

Bock, a New York City resident, said *The Thugs* explores "how fear is created and what it's like to be afraid of something you don't know about."

The play also provides an unflinching look at office life. "It's strange," he thinks, "that we live in a business world but so often we write about family and love instead of work."

Harrison, a Minneapolis resident, said he's interested in "the social acceptability of drag." He came up with the idea for *Act a Lady* while doing research in a small town in southern Minnesota. At a local museum he found hundreds of 1920s photos of men dressed as women.

"Some looked like lumberjacks in wedding gowns," he said. "Others put great care into how they looked."

In the play, cross-dressing brings out latent homosexual desires in some of the men.

For a complete listing of JAW/West events and ticket info, visit [www.pcs.org](http://www.pcs.org).

—Stephen Blair

## Conduit jump-starts new dance works

As if the creative challenges of choreography aren't daunting enough, Portland artists also struggle to find decent rehearsal space.

Conduit Dance is addressing that need with *Charged: The Conduit Commission Project*, which co-director **Tere Mathern** calls a mini-residency. Three choreographers were selected from a pool of applicants and given a set number of rehearsal hours each week in the Conduit studio.

In addition to providing valuable rehearsal space, the three-month project also acts as a forum for choreographers to receive feedback from their peers. *Charged* has "created an environment where you can not just be creative, but also have some suggestions about it, more than just working alone in the studio," says Mathern.

Several weeks into the project, an open rehearsal for the public offered choreographers another avenue for dialogue and fine-tuning.

"It's been incredibly useful to perform in front of other people along the way," says Monster Squad choreographer **Tahni Holt**.

Holt's work for *Charged* is a solo titled "Island Desk: My Teeny Tiny Knowledge of Nothing," an adaptation of a larger piece that will be performed in the fall in collaboration with **Marty Schnaps** and **Chris Larson**.

Lesbian choreographer **Catherine Egan** has worked as movement director for several theater companies and toured with Imago Theatre's *Frogz* production. Her company, *Eggshelled*, will be presenting two pieces for *Charged*. "Scribble" is the more dancery, says Egan, and is set to an electric guitar version of Bach's "Suite for Cello Number One."

"The one with five [dancers] is 'A Day.' The score is a day in the life of a working stiff with abstracted movement from daily activity," says Egan.

**Sinead Kimbrell** of SpugMotion is choreographing "Duet D" for dancers **Dorinda Holler** and **Beth Rankin**. The theme is relationships, and the footwork is influenced by Kimbrell's background in Irish dancing.

The *Charged* program is a pilot at this point, but Mathern and Conduit co-founder **Mary Oslund** hope to make it ongoing.

"*Charged* is exciting to us... It allows us to solicit applications for our programs to help artists, to sponsor them and shelter them," says Oslund.

Performances of *Charged* are 8 p.m. July 28 to 30 in Suite 401 at 918 S.W.



Gay writers Adam Bock (left) and Jordan Harrison will premiere their plays-in-progress during the Just Add Water/West Festival through July 17.

Yamhill St. Tickets are \$10-\$14 sliding scale from 503-221-5857.

—Rebecca Ragam

## Scream come true

Who is **Sarah Bettens**? She has written international radio hits, including "Not an Addict," "Believe" and "Almost Happy," has been awarded gold and platinum records in Europe and has been featured in *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue*, *The Chicago Sun-Times* and *Billboard*.

But despite her many accomplishments to date, Bettens is feeling like a first-timer now. That's because the former singer for Belgium band K's Choice has gone solo with her new record, *Scream*, a personal "exorcism" telling the story of the dissolution of her marriage and her coming out as a lesbian.

"I had been wanting to do this for a long time," says Bettens. "It's a whole new challenge, and it makes me feel like it's my first record. Everything has a new level of excitement to it, especially touring."

*Scream* finds Bettens taking risks as an artist, swaying between hard-charging rock and pure pop bliss to create a sound that goes beyond anything she's done before. With just 10 days in a Los Angeles studio to lay down most of the tracks, her overworked voice took on a roughness that gives the songs an edge. According to Bettens, "The whole record sounds more raw."

Last summer she took her new material on a test-drive through several of Europe's biggest festivals, often playing in front of crowds of more than 20,000 people. Bettens was thrilled with the fan reaction. "The shows were amazing—the K's Choice fans were really excited that I'm doing something different, and people who didn't know me from K's Choice really responded to the new songs. It was way beyond my expectations."

**Ashleigh Flynn** opens 9 p.m. July 19 at Imbibe, 2229 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. Cover is \$10.

—JD

## See the Light

A one-man show written and performed by native Oregonian **Ezra LeBank** will raise money for several queer-friendly charities this month.

The Lynx Company's *A Light in the Dark* explores the moment of death when a person desperately needs to find some closure and purpose in life before letting go entirely. The play is presented in six parts: The End, The Politics, The Struggle, The Poetry, The Breaking of the Shell and The Beginning.

"*A Light in the Dark* is about searching for life in the moment of death," LeBank told *Just Out*. "At our core, withstanding all our differences of race, sex, religion, etc., we all have to



K's Choice singer Sarah Bettens comes out as a lesbian on her solo debut, *Scream*.

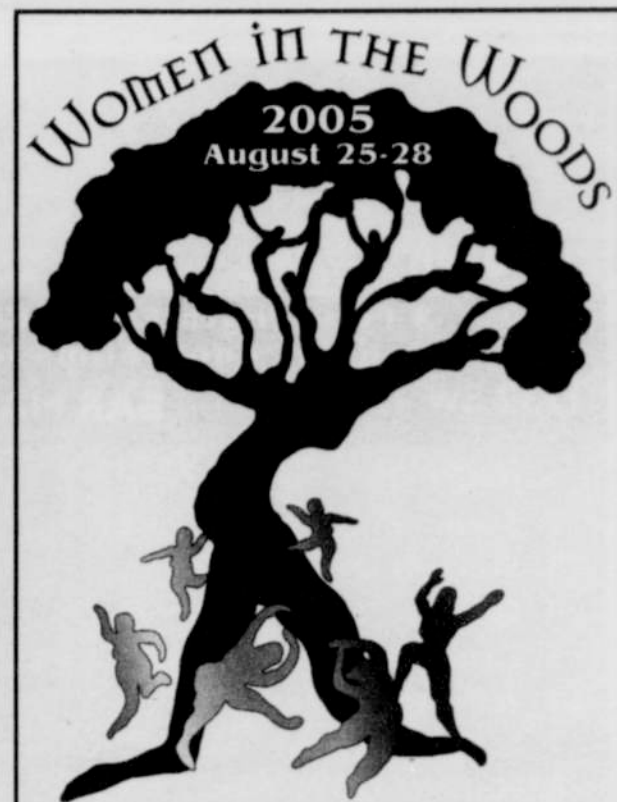
face death, and in that primal dance, we find our common ground, searching for a life that heats our blood and gives us a vitality that is truly worth dying for."

Proceeds benefit Metropolitan Community Church of Portland July 15, Basic Rights Oregon July 16 and 17 and P'nai Or Education Fund July 23 and 24.

"These organizations are centered on building progressive communities for those of us who do not necessarily find strong community in the mainstream of this culture, be it due to religion or sexual orientation," says LeBank, who is heterosexual. "I also want to encourage these communities to embrace social theater as a sacred communal space where all are not only welcome, but necessary."

*A Light in the Dark* plays 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays until Aug. 7 at Back Door Theatre, 4319 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. Tickets are \$10-\$15 from 503-287-8737 or [thelynxcompany@yahoo.com](mailto:thelynxcompany@yahoo.com).

—Jim Radosta



4 days/3 nights - \$265-365 per person (sliding scale)

3 days/2 nights - \$200-300 per person (sliding scale)

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Registration deadline is August 1, 2005. Fees must be paid in full at that time.

For registration form call 503-284-0722, or visit [www.womeninthewoods.com](http://www.womeninthewoods.com)



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