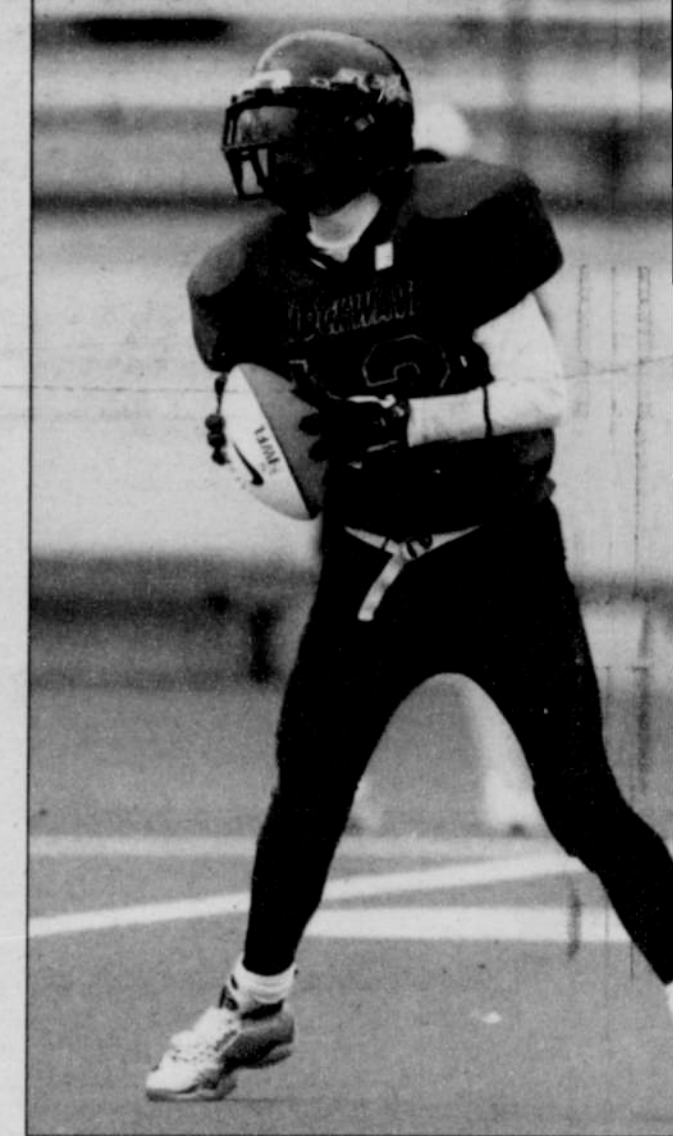




JAMES WILDERHANCOCK



The Portland Shockwave women's football team tryouts Dec. 22.

Pink Martini performs Dec. 31 with MGM movie queen and Portland native Jane Powell (inset).

**Roman Empire an Intimate Affair**

Take notice, Portland, the city has some new writing talent.

"Rome is nothing without him. It exists, it motors and screams and breaks and scalds."

So begins the intimate, handmade book titled *The Rise and Fall of My Roman Empire: A Romance in Three Chapters*.

Written by Philip Iosca, this is no ordinary love story. "It's fictionalized memoir," he says of the tale, which concerns a narrator's love affair in Rome and the wake of returning to the city where the relationship took place.

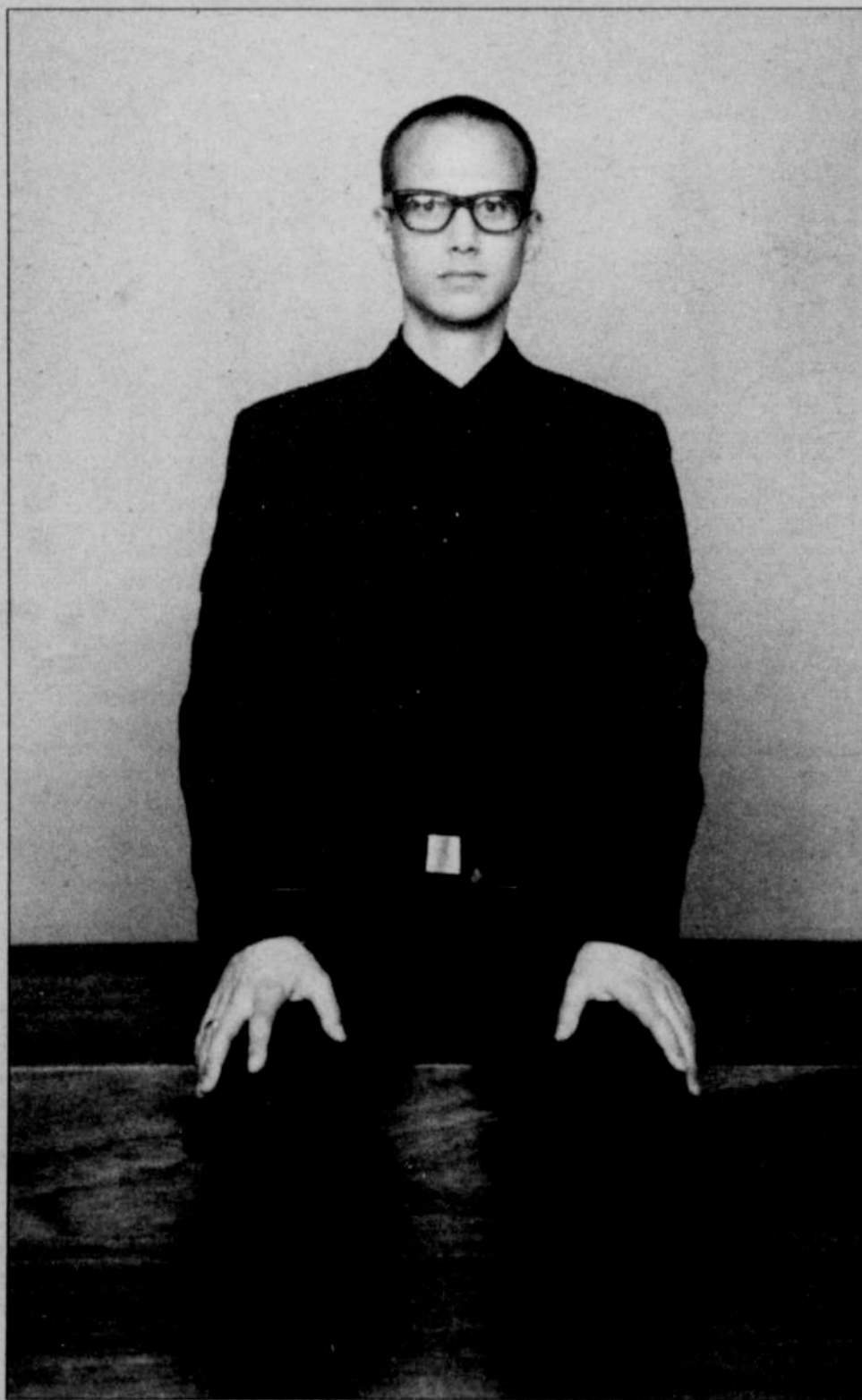
Besides being the author, Iosca has also designed, printed and assembled each part of this project. *Roman Empire* comes with three chapters lined with metallic gold contact paper, wood grain contact paper and vintage gay porn.

If anything, Iosca is an indicator of gay coolness. He is an alumnus of Catlin Gable School, along with the likes of Gus Van Sant. After receiving his undergraduate degree from the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, he returned to Portland and enrolled in the elite Wieden+Kennedy 12 program. He works as the director of marketing for the other incubator of innovation in town, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art. In addition to all this, he happens to be the boyfriend of three years to Pink Martini's frontman, Thomas Lauderdale.

With three other artist books under his belt, Iosca hesitates to call himself a writer.

"I've always had a really interdisciplinary approach to my artwork. If I have an idea for a project, I'll execute in whatever means or medium are appropriate for solving that problem. Sometimes words are the way to solve a problem, so that technically makes me a writer. But it's just another way of solving the problem."

Don't go looking at Barnes and Nobles, or even Powell's, for *Roman Empire*. This intersection of love, desire and place is on sale for \$30 at only two places: Reading Frenzy, a local independent press emporium, and Printed Matter, a bookstore in New York City specializing in artist books.



CHRIS HORNBECKER

Philip Iosca wrote, designed, printed and assembled each part of *The Rise and Fall of My Roman Empire*.

"I'm getting to a point in my art practice where I'm trying to generate a body of work before committing to an exhibition, rather than committing to an exhibition, then having to generate work," Iosca says. "I've never had a solo exhibition in this town. I think it's something I'd like to do myself somehow."

—Wayne Bund

**GO OUT** DJ Girlfriends presents **Pink**, a monthly queer night at Dunes offering an eclectic array of music from disco to hip-hop and everything in between. Pink drink specials all night long! (8 pm speed dating, 10 pm dance party. 1905 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. \$3.)

The Gender Fluids are at it again with the second annual **Queer Quistmas** spectacular at Mississippi Pizza Pub! This year's holiday cheer is loaded with things that would make Jack Frost heat up and melt into a big puddle of, well, Jack fluid. The vignettes feature song and dance, spoken word and a multimedia fruit pie only John Waters could love! Electro-pop sensation CJ and the Dolls open. (10 pm. 3552 N Mississippi Ave. \$5-\$10 sliding scale.)

**SUN • DEC. 23**

**GO OUT** The **Adventure Group** takes an easy walk at Washington Park and Arlington Heights Loop, from a deep forested valley, climbing high through twisty urban streets, to a vertiginous viewpoint at the top of one of Portland's longest stairways. Along the way you'll hear about landslides, lawsuits, Communists, roses, goiter and plank roads. Meet at lower park entrance. (10 am. West Burnside Street at Northwest 24th Place. Larry 503-222-5717.)

C.C. Slaughters presents **The Superstar Divas Holiday Show Part 2**. (8 pm. 219 NW Davis St.)

**MON • DEC. 24**

**GO OUT** Metropolitan Community Church of Portland holds spiritual and festive Christmas Eve services. (7 and 11 pm. 2400 NE Broadway.)

**TUE • DEC. 25**



**Merry Christmas!**

**WED • DEC. 26**

The **Adventure Group** takes a moderate snowshoe trip to White River for spectacular views of Mount Hood. Meet outside Starbucks at Hollywood Fred Meyer. (9 am. 3030 NE Weidler St. Ron 503-284-3345.)

**Plazm Delivers Queer Content**

The latest issue of *Plazm* is chock full of queer content. The art/design/literary magazine is published annually, and the theme for this 29th issue is collective memory.

Domenick Ammirati's fictional story about a gay couple who pass as brothers reads like a cautionary tale for narcissistic gay men: It is possible to find someone who is too much like yourself.

In a six-page spread designed to resemble a hastily cut-and-pasted zine, several notable Portlanders collectively remember the punk and post-punk music scene circa 1980-1995. Sts, who drums for The Lookers and Cadallaca and serves as program director for the Rock 'n' Roll Camp for Girls, waxes nostalgic about queercore bands such as Team Dresch. "Their openness about being queer and their obvious power changed the lives of thousands of young homos, including mine," she writes.

More visually appealing are the nine full pages devoted to works by queer artist **Storm Tharp**. He uses ink, charcoal, colored pencil and a watercolor paint known as gouache to create distinctive and disturbing portraits. The faces warped by large, black dots seem to swim on the page, refusing to take discrete shapes. They are contained only by the often colorful clothing and hair Tharp uses to demarcate each subject.

