

on stage

Artists Repertory Theatre presents *House and Garden*, two interlocking plays about a highly comic series of catastrophes and intertwined relationships during a luncheon and a midsummer maypole fête, performed simultaneously on two separate stages with a single cast that dashes madly back and forth, through Oct. 14. (Call for times, 1516 SW Alder St. \$20-\$47 from 503-241-1278.)

Artists Repertory Theatre and Youth Resources present *The Ghosts of Celilo*, a powerful musical about three children's quest to escape a boarding school and catch their ceremonial first salmon before their home is destroyed by a Columbia River dam, Sept. 27-Oct. 14 at Newmark Theater. (Call for times, 1111 SW Broadway. \$21.50-\$50 from box office or Ticketmaster.)

Arts Equity presents queer playwright Edward Albee's *Seascape*, a fascinating dialogue between a middle-aged couple and two lizards seeking life on the land, through Oct. 13. (Call for times, 606 Main St., Vancouver, Wash. \$10-\$24 from 360-695-3770.)

Carla Damaris Grant presents *Sun-Clothed Woman*, her performance piece that uses songs of the past, dreams of the future and a No. 8 wrench to address the end of the world, through Oct. 7 at Hipbone Studio. (8 pm Friday and Saturday, 6 pm Sunday, 1847 E Burnside St. #104.)

Classic Greek Theatre of Oregon presents *Peace*, based on the play by Aristophanes, through Sept. 30 at Reed College's Cerf Theatre. (Call for times, 3203 SE Woodstock Blvd. \$10-\$20 from Brown Paper Tickets.)

Defunkt Theatre presents *The Lesser Magoo*, a funny, thought-provoking play about a woman working at a cutthroat office whose supervisor invites her to a dinner party, through Oct. 13 at Back Door Theater. (8 pm Thursday-Sunday, 4319 SE Hawthorne Blvd. \$10-\$15 from 503-481-2960; Thursdays and Sundays are "pay what you will.")

Imago Theatre presents *Double Feature*, featuring the one-act dark comedies *The Father-thing* and *Serial Killer Parents*, Oct. 6-27. (7:30 pm Thursday, 8 pm Friday and Saturday, 17 SE Eighth Ave. \$15-\$22 from 503-231-3959.)

Integrity Productions presents the world premiere of *8 Views Toward Center*, comparing and contrasting women from an ancient Persian to a circus performer from 1808 to a "devil" from the 1950s, Oct. 4-Nov. 3 at Theater Theatre. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday, 4 pm Sunday, 3430 SE Belmont St. \$12-\$15 from 503-286-3456; Thursdays are \$5-\$1,000 sliding scale.)

Joan Freed presents *Chocolate Confessions*, her one-woman musical comedy about a chocolate shop owner and her mixed assortment of hilarious customers, through Nov. 18 at World Trade Center Theater. (7:30 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 25 SW Salmon St. \$29 from 503-784-6220.)

Key Productions presents a staged reading of Patrick Marber's *Closer*—with a gay twist!—Sept. 29 at Vixens. (8 pm, 2929 SE Powell Blvd. \$10 donation.)

Lakewood Theatre Company presents *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, based on the Oscar-winning movie about a Kansas woman

who takes New York by storm during the Roaring '20s, through Oct. 21. (Call for times, 368 S State St., Lake Oswego. \$23-\$25 from 503-635-3901.)

Miracle Theatre presents the Northwest premiere of *Mariela in the Desert*, a deadly mystery about what happens to a family when creativity is forced to dry and wither away, through Oct. 13. (7:30 pm Thursday, 8 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 525 SE Stark St. \$15-\$20 from 503-236-7253.)

Northwest Children's Theater presents *Honk! The Ugly Duckling Musical*, hatched from Hans Christian Andersen's timeless tale, Oct. 5-28 at Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center. (7 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Saturday and Sunday, 1819 NW Everett St. \$16-\$20 from 503-222-4480.)

Northwest Classical Theatre Company presents *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakespeare's naughty, irreverent tale of lovers, fairies and makers of plays, through Sept. 30 at Shoebox Theater. (7 pm Thursday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 2110 SE 10th Ave. \$12-\$18 from 971-244-3740.)

p.boy productions presents *Boys Will Be: Alone in Our Rooms*, an interactive exploration into the lives of boys and the discoveries made while alone in their rooms featuring The Gender Fluids with installation artist Dallas Oliver, through Sept. 29 at Wonder Ballroom. (8 pm Friday and Saturday, 128 NE Russell St. \$10.)

Play After Play presents *The Boatman's Flute*, a children's play about a mandarin's daughter enchanted by a man who is not what she thought, followed by an opportunity for kids to interact with the performers, through Sept. 23 at Brooklyn Bay. (10 am Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 1825 SE Franklin St. Bay K. \$6 from 503-772-4005.)

Portland Center Stage presents *Cabaret*, a celebrated musical set in Berlin during the rise of the Third Reich, Sept. 28-Oct. 21 in Gerding Theater at the Armory. (Call for times, 128 NW 11th Ave. \$18.50-\$63.50 from 503-445-3700.)

Portland Civic Theatre Guild presents a reading of the Elizabethan Vaudeville production *Greensleeves* Oct. 2 at The Old Church. (10:30 am, 1422 SW 11th Ave. \$6.)

Portland Metro Performing Arts Center presents *Hot Flashes*, a long-running musical that follows the career of a five-woman band from their 40s to their 70s, Sept. 29-Oct. 21. (Call for times, 9933 SE Pine St. \$20-\$24 from 503-775-8017.)

Portland Opera opens its 2007-08 "Great Women of the Stage" Season with Bizet's *Carmen* Sept. 21, 23, 25, 27 and 29 at Keller Auditorium. (7:30 pm, 222 SW Clay St. \$41.75-\$147.75 from box office or Ticketmaster.)

Portland Opera's Broadway Across America presents *Lerner & Loewe's Camelot* Oct. 2-7 at Keller Auditorium. (Call for times, 222 SW Clay St. \$23-\$68 from Ticketmaster.)

Portland State University presents Albert Camus' *The Rope*, based on the true story of Russian Socialist revolutionaries who assassinated Grand Duke Sergei Romanov in 1905, Sept. 28-Oct. 6 at Lincoln Hall. (7:30 pm Thursday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 1620 SW Park Ave. \$5 from 503-725-3307.)

Public Playhouse presents *The Nerd*, a side-splitting comedy about the houseguest from hell, Sept. 28-Oct. 13 at CoHo Theatre. (7:30 pm Thursday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 2257 NW Raleigh St. \$14-\$16 from 503-922-0532.)

Skinner/Kirk Dance Ensemble presents gay choreographer Eric Skinner's abstract piece addressing the strength, grace and momentum that drive our existence in urban living, set to the moody music of Brian Eno and Yo-Yo Ma, Sept. 22 at BodyVox Studio. (7:31 and 9:01 pm, 1300 NW Northrup St. \$10-\$20 sliding scale from skinnerkirkdance@hotmail.com.)

Slocum House Theatre presents *Dearly Beloved*, in which three sisters throw a gossip-generating wedding in their small Texas town, through Sept. 30. (8 pm Friday and Saturday, 4 pm Sunday, 605 Esther St., Vancouver, Wash. \$8-\$10 from 360-696-2427.)

Theatre Vertigo presents *A Doll's House*, Henrik Ibsen's classic in which a woman's forgery of her husband's signature sets into a motion a series of events that call into question the validity of their marriage, through Sept. 22 at Theater Theatre. (8 pm Friday and Saturday, 3430 SE Belmont St. \$15 from 503-306-0870.)

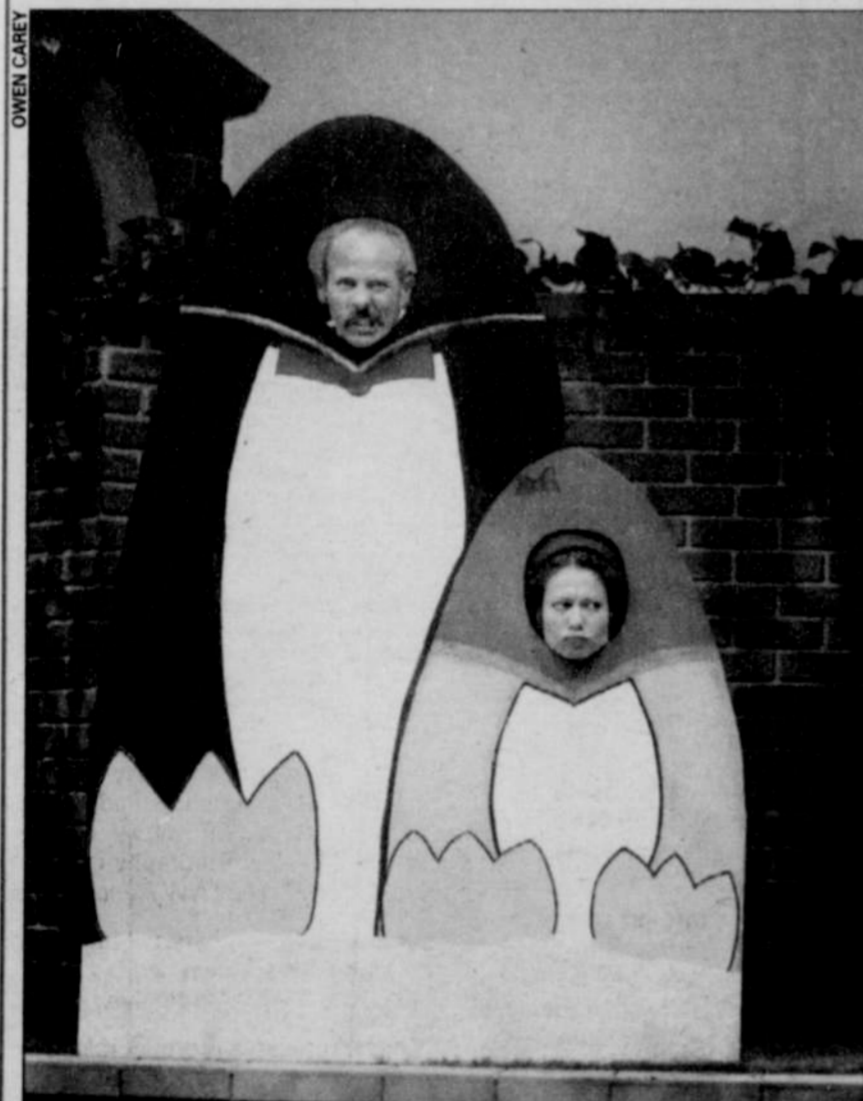


Lou Diamond Phillips stars in *Lerner & Loewe's Camelot* Oct. 2-7.

Third Rail Repertory presents *Grace*, a dark comedy about a devout couple who develop a chain of Gospel-themed "Sonrise" motels in Florida, Sept. 28-Oct. 27 at Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. (8 pm Thursday-Saturday, 2 pm Sunday, 5340 N Interstate Ave. \$16-\$25 from 503-235-1101.)

3-Moment Players present *Balls!*—three one-act plays by gay Oscar-winning playwright Alan Ball (*American Beauty*, *Six Feet Under*)—through Sept. 22 at CoHo Theatre. (8 pm, 2257 NW Raleigh St. \$15 from 503-746-4209.)

White Bird launches its 10th anniversary season with masterworks by Paul Taylor Dance Company Oct. 3 at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. (7:30 pm, 1037 SW Broadway. \$20-\$50 from box office or Ticketmaster.)



Fete organizers Barry (gay actor Michael Mendelson) and Lindy (Marjorie Tatum) give the penguins a test-drive in *Garden*.

Two Sides to Every Story

Even more interesting than the fete of a single cast performing two interconnected plays in two adjacent theaters at the same time is the perception, as prolific British playwright Alan Ayckbourn offers, that "we are all of us walk-on players in other people's lives." That simple insight is the throughline of Artists Repertory Theatre's diptych *House* and *Garden*, two standalone stories that together reflect the multiple facets of love and marriage.

"Everybody has a story to tell, and we can get so caught up in our own situations, we forget that the world doesn't revolve around us," elaborates Stephanie Mulligan, who with Laura Widener are the wife-wife stage management team for these twin tales. "How about when you go to a party at a friend's house? There are people you know well, and friends of friends who you only see—and who only see you—in that context. And if that's your only context for another person, you form an opinion based on that context."

Likewise onstage, where the main character of one play necessarily plays a smaller role in the other and vice-versa. Tables get turned quickly, and the ground began to shift at the beginning of rehearsals when actors were given mock passports indicating exits and entrances for both

shows. Scripts were tacked on studio walls in tandem timeline fashion, baby monitors checked each other's progress, and time was tracked at the bottom of each page of dialogue to ensure the two productions were aligned.

While *House* and *Garden* only refers to rather than rousts gays and lesbians, Mulligan notes that the characters' relationship conflicts are universal. "Heterosexuals haven't cornered the market on miscommunication," to which Widener adds, "It doesn't matter what sexuality the characters are—any person in a committed relationship will recognize and identify in some way to the trials and tribulations that go on in unhealthy relationships, how one person's peccadilloes can so strongly effect and resonate in everyone else's lives."

In observing Ayckbourn's comedy when writing about love, lust and its wake, Mulligan sums up the shows by quoting a line from one of the scripts: "Love is essentially a very simple business. But in the hands of human beings, it often becomes monstrously complicated."

House and *Garden* continue through Oct. 14 at 1516 S.W. Alder St. Tickets are \$20-\$47 from 503-241-1278 or www.artistsrep.org.

—Timothy Krause

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One Good
Frame

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