

on stage

Artists Repertory Theatre presents a world premiere adaptation of *The Seagull*, Anton Chekhov's exploration of an actress, her son, her lover and his muse, through Feb. 26. Though Chekhov was a master of indirect drama (yawn), a worthy reshaping by former Portlander Joseph Fisher (*Faust. Us. Version 2.0*) provides direct access to this funnier-than-you'd-remember Russian classic. (Call for times. 1516 SW Alder St. \$15-\$40 from 503-241-1278.)

Arts Equity presents *The Ice Fishing Play*, a winter comedy that brings a lonely fisherman cheek-to-gill with destiny, through Feb. 26 in Vancouver, Wash. (Call for times. 606 Main St. \$10-\$34 from 360-695-3770.)

Broadway Rose Theatre Company presents *Simply Sinatra*, Corey Brunish's cabaret tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, Feb. 4 at Tigard Community Friends Church. (3 and 7 pm. 15800 SW Hall Blvd. \$12 from 503-620-5262 or www.broadwayrose.com.)

CoHo Productions presents *The Real Inspector Hound*, Tom Stoppard's absurdist mockery of the traditional "whodunit," through March 4. A great cast, including Gary Brickner-Schulz as an oafish Magnus and Gretchen Corbett as the dire Mrs. Drudge, but on the whole this production lacks vim and vigor, not to mention the sentient overtones that make the twists and turns of this ingenious farce such a tickle. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 2257 NW Raleigh St. \$19-\$22 from 503-220-COHO.)

Defunkt Theatre presents *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*, an unpredictably absurdist take on the Faust story from lesbian Gertrude Stein, through Feb. 18 at Back Door Theatre. Like the theater's trademark cliplights, it's difficult to focus this oblique, tongue-heavy script. Nothing is straightforward, and yet that is its strength. As such, Defunkt has created a seditious environment inebriated in an atmosphere of words. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday. 4319 SE Hawthorne Blvd. \$10-\$15 from 503-481-2960; Thursdays are "pay what you will.")

Eggshell presents lesbian contemporary choreographer Catherine Egan's *The Dog in This Here Box*, a curious mix of dance works with elegant humor and off-kilter pathos, Feb. 17-19 at Conduit Dance. (8 pm. 918 SW Yamhill St. \$12 from 503-221-5857.)

Insight Out Theatre Collective presents *Kindred*, a riveting dark comedy about two prisoners seeking redemption and connection in desperate circumstances, through Feb. 18 at Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. (8 pm Wednesday-Saturday. 5340 N Interstate Ave. \$15 from 503-234-0973; Wednesdays are \$5-\$15 sliding scale.)

Lakewood Theatre Company presents *The Lion in Winter*, a comic drama pitting King Henry II against his strong-willed wife and their three heirs in a 12th century struggle for love and power, through Feb. 19. A competent cast delivers a polished production, though its vigorous pace, broad characterizations and excessive volume downplay the acerbic bite of this black comedy to a playful nip. (Call for times. 368 S State St., Lake Oswego. \$22-\$24 from 503-635-3901.)

Last Rites Productions presents a graphic retelling of the 1966 cult horror film "Manos" *The Hands of Fate* through Feb. 4 at Theater Theatre. Great band, cool programs, but not destined to hold the attention of this reviewer through the second act, even with the promise of a surprise ending. Relying on insider jokes (it must help to have seen the movie), young cinemaphiles may laugh; for others, *Manos* is a little like a *Rocky Horror* floor show, sans screening. (10:30 pm. 3430 SE Belmont St. \$8-\$10 from www.lastritesproductions.org.)

Liminal Performance Group presents the Portland premiere of *Far Away*, Caryl Churchill's



Nuevo Ballet Español makes its Portland debut Feb. 8 thanks to the reliable folks at White Bird.

dark, quasi-political play staged on a set composed entirely of video projection surfaces, through Feb. 18 at Goldsmith Building. This initially intriguing production's enigmatic "tunnel vision" ultimately befuddles more than enlightens. And while art doesn't have to give answers, it must at least clearly convey the question. All that was obvious was young Hallie Blashfield's phenomenal stage presence. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday. 20 NW Fifth Ave. \$6-\$10 sliding scale from 503-890-2993.)

Miracle Theatre Group presents *Men on the Verge 2 (The Self-Esteem Files)*, a one-man show revealing a vibrant array of gay Latino identities, through Feb. 25. (7:30 pm Thursday, 8 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 525 SE Stark St. \$16-\$20 from 503-236-7253.)

Northwest Children's Theater presents the Tony-nominated musical *A Year with Frog & Toad* through Feb. 26 at Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center. (Call for times. 1819 NW Everett St. \$12-\$20 from 503-222-4480 or www.nwcts.org.)

Oregon Ballet Theatre presents its romantic *Winter Program* featuring a world premiere by gay choreographer Trey McIntyre and George Balanchine's classic tribute to Gershwin, "Who Cares?," Feb. 18-25 at Keller Auditorium. (Call for times. 222 SW Clay St. \$23-\$96 from box office or 503-2-BALLET.)

Portland Actors Conservatory presents *The Laramie Project*, Moises Kaufman's thought-provoking, critically acclaimed and emotionally riveting theater experience of a small town at the epicenter of Matthew Shepard's anti-gay murder, Feb. 17-March 5 at Firehouse Theatre. (7 pm Wednesday and Thursday, 8 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 1436 SW Montgomery St. \$15-\$25 from 503-274-1717.)

Portland Center Stage presents the longest-running musical in U.S. theater history, *The Fantasticks*, which follows two starry-eyed teens into their

first great romance, through Feb. 5 at Newmark Theatre. Sadly, PCS' high-concept retooling misdirects attention, as if the production doesn't trust the sincere charm of its own material. How does all the window dressing serve a play utterly simple in essence? It doesn't. Fortunately, the exquisite score is intact, and Ron Daum stands out as a musical theater trooper. (Call for times. 1111 SW Broadway. \$15-\$56 from 503-274-6588.)

Portland Center Stage presents *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, an irreverent "techno comedy" about a brilliant young agoraphobe who uses highly imaginative means to find her Chinese birth mother, Feb. 14-March 5 at Newmark Theatre. (Call for times. 1111 SW Broadway. \$15-\$56 from 503-274-6588.)

Portland Civic Theatre Guild's First Tuesday Readers Theatre presents *The Goodbye People*, a comedy about crazy people pursuing their dreams at almost any cost, Feb. 7 at The Old Church. (10:30 am. 1422 SW 11th Ave. \$5.)

Portland Community College Women's Resource Center presents Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* Feb. 10-12 at the Sylvania Campus Performing Arts Center. A silent auction will precede the evening performances to benefit the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center, with performances in the lobby by Portland musicians Ally Hanes and Em Brownlowe of The Swallows. (8 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 12000 SW 49th Ave. \$12-\$15 from PCC Women's Centers, In Other Words and Ticketmaster.)

Portland Opera presents Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth* in partnership with BodyVox Feb. 4, 7, 9 and 11 at Keller Auditorium. (7:30 pm. 222 SW Clay St. \$37-\$133 from 503-241-1802 or Ticketmaster.)

Portland State University presents *Oh, What a Lovely War*, a chilling documentary of World War I combined with a cabaret of music and comedy performed by a troupe of circus clowns, Feb. 17-25 at Lincoln Hall. (7:30 pm Wednesday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 1620 SW Park Ave.

\$7-\$8 from 503-725-3307 or Ticketmaster; Wednesday is "pay what you CAN" in conjunction with Oregon Food Bank.)

Portland Story Theater presents *Beginner's Luck*, grown-up storytelling that will take you back to your first encounters with relationships, love and sex, Feb. 10-18 at Brooklyn Bay Performance Space. Ticket price includes a beverage and a tasty treat! (7:30 pm. Friday and Saturday. 1825 SE Franklin St. \$15 from www.portlandstorytheater.com.)

Profile Theatre Project continues its Lanford Wilson season with *Burn This*, a visceral exploration of loss, love and art about a dancer grieving the accidental death of her gay collaborator, through Feb. 12 at Theater Theatre. It's a daring story filled with open wounds and emotional scars, but it's only when these characters let go and move on—about halfway through the second act—that things start to get interesting. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 3430 SE Belmont St. \$13-\$28 from 503-242-0080.)

Readers Theatre Repertory presents an evening themed *Love's Funny That Way* topped off with Shakespeare's *Sonnets 138 and 75* and chocolate truffles Feb. 10 and 11 at Blackfish Gallery. David Ives' "The Sure Thing" and gay Pulitzer Prize winner Tony Kushner's "Terminating" will take the audience through first dates, second chances, fertility clinics and Oedipal conflicts. (8 pm. 420 NW Ninth Ave. \$8 from 503-295-4997.)

Reed College presents *Tis Pity She's a Whore*, a wry black comedy about a brother and sister who fall in love, Feb. 16-18 at Mainstage Theater. (7:30 pm. 3203 SE Woodstock Blvd. \$1-\$3 from 503-777-7284.)

The Skylark Tappers present *Bits and Pieces*, the 10-member company's long-awaited tap concert featuring a rich diversity of music, new choreography and classic numbers, Feb. 18 and 19 at the Performing Arts Center on Portland Community College's Sylvania Campus. (7:30 pm Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. 12000 SW 49th Ave. \$7-\$18 from 503-245-3994.)

Slocum House Theatre presents *The Odd Couple*, Neil Simon's comedy about a slob bachelor and his meticulous roommate, through Feb. 5. (Call for times. 605 Esther St., Vancouver, Wash. \$8-\$10 from 360-696-2427.)

Theatre Vertigo presents *The Love of the Nightingale*, a rich retelling of the ancient Greek myth of Philomele and a story of the power of words and the price of silence, through Feb. 11 at Theater Theatre. *Nightingale* is an extraordinary epic strikingly staged, a classic tragedy with a contemporary voice—and the embodiment of true ensemble work representing company-wide collaboration toward a unified vision, one that takes advantage of theater's unique power to tell compelling stories. Recommended. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday. 3430 SE Belmont St. \$15 from 503-306-0870; Thursdays are "pay what you will.")

White Bird presents the Portland debut of Spain's award-winning flamenco company, Nuevo Ballet Español, Feb. 8 at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. (7:30 pm. 1037 SW Broadway. \$18-\$50 from box office or Ticketmaster.)

Reviewed by TIMOTHY KRAUSE. Read more at followspot.blogspot.com.



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