

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE PRESENTS MAN AND SUPERMAN

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE THEATER LIVE

March 25–
April 13, 2003

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1111 SW Broadway & Main
in the Newmark Theatre



By George Bernard Shaw

One of the wittiest plays in the English language

This fast paced romantic comedy centers on an unmarried-by-principle philosopher who succumbs to the wiles of a very witty, very determined young woman. Written a year after Shaw finally married at age 42, it expresses the profound struggle between the desire to advance creatively and intellectually, and the inexorable attractions of love.

Tuesday, April 1, 2003
Gay and Lesbian Audience Night!

Join us at intermission for a no host bar and raffle led by The Fabulous Poison Waters!

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MUSIC

Music therapy

Portlander plays music for the brain

BY JAMIE BOLYARD

Portland singer/songwriter Kanzeon sits in the corner at Touchstone Coffee House and holds her guitar close. She wears faded jeans, black leather and an aura of nervous energy.

She introduces a song she recently wrote called "Thank You" and belts out a gospel-influenced, feel-good number full of positivity. Then she announces a Lyle Lovett song, plays a few chords and stalls. She shouts to her partner, "Hey, Cathy, do you remember the words to this song?" Cathy doesn't know the lyrics. No one knows.

She ribs the audience: "At least I have an excuse. I have a brain injury."

It happened when she was 5 years old—"an embarrassing story for a butch lesbian to tell," she laughs. It was a big decision—to pull up her tights after going to the bathroom, or not to pull up her tights. Mom said leave them down since she was headed for bed anyway, so that's what she did.

As mother and daughter walked hand in hand, Kanzeon tripped and fell hard, hitting her head on the baseboard. She was taken to the emergency room, where doctors sewed up a massive gash on her forehead. The doctor told her parents she would be fine.

She was not fine, and it would be 19 years before she would be diagnosed otherwise.

Kanzeon joined the Navy at age 18. Having grown up in a musical household where her parents listened to jazz and her brother excelled in guitar, she decided it was time for a six-string of her own.

As she walked on base with her purchase, people excitedly asked her to play. "Sailors like free entertainment," she smiles.

Too embarrassed to admit she didn't know how, she plunked around and made up a song on the spot. Hurriedly, she taught herself the guitar and also started writing songs. In 1989 she moved to Austin, Texas, and tried her hand playing clubs.

A performance coach she was working with at the time began to notice Kanzeon's thinking didn't seem sequenced or logical. Suspecting a learning disability, she suggested a visit to the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. After numerous tests, the musician was diagnosed with frontal lobe brain damage, which affects things such as eye-hand coordination, impulse control, memory, ability to pick up on social cues, judgment and reasoning.

Finally her life started to make sense. There was a reason why she went back to school after the accident and could no longer find her kindergarten classroom. There was a reason why her balance was so poor that her dad

completely gave up on trying to teach her how to ride a bike. There was a reason why she couldn't seem to keep a job as an adult, why anger management was an ongoing problem and why she often felt misunderstood and confused. "I finally knew what the monster was I was dealing with," she says.

The singer moved to Portland in 1999 and renamed herself Kanzeon—literally translated from Japanese, "she who hears the cries of the world." According to Buddhist legend, Kanzeon manifested 33 forms to save the people from suffering. Kanze says she "liked the anonymity behind" the name.

While attending Metropolitan Community Church of Portland (as a "Buddho-Christian," she says), she met a volunteer for the Brain Injury Association of Oregon, a grassroots organization with the mission to improve the quality of life of people with brain injury and their families and to prevent such injuries.

Thanks to the group, Kanze is finally getting some of the rehab she should have



Musician on a mission: See Kanzeon on March 7 and 8 in Portland

PHOTO BY MURRY DAVIS
received when she was 5. That's why she donates 20 percent of all the money she makes from music to the organization. Noting that the help she has received has changed her life, she hopes

"to raise awareness and help prevent misdiagnoses from happening so other people don't have to go their whole lives wondering why they can't keep jobs and why they can't relate well with people."

Back at Touchstone, Kanzeon covers Creed's "My Sacrifice" and is a dead ringer for the lead singer. Her voice is deep and clear and refreshingly unique—it's not every day do you hear a woman with a tenor vocal range.

Her set continues with "Walking in Memphis" and "Love Me Tender." She even throws in a little Melissa Etheridge and Tracy Chapman (you know, for the crowd).

"Music has always been my therapy. It's my catharsis," she says. Many of the songs on her acoustic CD, *This Road*, were written about isolation and wanting to connect with others. "Now I write some happy songs too," she smiles. ☐

KANZEON performs 7 p.m. March 7 at the Egyptian Club, 3701 S.E. Division St. Cover is \$5. You can also find her 7 p.m. March 8 at Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, 2400 N.E. Broadway. Tickets are \$7, and proceeds benefit Esther's Pantry and the Brain Injury Association of Oregon.

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