDE TO SHOW TUNES: A ONE GUY SHOW by composer Larry O'Keefe
- HOLLYWOOD NURSES by Peter-Michael Marino and Sheila Hood about good nurses going bad
212-545-7114

Theatre New West in Houston announced its new season to include:
- THE COMING OUT PARTY by John Michael Caffey, a gay Pygmalion
- FRUIT COCKTAIL, a world premiere of a new musical revue by Eric Lane Barnes. December 2002-January 2003
- MARTIN YESTERDAY by Brad Fraser, Feb.-March 2003
- BOYS AND GIRLS by Tom Donaghy, subject to securing rights, Apr-May, 2003
- AVOW by Bill C. Davis, Brian and Tom ask their liberal priest to bless their union in this comedy/drama, June-July, 2003
713-394-0464

The New York Gay Theatre Festival will be held in December 2002 at The Bank Street Theatre. 212-358-3557.
www.4unity.org

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FILM / VIDEO / TELEVISION/RADIO

Moondance International Film Festival 2003 will be held May 15-18, 2003 in Boulder, Colo. For information on submissions for all categories, including stage plays:
www.moondancefilmfestival.com

Demian / Sweet Corn Productions

Current videos in distribution:
- "The Fight Before Christmas" A musical comedy about same-sex couples and family values (on VHS)
www.buddybuddy.com/fight.html

- "Gertie Takes A Trip To The Moon & A Man Recycles," and "LEGGO" Animations (two shorts on a compilation DVD)
www.buddybuddy.com/dvd-1.html

Currently being produced:
- "Scaredy-Kate & the Monsters -or- How to Pay the Rent" A marionette opera (music by Joseph Haydn)
www.buddybuddy.com/kate.html
- "Gilgamesh & Enkidu: The Oldest Love Story Ever Written"
www.buddybuddy.com/g.html
- "Director's Commentary" A short comedy
www.buddybuddy.com/dc.html

Demian is director of [Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples](http://www.buddybuddy.com/partners) and can be reached at, Sweet Corn Productions, Box 9685, Seattle, WA 98109. 206-935-1206
demian@buddybuddy.com
www.buddybuddy.com/sweet.html

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LITERARY SCENE

Playwright Paul Harris has published The Harris Guide 2003 (ISBN 0970127448), the only comprehensive international GLBT press directory in the world. This certainly can help publicize shows and events! Kudos Paul. For your copy, contact Upstart Press, 305 West 45th St., Suite #3-I, New York, NY 10036. 800-247-6553

In October, HAG Theatre in Buffalo cosponsored T. Cooper reading from SOME OF THE PARTS. HAG artist Susan Smith also read from her book DRAG KINGS AND THE WHEEL OF FATE.

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MUSIC / OPERA / DANCE

In November 2002, Joyce Dewitt joined Vince Lodato and Tina Marie Casamento in Who Wants to Live in New York? an impassioned musical cabaret piece at The Duplex. The New Mondays series also returned to The Duplex highlighting new and established composers September-December 2002, including William Finn, Galt MacDermott, Frank Wildhorn, Julie Gold, and more. 212-255-5438

The 2002 Dance-Along Nutcracker, saluting The Musicals of Broadway, took place in San Francisco, December 7-8, 2002. It was performed by the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Freedom Band under AD Jadine Louie at Yerba Buena Center for The Arts. In September, the band performed When Stars Begin To Fall, a concert of hope in honor of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. 415-255-1355. www.sflgfb.org

San Francisco's ABD Productions presented Living Like Weasels and other solo dances by Anne Bluethenthal in December 6-8, 2002 at the Dance Mission Theater. 415-273-4633

Latin star Jade whose solo musical was a sensation at Columbus Theatre festival and also in New York, was the winner of the 2002 Premio Estrella award at LLEGO's 9th annual Encuentro awards in Miami. www.llego.org or www.getjaded.com

The musical *PRODIGAL*, with music by Mathew Frank and book and lyrics by Dean Bryant, premiered off-Broadway in February 2002 at The York Theatre Company. The show has been recorded by John Yap's JAY Records. The musical is a gay coming of age story set in Australia where it premiered at the Midsumma Festival in 2000. The original Off-Broadway cast includes Kerry Buler, Alison Fraser, Joshua Park (lead role of Luke), Christian Borle, and David Hess.

Entertainer Les Michaels hosts an open mic show for cabaret singers at Vermont, a trendy lounge in the Los Feliz area of Los Angeles on Monday nights. 323-661-6163

Many Dance events have been happening and will be happening in the winter season at Highways in Santa Monica CA. 310-315-1459

Likewise there have been numerous dance events at Dixon Place in NYC. 212-532-1546. www.dixonplace.org

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PLAYWRIGHTS / PRODUCERS FORUM

Playwright Michael Kearns is scheduled to speak to LA GLAAD's Theatre Committee on February 3, 2003 at ONE Institute. This is a tentative date and may be a co-event with ONE that members of the public can attend. 213-741-0094. www.oneinstitute.org

Sisters on Stage (SOS) are accepting applications from emerging and established lesbian playwrights who want to participate in their Pages in Stages mentoring workshops. www.theatermania.com/news/tmnews/index.cfm?story=2784&cid=1

DAUGHTERS a new play about a trans-cultural family by Shirlene Holmes premiered at Georgia State University in November 2002. While this play is not gay-themed, Dr. Holmes has written *A WOMAN AND A LADY* and other lesbian-themed plays.

SILENT PARTNERS by Charles Marowitz had a reading at The Coronet Theatre in LA in November 2002. It is a dramatization of Eric Bentley's *A Brecht Memoir* dealing with the curious and sometimes troubled relationship between Brecht and his primary translator Eric Bentley.

Speaking of Eric Bentley, when is some producer in Los Angeles or The West Coast going to mount a full production of his Wilde opus, *LORD ALFRED'S LOVER?* The rights are available through Samuel French.

Frank Calo and his Spotlight on Productions presented a staged reading of Kevin Brofsky's *CLAYMONT* at Theater L in NYC, in November 2002. The play is about being young, sensitive, and Jewish. clgri@rcn.com

Bailiwick Repertory is announcing the First GLBT College / University Playwriting Contest to encourage emerging student playwrights. First place full-length play winners will receive full production in the 2003 Pride Series and winners in one-act category will be produced during the Pride Series Director's Festival. Deadline: January 1, 2003. Submission information: 773-883-1090, chancetheatre@hotmail.com, www.bailiwick.org

Michael Thomas Tower's new play *NATURAL FLIGHTS* received a reading in San Diego in October 2002 at 6@ Penn Theatre. The play deals with the tribulations and strong friendship of three gay couples. mttower@aol.com

Playwrights 6 in Los Angeles presented *Black & Bruce*, one-act plays by Laura Black and G. Bruce Smith in September 2002 at Village Gate Theater. The playwriting group will present *Christmas is Queer* at Celebration Theatre in Los Angeles, December 6-29, 2002. They will present five short holiday plays with gal and lesbian themes by Laura Black, Larry Dean Harris, Amy Heidish, G. Bruce Smith, and Monica Trasandes. Reservations: 323-860-6625

Jon Sims Center announced its fall 2002 artists-in-residence to include Saun-Toy Latifa Trotter, Heather Gold, *BROTHERS*, and *ADEO*. They range from a queer woman of color, a stand-up comedian, a seven member female born to male identified artist of color troupe to a performance ensemble of queer men of color. 415-554-0402

Frances Sternhagen and Douglas Sills starred in a reading of Michael Levesque's new play *ON HOLD* in NYC in September 2002. The play centers about a man who discovers he is HIV+ and his mother. It is about healing and rebirth.

All Out Arts is sponsoring The Purple Circle NYC, a playwrights' forum in NYC meeting monthly for GLBT playwrights to hear their work read for professional performers. For details and interview, contact Kevin Brofsky, 646-34-8137.

On October 29, 2002 TOSOS II produced a reading of Doric Wilson's *NOW SHE DANCES!* based on the Salome story. www.doricwilson.com

Boston's Asian Pacific American Arts Collective had their first general meeting in September 2002. For further information: bostonprogress@yahoo.com or 617-461-6092.

Eccentric Theatre Company etc. directed by Michael Kohl presented a reading of the early Celebration Theatre hit, *DREAM BOY* by Steven Moore in West Hollywood. The play has a lot of bisexual curves to it among the gay men who are not in but not out either as well as foreboding of the AIDS era taking place in 1980. 323-842-6749

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TOURING

Jeffrey Solomon is on his Lavender Sleigh Tour this holiday season with his hit award-winning show *SANTA CLAUS IS COMING OUT* or *HOW THE GAY AGENDA CAME DOWN MY CHIMNEY*. The show played in San Diego at 6th@Penn in late November then on to The Coast Playhouse in West Hollywood, December 3-8; dashing on to The Adrienne in Philadelphia, December 18-22; and to The Warehouse Theatre in Wash. D.C., December 27-January 7, 2003. To bring Santa Claus to your theatre or Jeff's other hit show *MOTHER/SON* contact Producer Gary Shaffer at 732-286-3948 or shafferpromo@yahoo.com

Comedian Jason Stuart embarks on My Big Fat Gay/Jewish Comedy Tour, December 12 at The Laugh Factory in Hollywood. Other places he'll be visiting are Austin, Kansas City, Dearborn Mich., Bridgewater Sate College, Mass., benefit for Columbus Ohio Gay Men's Chorus, and in Seattle in June 2003 where he'll be appearing at Meany Theatre with Bob Smith and Marga Gomez. 323-656-1336. www.jasonstuart.com

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WILDEANA

The Oscar Wilde Birthday Celebration produced by The Purple Circuit / WildeWeek was a Gay and Lesbian History Month event on October 12, 2002 for the benefit of ONE Institute & Archives Performing Arts Collection. The theme was "Wilde's Impressions of America" and we were honored with the talent of Kevin Rettig, Shoshani "Dolly Wilde" Henri, and Travis Michael Holder who replicated Wilde's lecture on America. Thanks to all involved.

SALOME by Oscar Wilde. The Reading will be performed at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn from November 26-December 22, 2002. Estelle Parsons directs Al Pacino, Marisa Tomei, Dianne Wiest, David Strathairn, and others. 866-468-7619. www.ticketweb.com

The Oscar Wilde Society of America presented Oscar Wilde Fest 2002 November 30-December 2, 2002 in New York City. mbisch@indstate.edu. www.indstate.edu/humanities/owsoa.htm

The OSCHOLARS, an online journal about Wilde is posted at homepages.gold.ac.uk/oscholars and the password is **umney**.

C. Robert Holloway spoke at the Fakes & Forgeries Conference at UCLA in October 2002 on Faking Oscar Wilde to Better Understand Him. Mr. Holloway is the author of the novel The Unauthorized Letters of Oscar Wilde, available from Xlibris Publishers. 888-795-4274. www.amazon.com www.bn.com

A Wilde Holiday, a dramatization of fairy tales by Oscar Wilde, opens at A Noise Within on December 13, 2002

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APPEALS / OPPORTUNITIES

NYC's HERE Arts Center celebrated its 9th anniversary with a gala benefit on November 11, 2002. Help this innovative arts space at HERE, 145 Sixth Ave, NYC 10213-1053. www.here.org

Walk & Squawk Performance Project is doing great work in Detroit at the Furniture Factory under ADs Erika Block and Hilary Ramsden. Support them at P.O. Box 441038, Detroit MI 48244. erika@walksquawk.org

Playwrights Arena and AD Jon Rivera in Los Angeles support writers who believe in and contribute to a special platform for theatrical life with all its particular social, cultural and inter-personal dimensions. Contribute to them at 514 South Spring St., LA, CA 90013. www.playwrightsarena.org

Robert Prior and The Fabulous Monsters continue to present extraordinary work for Southern California and other parts of the country where they have toured. Their RAMAYANA 2K2 was visually spectacular and truly an amazing theatrical experience. Help them: c/o Treasurer Mark Compton, 353 W Broadway, #D, Glendale, CA 91204. mark.compton@usa.net

How to Reach Us
The Purple Circuit

Bill Kaiser
921 N. Naomi St. Burbank, CA 91505
Office: 818-953-5096
Hotline: 818-953-5072
purplecir@aol.com
www.buddybuddy.com/pc.html

The Arch and Bruce Brown Foundation

The Foundation continues to accept applications from all theatrical and musical producing organizations for grants to help with gay-positive productions based on historical subjects.

This year's writing competition is for *full-length fiction*. Submissions due by November 30, 2003.

For production or writing guidelines send a SASE to: Arch and Bruce Brown Foundation, PMB 503, 31855 Date Palm Drive, Suite 3, Cathedral City, CA 92234

Purple Circuit Newsletter

Subscriptions only: \$20 / year
Please make checks payable to:

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921 N. Naomi St.
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