



GAYM SHOW BINGO

Your Hostesses: Sharmai & Carlotta
WIN CASH + PRIZES!
 Every Wednesday @ 7pm
 classic bingo with a game show twist

STARTS JUNE 25

CRUSH
 1400 SE MORRISON
 503.235.8150 • WWW.CRUSHBAR.COM

NINKASI BREWING COMPANY



541-344-BREW
 (541-344-2739)

877-7-NINKASI
 (877-764-6527)

AVAILABLE ON DRAFT IN PORTLAND'S
 FINEST RESTAURANTS AND BARS

NOW AVAILABLE IN 22OZ BOTTLES

MYSPACE.COM/NINKASIBREWING
 NINKASIBREWING.COM

272 VAN BUREN ST., EUGENE, OR 97440

theater

Broadway Bound?

What's hot on the Great White Way

by Jon Kretzu

Spring has come to Manhattan, which means balmy breezes, Central Park in full flower and hordes of theater maniacs discussing the upcoming Tony Awards like crazed tween girls comparing the merits and debits of the latest batch of semi-nude pics of Miley Cyrus and Lindsay Lohan. There has been a lot of fine work on New York City stages on both the musical and—surprise, surprise—straight play front.



The Met played host to a dazzling roster of thrilling new productions, including the haunting *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Whether that work is worth the rapidly escalating ticket prices (yep, they just went up *again*—second time in two years—must be that rotten strike) is still up for discussion. All Broadway musicals will now cost you a ridiculous \$117 a ticket (nothing is worth that—not even Mother Teresa in a revival of *Evita*), with nonmusicals hovering at the \$100 limit.

It's been a good season for the legitimate theater. Three of the season's Tony-nominated Best Plays are worthy of their hype. Tom Stoppard's *Rock and Roll* finds everyone's favorite English intellectual vigorously flexing his sociopolitical muscles with wit aided by the work of a splendid imported cast. The eerie Christmas Eve tale *The Seafarer* made the trip from London's National Theatre mostly intact. Featuring a perfectly balanced ensemble of character actors, Conor McPherson's play was a haunting meditation on sin and redemption that managed to simultaneously chill the blood, wrench a tear, summon empathic laughter and warm the heart.

Regional theater was the home of this season's biggest event for lovers of serious playwriting—Tracy Letts' remarkable *August: Osage County*. This powerful account of epic familial dysfunction came straight to Broadway intact from its premiere at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre, where Letts is a longtime company member. Letts made his name off-Broadway and in regional theaters with his dual horror-comedies *Killer Joe* and *Bug*—theatrical roller coasters that managed to combine the gravity of Jacobean tragedy with the shock and awesome viciousness of a Tarantino bloodfest. But with his new play, Letts deservedly enters the pantheon of U.S. playwrights who have

managed to create works of art that both inspire and entertain.

August: Osage County takes the traditional three-act, one-set, large-cast family drama and gives it a bracing and deeply disquieting contemporary kick in the ass. Over the course of nearly four hours, we watch the Weston family reunite in a feast of recriminations and revelations, scathing, raw-marrow wit and emotional bloodshed laced with sudden flashes of sensitivity and what passes for love. An exhausting/exhilarating piece of work performed by a peerless cast, *August: Osage County* is the dramatic event of the year.

There have been numerous other joys on the legitimate New York stage this year. Stephen Karam's sold-out cult hit *Speech and Debate* was a biting, cruel, hilarious and ultimately moving story of teenagers trying to survive the battlefields of sexual identity, loneliness and exploitation within their text-message/MySpace/Facebook blogosphere. Paul Rudnick's *The New Century* is a set of interlocked monologue fantasias on gay themes that wove some touching moments of real feeling in among the *fabulous* one-liners and slightly fatigued yet still funny Rudnick witticisms. Mark Twain's long-forgotten farce *Is He Dead?* was brought to glorious life by adapter David Ives and a wonderful cast of farceurs led by the inimitable Norbert Leo Butz doing a priceless drag act of depraved desperation. Less effective was the London export *Alfred Hitchcock's The 39 Steps*, an acclaimed exercise in lukewarm camp that left me cold.

On the revival front, we had a lot to choose from but only one real winner. Patrick Stewart brought his hit Chichester Festival/West End production of Shakespeare's bloody *Macbeth* to the



Gypsy star Patti LuPone held nothing back in "Rose's Turn," surely the greatest musical soliloquy ever written.