

## DIVERSIONS

**Out With It!**



by Lisa Bradshaw

### Ya gotta chase yer dreams, kid

Dick Scanlan is an actor, not a writer, damn it.

But when your first penned stage production wins six Tony Awards, it's kinda hard to argue.

"I was an actor in New York, and I had a boyfriend," relates Scanlan, who wrote *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, which debuts April 6 in Portland. "He was always encouraging me to write, which I always got really angry at because I took it as a distinct vote of nonconfidence in my acting ability."

This was years ago when Scanlan worked for a corporation that handled retirement funds. "I never had to do any work.... I just had a beautiful office on the 50th floor of a building, and I just sat there all day with literally *nothing* to do...it was outrageous. You know, this was the '80s."

Thanks to greedy excess, Scanlan had time to whip out a short story one day that just popped into his head. "I felt like my first time out as a writer I was accessing parts of my creative life that in all my years of acting I had never been able to access."

Just then his partner became sick with AIDS and died in the summer of 1988. Scanlan spent most of that summer at a house in Southampton, N.Y., with no cable but with a TV and VCR. He brought two movies for visiting friends to watch: *Caligula* and the 1967 Julie Andrews hit *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.

"They would watch *Thoroughly Modern Millie* every week," Scanlan says. "I've never seen *Caligula* to this day."

And the wheels started turning. "It struck me as a really wonderful idea for a Broadway musical.... But I knew it had to be a *big* show, and I knew it would be the type of thing that no producer in his or her right mind would ever hire someone who's only written one short story [to do]."

That story, though, led him to a writing class at Columbia University. His teacher was so impressed, she set him up with her agent. His second story was published immediately. "I just became a writer," he says. "I was very inspired by or guided by...my late boyfriend because it was a part of me he had been so desirous that I explore."

A few years later, Scanlan hit pay dirt with a role in the off-Broadway show *Pageants*. "When you're in a hit show," he explains, "you instantly know everybody in show business because everyone comes to it."

So with this newfound network of connections, Scanlan saw a glimmer of hope. It took him 2 1/2 years to get the rights to *Millie*, during which time he developed a whole lot more short stories into the book *Does Freddy Dance*, which was published in 1995.

Fast-forward seven years. Scanlan's *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, with music by Jeanine Tesori, opens on Broadway and within two weeks is nominated for 10 Tonys. Another month later, it wins six, including Best Musical.

"When the show won the Tony," remembers Scanlan, "we went up to the stage, and Jeanine seemed really...dazed. I said to her, 'Are you all right?' and she said to me, 'I'm not used to dreams coming true.'"

(Take this short pause offered here to collect yourself if, like me, you need to.)

Directly after the ceremony, they were shuttled across 50th Street to the (appropriately named) Rainbow Room at the top of Rockefeller Center.

"So you win the Tony, they usher you out the door, and it's a police barricade, and there's all these people screaming...and you go into this elevator, and you're in the Rainbow Room...arguably the most sensational room in Manhattan.... I thought that as a kid if I had dreamed of this night, it couldn't have been more glamorous.... I couldn't have, in my gayest fantasy, imagined such a sensationally fabulous evening."

So when you spend your sensationally fabulous evening seeing *Thoroughly Modern Millie* April 6 to 10 at Keller Auditorium, give a little nod to the man who brought it to you. **J**



Dick Scanlan

### Spanking Portland: Phase II

That cunning little contest over on Alberta Street named after Spank! hair salon has chosen three winners for its makeover contest.

Only 10 people entered **Spanking Portland**, says Spank! owner **Mitch Bridon**, but even that was too many to keep it from being easy. "The judging was so hard," laments the gay boy. "We wanted, actually, all of them to win."

The three who did all happen to be straight women, who might just be on their way to bona fide fag-hag-dom when Bridon gets done with them. He'll redo their topnotches and lead them through a reclothing, rejeweling, rejuvenating day of earthly pleasures.

Some of the letters really touched the seven judges, all from Alberta Street businesses. One of the winners, Erin, has a boyfriend, says Bridon, who "totally loves her.... His was a great, great letter." Erin works in a correctional facility with sex offenders, explains Bridon, "and she can't wear makeup, and she has to wear baggy clothes, and she can't look pretty." The look, he says, "has carried over into her everyday life."

Another winning letter came from friends of a young woman named Marcia. They wrote, "This girl is three tweaks from hottie."

The third winner, Dayna, penned her own entry. The Holman's server claims she's "been having nightmares about becoming that dried-up old hide you often see tending bar at the Elks Club...I see a lot of cool, young hipsters who would be duly impressed if I was suddenly sporting a new look."

Spanking Portland is scheduling the makeovers for this month. Stay tuned for the "after" shock.

### Cowboy up

Queer cowboys and girls in Oregon have been going through a dry spell the past seven years. That's how long it's been since there was a gay rodeo association in these parts.

Well, dust off your 10-gallons because the Idaho Gay Rodeo Association has expanded into the **Pacific Northwest Gay Rodeo Association**, which includes Oregon. Yee-haw!

The nonprofit will produce a whole herd of horse events throughout the region. "We recognize that there is an excellent opportunity for gay rodeo in Washington and Oregon,"



Clockwise from top: Erin, Marcia and Dayna will be given new looks and serious swag as the winners of Spanking Portland



says Joe Hemsymer, the association's president. "It only makes sense to reach out and include the Northwest community as a whole."

First up on the calendar is the **Spring Roundup**, May 21 to 23 in Boise, Idaho. Participants will spend the weekend barbecuing, roping, barrel racing, chute dogging and otherwise having a gay old time. For more information, visit [www.idahogra.com](http://www.idahogra.com).

### Ten inches, in miniature

Psst! Gai-Pied just started carrying the new Jeff Stryker action figure, and they're going fast.

Store owners and husbands **Nathan Moore** and **Rick Spencer** ordered the action figure directly from Mr. King of Porn himself. The anatomically correct, 12-inch doll encased in a lovingly autographed box can be yours for a mere (ahem) \$59.95.

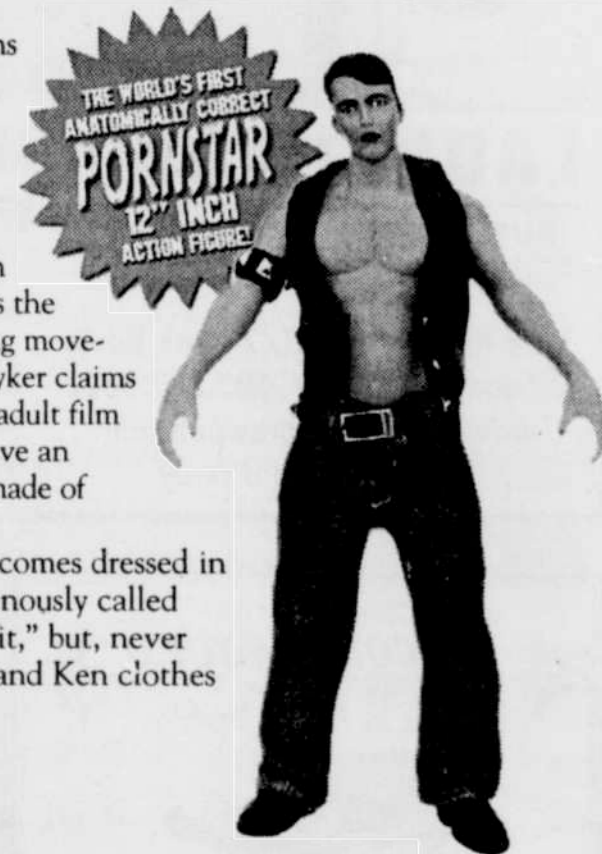
"It's one of my favorites," says Moore, who notes the figure's lifelike skin is really soft. "And the penis is poseable."

Yes, let's talk about that penis. Last fall, Stryker was on hand at the Gay Erotic Expo in Los Angeles to promote his doppelganger.

He obliged fans

by demonstrating the various poses the famed appendage can take, as well as the other appealing moveable parts. Stryker claims to be the first adult film celebrity to have an action figure made of himself.

The "toy" comes dressed in what's disingenuously called "Stryker Outfit," but, never fear, G.I. Joe and Ken clothes fit as well.



### DARE to make art

The 15th annual **Dyke Art Retreat Encampment** is scheduled for **June 27 to July 4** in Steppingwoods women's land near Roseburg. The creative and social week, which limits itself to 15 members, supports a variety of individual and group art projects.

Organizer **Jemma Crae** says that participating in DARE is "powerful because we don't have anybody looking over your shoulder or even our own self-critic saying, 'That's not OK.' We just play with each other.... You feel safe."

The week includes a cabin or tent space, a hot tub and sauna and three vegetarian meals a day. Cost is \$190-215. For more information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to DARE, 2000 King Mountain Trail, Sunny Valley, OR 97497. **J**

Compiled by LISA BRADSHAW and MEG DALY



Rose City Swing makes delightful sounds during the ISRC Spring Ball 2004

PHOTO BY MARTY DANES