

DIVERSIONS



A refurbished *Female Trouble* plays March 22 to 28 at Clinton Street Theater

Trouble at the Clinton

John Waters' *Female Trouble* has been sadly neglected since its release in 1975. And no wonder.

Although outrageous from start to finish, the movie still lacks any infamous notoriety such as Divine's doo-doo snack in *Pink Flamingos*, and it didn't help that Waters seemed to reject his early bad-boy persona and the films that went with it. He made higher-profile, almost mainstream stuff such as *Hairspray* and *Serial Mom*, seemingly happy to trade his old "prince of puke" label for the more stately "indie godfather."

Female Trouble is the gaudy biography of Dawn Davenport (Divine), a hefty high school slut who hates her life, longs for glamour and fame, and gets raped (by Divine out of drag) and knocked up on Christmas morning on an old mattress just off the highway.

She marries a hairdresser, whose fag hag aunt Ida (Edith Massey) plots against her. She has a juvenile delinquent daughter, Taffy (Mink Stole), and after a few odd jobs (surly waitress, go-go girl, cat burglar) becomes a novelty model for a fascist couple who run a beauty school. All manner of insanity ensues.

Fortunately, *Female Trouble*, just released in a refurbished print with new footage and playing March 22 to 28 at Clinton Street Theater, has survived as both a brilliant example of personal vision triumphing over a lack of budget and a hilariously vicious satire of everything boring and normal (read: heterosexual) in life.

Waters details Dawn's world with the amused detachment of an anthropologist. The characters' ruthless rejection of convention is everywhere apparent, including motherhood ("Thank God I had an abortion!") and heterosexuality ("Queers are just better!").

Even some of Waters' fans consider his work disposable camp trash, made simply to provoke and to shock, but this attitude overlooks his films' underlying stubborn validation of the outsider. Like the director's core gay audience, Dawn refuses to conform to other people's notion of how she should live.

If many straight viewers couldn't embrace her hilarious portrait of a "madwoman" who remains true to her dream, however fractured, queer viewers should.

—Gary Morris

Come to the cabaret

You couldn't visit a cabaret in Paris for \$3, but you can in Portland, Oregon.

Dante's Café and Cocktail Lounge serves up "Vaudeville," a comedy and cabaret show every Tuesday night beginning at 9.

It's a nonstop evening of entertaining freaks and geeks offering queer-friendly weirdness: master magician Reed McClintock; spinnings of DJ Dairy (not for the lactose intolerant); fire juggler extraordinaire Mike the Menace; Shayna, the heart-stopping trapeze artist; daring sword swallower Pandora Pandemonium; Aziza (winner of the Bellydancer of the Universe title); Kitty Diggins, Portland's most famous burlesque dancer; and, of course, Bubbles the drunken, depressed bunny.

New on the docket are drag queens Vanessa Lynn and Veronica DeVore, who are pleased as punch with the evening. Admitting apprehension at performing outside the normal venues, dear Vanessa says that she had "a great time" and that the whole thing had a "Moulin Rouge-type feel." Throw in Nicole Kidman and I'm there.

Dyke on a mission

Something new is going on 'round Portland. Here's the idea: Every Saturday and Sunday evening lesbians will descend on a bar and coffee shop, respectively, creating Dyke Night Portland. You don't need an invitation, just an e-mail from the listserv telling you the locations of the upcoming takeovers.

The firebrand behind this gaiety, according to one of her e-mails, is "just a girl" who has been in town for six months and has had trouble finding lesbian friends.

"I'm not renting out venues," the anonymous list moderator says, "just hoping we can take over...by pure numbers.... The bars are not giv-

ing us official dyke nights, we're just going."

She says the first Dyke Nights—March 9 at the Shanghai Tunnel and March 10 at Shot in the Dark Coffee House—showed promise in that many women showed up. Unfortunately, they also looked around and left without taking off their coats "presumably because they saw no dykes."

Witnessing this "over and over," the moderator's latest e-mail encourages women to stick it out. "Ladies," she writes patiently, "had you stayed, the next group would have seen dykes—you!"

The next Dyke Nights are March 16 in the upstairs bar of the GoodFoot Lounge, 2845 S.E. Stark St. (you should know this address), and March 17 at Anna Bananas, 1214 N.W. 21st Ave. Time of arrival is unimportant, but queers will start showing up about 9 p.m. Saturday and 7:30 p.m. Sunday.

To receive ongoing Dyke Night locations, e-mail dykenightportland@yahoo.com. At 90 people on the list so far, there's no reason this shouldn't be great.

Out of the closet and plenty to wear

Much fun and hilarity were found March 3 at Darcelle XV for the annual Closet Ball contest. The event is organized by

Mr. Miss and Ms. Gay Portland along with the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court.

Contestants are introduced at the beginning of the show in their "natural" state, then transformed by their "sponsors," who have until the end of the show to costume them as

opposite gender-wise as possible. There is a drag show, of course, during the transformations, then judges pick the best metamorphosis.

This year's winner is striking leopard-skin-clad redhead Blaze Cheval. Proceeds from the event go to Outside In.

In other ISRC news, the group raised \$2,000 at the Stars Twinkle and Shine Show, an annual fund-raiser for Camp Starlight, which serves children whose lives are affected by HIV/AIDS. The hardworking Empress Poison Waters, together with Darcelle XV, has pledged to raise \$50,000 for the summer program.

Music for the soul

John Trudell's artistic goal is very simple, he explains. "To communicate the human experience at a level that human beings can recognize and relate to. That may be a personal statement. It may be a political statement. But whatever it is, it all comes from the same point of reference: the experiences we share as peoples of this planet."



John Trudell mixes spoken word and rock 'n' roll March 20 at PSU

The acclaimed poet and musician will perform with his band, Bad Dog, in support of his new album, *Bone Days*, March 20 at Portland State University's Smith Memorial Center. (See Page 28 for complete information.)

Born of mixed tribal blood, Trudell grew up in and around the Santee Sioux reservation near Omaha, Neb. The struggle against economic and cultural deprivation eventually would become the raw material for an uncompromising artistic vision.

Trudell became an activist in the late '60s working with the organizations Indians of All Tribes and American Indian Movement until 1979, when his wife and three children were killed in a fire. In the same year, he met Jackson Browne, who helped him express his anguish

through poetry and music. "The lines were my bombs," he writes, "my explosions, my tears."

With 20 years of writing and recording eclectic soundscapes, as well as multiple collaborative projects and tours, including benefits for indigenous causes with the Indigo Girls, Trudell is a master of his craft. Still, the sound remains fresh, with a haunting, timeless quality that almost seems unrehearsed. Expect tribal

rhythms, chanting and poetics against a backdrop of good old-fashioned rock 'n' roll.

Gorge on wine and cheese

What a great reason to head down the Columbia River Gorge. The Hood River Downtown Business Association and the Columbia Gorge Arts and Culture Council have announced the return of First Friday.

On the first Friday of every month, dozens of local artists exhibit their work at various downtown Hood River businesses. There's also live music and samples of local food and wine.

And gosh darn, you'll probably have to make a weekend out of visiting this lovely little burg because First Friday runs from 5 to 8 p.m. [E]

Compiled by LISA BRADSHAW

10 years In the Life

The gay and lesbian cultural news-magazine *In the Life* celebrates its 10th season of profiles and interviews on and about all things queer—from political figures to sex to gay parenting.

The stalwart program next airs on Oregon Public Broadcasting at 11 p.m. March 26. The theme is leaders and pioneers in leadership, most notably various activists' response to the question "who should lead the gay and lesbian movement?"

The show also profiles several government figures. Virginia Apuzzo was appointed in 1997 as Assistant to the President for Management and Administration for the Clinton White House, making her the highest-ranking openly gay official in government. U.S. Rep. Sabrina Sojourner is the first out African American lesbian elected to Congress. Deborah A. Batts was the first out lesbian to be appointed to a U.S. federal court.

Also profiled is Oscar-nominated actor Sir Ian McKellen, who, in 1991, was the first



Sir Ian McKellen is profiled on *In the Life*

openly gay man to be knighted by British royalty and who turned the whole thing into a one-man show, *A Knight Out*.

