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**Harris to speak at
Portland lecture series**

The Heritage Series, a program of the Sankofa Society, presents an evening with author E. Lynn Harris: the premiere event of its 1997 season, "Expressions of Black Life and Culture." Harris has written the novels *Invisible Life* and *Just As I Am*. In his third book, *And This Too Shall Pass*, he continues to address issues of love, racism, AIDS

Entertainment

and homophobia in contemporary black society. Harris has come a long way from selling his self-published first book out of his car: *And This Too Shall Pass* is No. 8 on the *New York Times* best-seller list, and there's talk of a movie deal and plans for a fourth novel.

The Heritage Series, Oregon's only lecture series dedicated to the study, understanding and celebration of black life and culture, was created by the Sankofa Society and the Black Educational Center, a nonprofit organization in Northeast Portland. Other scheduled speakers include Patricia Reid-Merritt, professor of social work and African American studies and author of *Sister Power: How Phenomenal Black Women Are Ris-*



E. Lynn Harris

ing to the Top, and high-profile businessman Clifton Taulbert, who wrote the pre-integration memoir *Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored*, which was made into a film this year.

Harris will speak on Monday, March 24, at 7:30 pm. The lectures are held at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, 705 N Killingsworth St., in Cascade Hall. Tickets are \$13 in advance from Reflections, 446 N Killingsworth St., or Powell's on Hawthorne, 3723 SE Hawthorne Blvd., or \$15 at the door. For more information, call 286-7957.

**PGMC sings of pain
and redemption**

Prayers for Bobby is a book, a play and now a musical performance by the Portland Gay Men's Chorus, featuring soloist Margie Boulé. It is the true story of a life destroyed by prejudice and another healed by love: It is the story of mother whose moral beliefs prevented her from accepting her son's homosexuality until after he committed suicide, and how she became a nationally known crusader for gay and lesbian youth. And it all happened in Oregon.

Leroy Aarons' powerful play based on the diaries of Bobby Griffith has been scripted and set to music and will be performed with a variety of other compositions by the Portland Gay Men's Chorus at 8 pm March 22 at the Washington School for the Deaf in Vancouver, 611 Grand Blvd., and at 8 pm March 21 and 7 pm March 23 at the First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW

Jefferson St., in Portland. Tickets can be purchased at Gai-Pied and Jelly Bean in Portland and A Gentle Strength Bookstore in Vancouver, or by calling PGMC at 699-8586.

Swooning to music

The Seattle-based contemporary dance duo 33 Fainting Spells wheeled into the international spotlight at 1995's X-Change Festival in Dusseldorf, Germany, capturing critics' gazes and earning top honors at the event with its short work "Tsigané." Dayna Hanson and Gaalen Hanson (no relation) have now expanded that piece into the first evening-length performance by 33 Fainting Spells, "The Uninvited." A sophisticated exploration of the psychological interplay that comes from an encounter with an unwelcome visitor, "The Uninvited" sets intensely charged physical movements against a backdrop of simple household objects and an eclectic score of 20th-century compositions (Ravel, Webern, Ustvolskaya) to reveal the absurd ambivalence of human relationships.

The show, brought to you by the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, begins at 8 pm March 20 through 22 at the Scottish Rite Center, 709 SW 15th Ave. Tickets are \$14 and may be reserved by calling PICA at 242-1419, or purchased at the door.

**Still smokin'
after all these years**

Portland's Embers Avenue, 110 NW Broadway, is celebrating its silver anniversary this month—25 years of cavorting, communing and conviviality!

Festivities to be held March 20-24 include drink specials all weekend, a complimentary buffet brunch from noon to 3 pm Sunday, and at 4 pm a special commemorative show, "On the Avenue," hosted by His Imperial Majesty IV Frank.

**Resurrection of
a fallen angel**

Comedic crooner Melinda E. Pittman is planning an active retirement: After 11 years with the recently wrapped up Fallen Angel Choir, she is rolling out a new show featuring original musical numbers. Her cabaret, titled *Paradise Flossed*, follows the baby boom generation's search for nirvana over the last half-century—its triumphs, mistakes and embarrassments—all with a light-hearted approach and tunes that may make you forget you're laughing at yourself. The show features guest appearances by Bill and Hillary, Newt Gingrich, Bill Gates and Mae West, accompanied by the Birds of Paradise band.

Catch a special preview of *Paradise Flossed* on April 3, or see it any Thursday, Friday or Saturday, April 4 through 25. Show time is 7:30 pm, with additional 10 pm shows on April 4, 11 and 25. Performances are at Hawthorne Rhapsody, 3862 SE Hawthorne Blvd., on April 12 and 19, and at the Crown Ballroom, Fifth Floor, 918 SW Yamhill St., all other nights. Tickets are \$13.50 Thursdays, \$14 Fridays and \$15 Saturdays; the preview is \$11.50. Call the box office at 288-5181 to reserve tickets or charge by phone from Fastixx, 224-8499.

Stars come out for Ellen

Melissa Etheridge and k.d. lang will make cameo appearances in the April 30 coming out episode of *Ellen*, the sitcom starring Ellen DeGeneres that has made media waves with the blossoming of its lead character's sexuality. Sources at Disney, which owns the show's production company, revealed that Etheridge will perform the theme song during the opening credits and lang will play the role of a singing waitress at a dyke coffee bar. Several other celebrities are pitching in to make it a memorable and successful episode, including Laura Dern and Oprah Winfrey.

Compiled by Christopher D. Cuttone

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