

'Idiots' serve smart humor

by **Steele**
Clackamas Print

Last week the Osterman Theatre in Niemeyer hosted "Flaming Idiots," written by Tom Rooney and starring Robert Alzman and Matt Morrison. Alzman and Morrison are serial entrepreneurs who quit their jobs at the post office to purchase a restaurant with many business knowledge, high hopes and dreams. Together, they form an eccentric crew to work at the restaurant. The play features CCC performances by Mark

Polendey, Heather Ovalle and Peter Schweitzer. Also featured are veteran actors Jake Dannen, Daphne Starling, Matt Strong and Seth Wrubleski. The cast is well suited to act on a slapstick comedy because while they are very over-the-top characters, they are still believable and most importantly, likeable.

During the performance, the audience could do very little to hold back their laughs. "Flaming Idiots" is a very funny play where everyone will find something to enjoy. This is the kind of play that even non-theater and theater people alike can go to and walk away satisfied.

The play is directed by artist-in-residence John Renner



Contributed photo

Mark Polendey, Robert Alzman and Matt Morrison star in "Flaming Idiots," a play about two entrepreneurs who aren't business savvy.

and runs for two hours with a 15 minute intermission after the first of the two acts. The play runs June 1 - 3 at 7 p.m. and

the final performance is June 4 at 2:30 p.m. The cost is \$10 for general admission and \$8 for students and senior citizens.

Spring one act plays bring big laughs, absurdity

by **Stalnaker**
Clackamas Print

Audience members will find themselves laughing and scratching their heads after witnessing three one act plays being performed this week.

The first performance is "In Plain Air." Written by playwright Ian Frazier and directed by Sarah Griswold, this comedy features famous impressionist artists Auguste Renoir, Claude Monet and Edouard Manet in a room of wits as they paint each

other, Madame Monet and a rooster in a garden. The play is inspired by Manet's famous work "Monet Family in Their Garden."

Mike Ryan, playing the self-centered Monet, works very well and he is especially effective during his closing monologue. The chemistry between Matt Morrison (Renoir) and Nick Kornafel (Manet) is brilliant as they throw insults back and forth to each other.

Next up is "Fight Dreams" by playwright Alison Weiss and directed by Deidra MacKimmie. The play is both a comedy and social commentary on female

sexuality.

Daphne Starling stars as Dinah, a sexually frustrated woman that can only fantasize about having a dysfunctional relationship with her imaginary boyfriend Bradley (Robert Alzman). Starling and Alzman are great together as they provide the audience with big laughs. I must say, however, that Alzman really steals the show with his performance.

The final one act is playwright John Gloré's "The Morpheus Quartet." The play, directed by Mark Polendey, is a 10 minute dialogue between a First Violin (Deidra MacKimmie), a Second

Violin (Robert Alzman), a Cello (Jake Dannen) and a Viola (Kelly Renee Miller).

"The Morpheus Quartet" seems to be more like a piece of confusing performance art than a one act play, yet it's still enjoyable. The dialogue is very well paced and is humorous at times. I recommend paying close attention to this play to be able to catch everything that's being said.

The one act plays can be seen in the Niemeyer Center's Osterman Theatre today at noon, this evening at 7 p.m. and Thursday at noon and are admission free.

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'Minds': must-read novel

by **Lara Hedbor**
Clackamas Print

This is not an optimistic, heart warming comedy about a girl who has imaginary friends. And there are no happy endings, nor is there a pleasant resolution.

Devastatingly honest, "Divided Minds," by Pamela Spiro Wagner and Carolyn S. Spiro, MD, is the true life account of the ravages of schizophrenia, but with a twist: it is written from the perspective of twins.

Pamela Spiro Wagner is the "smart" twin, the "talented" twin, the twin who was going to make the most impact on the world. Carolyn, or Linnie, is merely the disappointing afterthought. They struggle throughout their childhood, each vying to break out in her own fashion, but it is only while they are both attending Brown University that their differences become blindingly obvious.

Pamela, or Pammy, suffers from paranoid schizophrenia, and has heard voices throughout her early teens. These voices lead her to believe that she is actually the root of all evil, proved by her belief that she was the one who killed John F. Kennedy - despite the fact that she was a sixth grader in art class at the time of the shooting.

Her disease, however, is hidden by her overwhelming shyness, and no one realizes until much later that Pammy has been experiencing severe auditory hallucinations for much of her life.

Things only spiral downward from there. In and out of mental hospitals and halfway homes, Pammy struggles just to survive from day to day, hearing hidden messages in the radio ads and suffering from the deadening effects of her medication.

Carolyn, however, suffers from her own set of challenges and has hardly enough time for her difficul-



Divided Minds
Twin Sisters and Their Journey Through Schizophrenia

Internet Photo

ties, let alone Pammy's inopportune psychotic episodes. She balances her work as a psychiatrist, her marriage to a man she doesn't love, and her house and two children, alongside frequent hysterical phone calls from Pammy with her looming threats of suicide, and occasional drives to bring Pammy to the next mental hospital.

Written in an engaging and fascinating manner, it is difficult not to lose oneself in the captivating side by side accounts of the events that composed the sisters' lives. Pamela, despite her illness, is an award winning poet and author who speaks for the rights of the mentally ill in terms of humane treatment and insurance coverage. Pamela's literary voice is ruthlessly revealing of herself, and Carolyn, while not a writer by profession, speaks with compassion and honesty that tempers Pamela's occasionally disturbing recollections of their lives.

"Divided Minds" is a book well worth reading, and provides insight into the minds of the chronically schizophrenic in a way that no one who has not suffered the disease could do. Surprisingly coherent, the book is difficult to put down. For anyone who is or was close to someone who has a mental disorder, "Divided Minds" is a must-read.

'Made' series puts hit out on HBO

"The Sopranos" looks to end season on violent note

by **N.P. Delzell**
Clackamas Print

With one episode left in an already up-and-down in-and-out "Sopranos" half season, who knows who's next to get whacked, jacked or thrown out of the family.

With mad rumors floating around, this has been slated to be the last season of the "Sopranos," so every episode counts ... or at least that's what the television people say anyway. I believe they will come back for at least two more seasons of G'd-up mob stories to appease the viewers.

A lot has gone down in the world of mob syndicate boss Tony Soprano's life while my "Sopranos" column was on hiatus. Regular characters are either being set up for slayings or being shipped out to make room for guest appearances, as well as sub-plots that fall out of the "Soprano's" style that most are accustomed to.

During episodes 74-76 a lot happens, so get up on things and make the most of your cable system. "The Sopranos" is on HBO Sunday night at 9 p.m. eastern, 6 p.m. western standard time.

Meadow Soprano, Tony's daughter who has been a regular character for most of the last four seasons, has now flown off to California. The homosexual Capo was brutally murdered for leaving the family, Bobby Bacala (Steven R. Schirripa) was jacked for \$3,000 while picking up the vig for a certain loan sharking operation. During the robbery Bobby barely missed a bullet and ended up with cement fragments in his eye, sidelining him as a show regular for a while.

During episode 74, "The Ride," things get back to normal as Tony and Christopher Moltisanti (Michael Imperioli) rob a group of bikers for a few hundred bottles of fine wine. The robbery ends with the men in an old-school "Sopranos" street shootout, with Tony and Christopher mocking the injured bikers as they roll off with their unplanned score. These are the moments when I get up, take a swing in the air and do a little Soprano shake.

With all this in mind, most people who have followed the show for the last eight years are now left wondering what will happen next. The cliffhangers that David Chase, writer/producer, is setting up are stellar but annoying at the same time.

This week is the last in the half season, so who knows what type of G-isms to expect?