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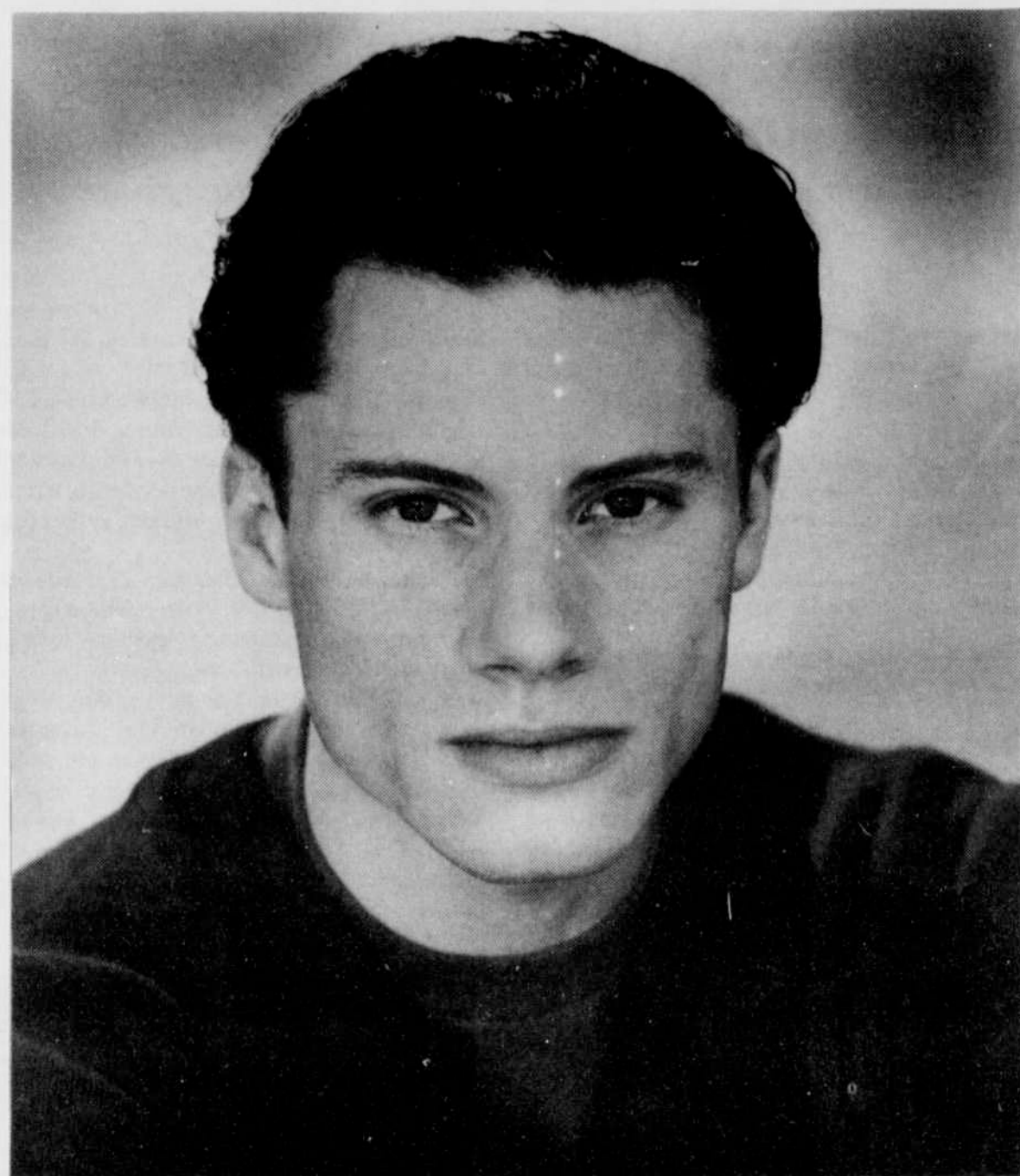
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LOVE AND DEATH

A recent staging of Remembrance, a trio of one-act plays, revealed a new playwright with profound insight

by C. Jay Wilson Jr.

Two performances of local playwright Bill Rampelt's work in progress *Remembrance* were featured at the Theater on the Park on June 4 and 5. The performances marked the first full-scale production of any of Rampelt's work and featured fine performances by Aaron Bass (*Jeffrey*), Jason Coffey, Alima Zepeda and local celebrity Leigh Clark. *Remembrance* was a thoughtful production that, above all else, revealed evidence of a writer with a profound insight into the

"Reminiscence," the second and most moving of the one-acts, is an account of two best friends (one of whom has a terminal illness) as they confront the fact that they may be spending their last New Year's Eve together. Leigh Clark's portrayal of the ailing best-selling author—rendered almost entirely in one position—was remarkable. I only wish that Alima Zepeda's movement had been directed more effectively so that audience members seated at the sides of the theater could have had better visual access to her performance.

Theater

human condition and with a play-writing prowess that should not go unnoticed.

Remembrance is a production that comprises a trio of one-acts, the first two of which are loosely tied together in the third. The first one-act, "The Waiting Room," features Bass and Coffey as two gay characters who meet at a VD clinic in 1980 and who reunite a few years later in the second sequence, as they await testing for HIV and discuss the date that occurred after their initial encounter. The play centers around the fear of rejection and its effect upon human distrust—a prominent factor within gay and straight relationships.

The final play, "All the Time in the World," features Leigh, Coffey and Bass in heaven's waiting room and weakly ties the two previous one-acts together. Although there was nothing unsatisfactory about the final one-act, it failed to match the intensity established in the first two plays—both of which could potentially develop into longer, independent works.

Unfortunately, Rampelt's plays were only able to enjoy two performances, due to the fact that Leigh Clark is planning to relinquish the Theater on the Park space (owned by the Portland Art Museum) after her final performance with Brian Ward on July 22. Rampelt hopes to have his work produced eventually by

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a local company—with luck it will be given a longer run, enabling more people to experience Rampelt's writing projected onto the stage.