

MUSIC

Pump up the volume

Vivian's Keeper in *Step*, Rose smells sweet; compilation gets into the groove

BY KATY DAVIDSON AND JIM RADOSTA

ONE STEP CLOSER

Vivian's Keeper • Self-Released

At first, it's hard to figure out what's so oddly familiar about the object on the cover of this CD. Is it a sculpture, a Lego structure, a crane? Then, boom, of course—it's a close-up of Portland's Broadway Bridge!



The warm, familiar-feeling sentiment of this music will surface in a similar way after just a few listens. Portlanders Joanna Agee, Adam Bentley and Erin More-

land paint vivid song-portraits, combining the imagery of nature with human relationships. The group is proficient at melody, harmony and a menagerie of instruments, and its collective sound brings to mind the old, weird folk group Pentangle.

It's wonderful to note that Vivian's Keeper takes turns at songwriting, which allows us to explore three different, yet complementary, points of view on a single recording. Agee likes nostalgic lyrics and mysterious-sounding minor chords; Bentley sounds like a grunge guy trapped in a hippie's body.

Moreland only contributes one song, "Beautiful," but it is the deepest and most interesting track on *One Step Closer*. It begins with a quirky banjo part, then her voice spreads across the music like room-temperature butter. The melody of the chorus sounds like Madonna.

Although nothing is new about the Vivian's Keeper sound, the rootsy, acoustic feeling of familiarity will keep their CD in your player. You can get it at www.vivianskeeper.com.

—KD

ROSE POLENZANI

Rose Polenzani • Daemon Records

Like Amy Ray, Rose Polenzani appeals to the darker side of dykes. On her self-titled CD (which is released by Ray herself, on Daemon Records) she combines a beautifully sweet voice with beautifully sinister lyrics but leaves you with enough hope to return.

She kicks off the disc with attitude ("You can laugh all you want to/I don't care"), then slides

into ballad mode with smooth performances such as "Sacramento Avenue," a song on which Polenzani emotes like Joni Mitchell or Mirah.

Her true talent lies in her well-placed and often bizarre harmonies as well as her vocal affectations. In the middle of "Mary Lee," she executes a beautiful collage of sounds with well-placed "ahs."

Considering the seemingly bottomless sea of female singer-songwriters, I was hesitant to give Polenzani a chance. How do we discern the good fish from the bad fish? With this wonderful performer, rationalization doesn't make a difference. Instinct tells me her songs are true.

—KD

TOTALLY DANCE

Various Artists • Arista Records

What better way to generate some heat on a cold autumn night than with some revved-up music?

Totally Dance is a strong compilation with a catchy mix of tunes you'll recognize from the club scene. Among them is the pounding instrumental "Sandstorm (Original Mix)" by Darude.

One of the disc's highlights is the disco-tinted "Get Over Yourself (Al B. Rich X-Tended Mix)." Imagine my embarrassment when I found out it's by Eden's Crush, a prefab product of the WB series *Popstars*.

Unfortunately, some of the selections are uninspired, such as the overplayed "Silence (Airscape Mix)" by Delerium Featuring Sarah McLachlan. "Take It to Da House" by Trick Daddy (Featuring the SNS Express) is yet another forgettable hip-hop song that steals liberally from a far superior classic—in this case, K.C. & the Sunshine Band's "Boogie Shoes."

—JR

KATY DAVIDSON is formerly a Portlander, currently a San Franciscan and always available to spout off about any kind of music. E-mail her at deamora@hotmail.com.

News Editor JIM RADOSTA lets the music set him free. E-mail him at jim@justout.com.



Just Out & Portland Center Stage invite you to our Gay & Lesbian Audience night. Mingle with cast, crew and hostess Poison Waters after the show at Dragonfish Asian Cafe.

Flesh and Blood

OCT 30 through NOV 18, adapted by PETER GAITENS from the novel by Pulitzer Prize-winner MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM

GALA NIGHT NOVEMBER 6TH

"This is what's happening. I live by myself in a five-bedroom house. My oldest daughter hardly speaks to me. My son loves other men. My youngest child gave birth to an illegitimate half-black baby whose father is god knows where. And I am trying to dress for a lunch with my grandchild's 'godmother' who is my only point of contact to my daughter, and I have no idea what to wear because I've never had lunch with a man who wears dresses."

PARTIAL NUDITY AND EXPLICIT SEXUAL CONTENT.

Special thanks to The Backers, Paramount Hotel and Higgins Restaurant & Bar.



503.274.6588 for tickets or a season brochure! and visit WWW.PCS.ORG

A Christmas Carol

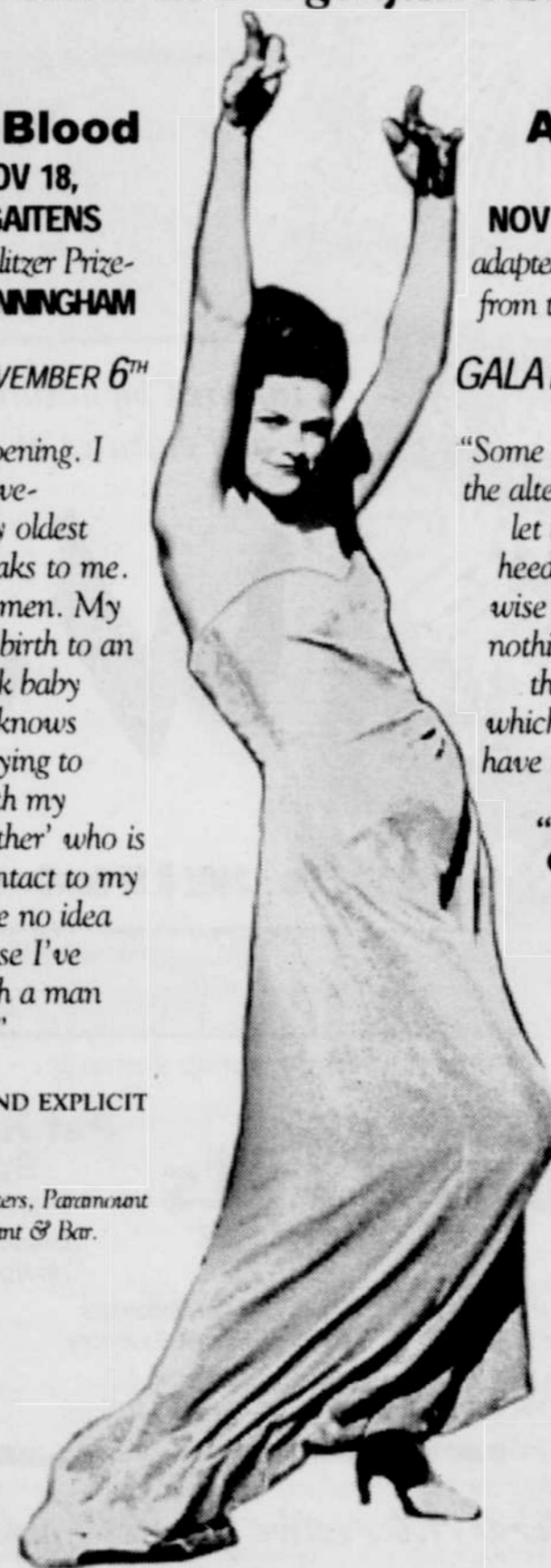
NOV 27 through DEC 24, adapted by DAVID MCCANN from the novel by DICKENS

GALA NIGHT DECEMBER 4TH

"Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them. For he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter."

"THE BEAUTY OF THIS CHRISTMAS CAROL IS ITS LOYALTY TO THE DICKENS STORY... RAPTUREOUS LANGUAGE... ABSOLUTELY INTOXICATING."
—THE OREGONIAN

Special thanks to Crown Pacific.



PORTLAND Center Stage



"After a long day on the job site, nothing beats bubbles and beer in my remodeled bathroom. Thanks for taking our hands and guiding us through the maze of refinancing. We couldn't have done it without your care and expertise!" — Bryan



Call today for a free qualification over the phone

- First Time Buyers • FHA/VA Loans
- Self-Employed • Complicated Borrowers
- Bankruptcies & Foreclosures • Credit Problems
- Investment Properties • Pre-approvals
- 100% Financing Programs

Christine C. Hall

Mortgage Broker
President's Club

503-495-8339

800-345-9190

503-301-1941

Pager

hallc@eaglehomemortgage.com



Sign on and meet someone right now!

WOW!
Thank you Just Out readers for making our Singles Halloween Party such a great success.

For those who couldn't make it, you missed meeting an awesome bunch of people. But here's the good news: We've got a ton of amazing new voice personal ads that will all be printed in the next issue of Just Out.

In the meantime, check them out at

www.justout.com